

Jesus Was Made Sin for Us

Second Corinthians 5.21

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • May 5, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2019

Scripture Reader and Reading: Dan Calvert – Second Corinthians 5.9–11

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – No Suggestions

Prelude:

I. In the late 70s when I was in preaching school,

- A. some of us were sitting around talking about spiritual things.
- B. During the conversation Hugh Johnson said
 - 1. that God made Jesus to be sin.
 - 2. I was horrified and challenged him to support his point from Scripture.

II. Hugh Johnson was one of those kind of guys

- A. who is always cool, even tempered,
- B. never getting too excited whether with anger or joy.
 - 1. In other words, he was not like me.
 - 2. When I grow up I want to be like Hugh Johnson.

III. Hugh just calmly showed me Second Corinthians 5.21:

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

– 2 Corinthians 5.21

- A. There it was in black and white.
- B. If the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write those words,
 - 1. then I had no option but accept what the Bible says.
 - 2. Next, I had to learn what the Bible means.
 - a) Since then I have gained the meaning of that passage and
 - b) have brought up its truth repeatedly in sermons.

IV. Then last week it hit me again,

- A. this time in a more graphic way, for
- B. I saw the truth represented in a way that made me deeply ashamed of my sin.

V. Last week I found an image of Christ on the cross

- A. that disturbed me to the core because
- B. it made me see something that I guess I had not actually visualized yet.
 - 1. I put that image on the front of last week's bulletin, and
 - 2. in case you did not see it then, here it is now on the screen.

VI. Usually when I see artwork of Jesus on the cross,

- A. I see just Him.
- B. I see His agony.
 - 1. You know the pictures of which I speak.
 - 2. And I know that He hung on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins.

VII. However, I have never seen my or our sins upon Him at the cross, yet,

- A. is that not what happened that day,
- B. at least according to Second Corinthians 5.21?
 - 1. I know that it is so and
 - 2. I know and have preached
 - a) that is the reason the Father forsook Jesus while He was on the cross.
 - b) Habakkuk 1 shows something about God that makes us understand why He had to forsake Jesus at the cross.
 - (1) The prophet asked God when He was going to do something about all the sin and crime going on in Judah.
 - (2) The Lord answered that He was preparing the Babylonians
 - (a) to punish Judah and Jerusalem.
 - (b) When Habakkuk heard that,
 - i) he objected because

ii) the Babylonians were more evil than Judah:

**13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil,
And cannot look on wickedness.
Why do You look on those who deal treacherously,
And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours
A person more righteous than he?**

– Habakkuk 1.13

(3) God cannot look upon evil.

- (a) Therefore, when the evil of the world was loaded onto Jesus,
- (b) the Father had to turn away from Him.

VIII. However, that image in the bulletin last week,

- A. really drove home for me what happened to Jesus at the cross.
- B. When I see Him, I should see my sins and the sins of the world on Him.

IX. Let's take a closer look at Second Corinthians 5.21

- A. that we might understand it better,
- B. That we might appreciate just what happened to Jesus that day.

Persuasion:

I. The Context

- A. I will start at verse 10 after Paul had said
 - 1. that he made it his aim to please Christ,
 - 2. he explained:

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

– 2 Corinthians 5.10–11

- a) We shall all appear before Christ to receive how we have lived.
 - b) Therefore Paul sought to persuade people to turn to Christ.
- B. The apostle said further in verses 14–15:

14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

– 2 Corinthians 5.14–15

1. On the one hand, the terror of the Lord moved Paul to convert people.
 2. On the other hand, the love that Christ has for the world
 - a) moves Paul to teach people
 - b) no longer to live for themselves but for Christ.
- C. Paul set us up to hear the great truth of our main passage today by teaching:

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

– 2 Corinthians 5.18–20

1. God used Jesus to reconcile the world to Himself.
2. He did this by not imputing their trespasses to them.
3. Therefore, Paul urged us to be reconciled to God.

II. Jesus Knew No Sin

- A. How did God reconcile the world through Jesus?
1. If God did not input our trespasses to us,
 2. what did He do with our sins?

B. Paul explained that in verse 21:

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

– 2 Corinthians 5.21

C. Jesus knew no sin.

1. To me, that is incomprehensible for my own life because
 - a) it seems that the story of my life is sin.
 - b) I do not know when I started sinning, but
 - (1) I do know that when I converted to Christ at age 18,
 - (2) I had already immersed myself in sin.
2. Listen to what the Hebrew writer said of Jesus:

26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

– Hebrews 7.26

3. Jesus never committed one sin of any kind.
 - a) How is that possible?
 - (1) How often do you sin?
 - (2) How many different kinds of sin have you committed?
 - b) He never once committed any of those kinds of sins!

D. Jesus was, and still is, absolutely holy.

1. A seraph in heaven announced the holiness of Jesus:

3 And one cried to another and said:

**“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!”**

– **Isaiah 6.3**

2. Look at the reaction to the announcement of the holiness of Jesus:

4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 So I said:

**“Woe is me, for I am undone!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts.”**

– **Isaiah 6.4–5**

E. Luke 5 shows Peter sensing the holiness of Jesus.

1. After teaching,

- a) Jesus told Peter to go out into the deep of the Sea of Galilee and
- b) to let down his nets for a catch.

2. However, Peter did not believe the Lord, but

- a) indicated that he would do as told,
- b) thinking he would show the Lord that He did not know what He was talking about:

5 “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.”

– **Luke 5.5**

3. Peter began to catch so many fish

- a) that his net started to break, and
- b) he signaled to his partners in another boat for help.

(1) When they did, verse 7 says

(2) that the catch filled both boats so much

- (a) that they started to sink.
- (b) Then it hit Peter:

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

– Luke 5.8

- i) Peter sensed his sinfulness because
- ii) he sensed the holiness of Jesus Christ.
 - (1) Peter knew Habakkuk 1 and Isaiah 6, and
 - (2) knew of his unworthiness to be in Christ's presence.

F. So then what Paul taught is that Jesus never knew sin by personal experience.

III. God Made Jesus to Be Sin for Us

A. Now here is the part that knocks us over.

- 1. Jesus who knew no sin,
- 2. God made Him to be sin for us.
 - a) At the cross, Jesus took all of my sins upon Him.
 - b) At the cross, Jesus took all of your sins upon Him.
 - (1) He carried those sins to the cross.
 - (2) That is why He went to the cross.
 - (a) Think on that for the rest of the week.
 - (b) What sins have you and I committed?
 - i) The holy Son of God had all of them upon His soul.
 - ii) That would be like dipping your favorite piece of clothing into mud or a septic tank.

B. Isaiah 53 prophesied that this would happen.

**12def He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,**

And made intercession for the transgressors.

– Isaiah 53.12

1. He hung between two sinners as though the epitome of a sinner Himself.
2. He bore their sins.
 - a) He bore the sins of the people executing Him.
 - b) Every filthy, rotten, disgusting, repugnant of all time sin smeared
 - (1) His beautiful, holy, and righteous soul.
 - (2) When you see Him on the cross, see your sin all over Him.

IV. He Enabled Us to Become the Righteousness of God

- A. Why did the Father make Jesus to be sin?
 1. Paul said that He did it for us.
 2. What did He accomplish by becoming sin for us?
- B. Listen again to the words of the Spirit by the pen of Paul:

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

– 2 Corinthians 5.21

1. God wanted us to become or to have His righteousness and
2. we get it through what Jesus did for us.
 - a) By becoming sin for us,
 - b) by bearing our sins to the cross,
 - (1) He bore the wages of sin for us, which is death.
 - (2) Now, instead of spiritual death,
 - (a) which is separation from God,
 - (b) we have God's righteousness.