

Jesus Christ has made Jews and Gentiles one

Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people, ⁵²and not only for them, but also to bring together into one body all the scattered people of God.

JOHN 11:51B-52 GNT

By dying for all people, Jesus has enabled both Jews and Gentiles to become part of the one people of God.

Those who believe are the true, spiritual children of Abraham

The Scriptures say the same thing about Abraham: “*Abraham believed God, and God accepted Abraham’s faith, and that faith made him right with God.*” ⁷*So you should know that the true children of Abraham are those who have faith.* GALATIANS 3:6-7 NCV™

Epilogue: Jesus Christ’s Mission and Israel

Jesus Christ came foremost to Israel

And so God chose his Servant and sent him first to you [the Jews], to bless you by making every one of you turn away from your wicked ways. ACTS 3:26 GNT

The Jews largely rejected Jesus Christ

He came to what was his own, but *his own people did not receive him.* JOHN 1:11 NET

So, God largely rejected the Jews and accepted the Gentiles

But *by their* [the people of Israel’s] *transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make Israel jealous. ...* ¹⁵*For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?* ROMANS 11:11B, 15 NET

In v. 11, their “transgression” refers to the Jews’/Israel’s rejection of the gospel, God’s way of righteousness that is by faith in Christ.

God has left a faithful remnant of Israel

So in the same way *at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.* ROMANS 11:5 NET

CHAPTER 13

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I. Salvation from Sin

The teachings in this section are at the absolute heart of the NT and the gospel message. It is critical for anyone trying to comprehend the Christian faith to soundly understand them.

Jesus Christ's Sacrifice for Us

Jesus gave himself to God, as a sacrifice for our sins

Live a life of love just as *Christ loved us and gave himself for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice to God.* [EPHESIANS 5:2](#) NCV™

Jesus brought the sacrifice for the sins of the people once and for all when he sacrificed himself. [HEBREWS 7:27B](#) GW

So, Jesus Christ died for us

But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that *while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* [ROMANS 5:8](#) NET

Christ gave his life as a substitute for our lives. He died in our place to pay the penalty for our sin, so that we would not have to pay it ourselves with everlasting death. Instead we can have everlasting life. This is life which extends beyond physical death. Note that as the Son of God, Christ's life is worth infinitely more than our lives; thus his death was an adequate sacrifice for any number of people.

Atonement for Sin

Biblical atonement is where God in his grace accepts an offering or sacrifice of a living being (i.e. its life) as a substitute for the life of a sinner – the person's life otherwise being required for their sin. As such, God accepts the sacrifice as payment for the person's sin. The result is that sin is taken away – and so the sinner is forgiven, pronounced righteous and reconciled to God. In conjunction with this, God's wrath – provoked by sin – is appeased.

In the OT, people who had sinned brought an animal as an offering of a life, for the priests to sacrifice on their behalf to make atonement

indwelling us, renewing and nourishing us. With this, we have a spiritual consciousness that enables us to live in communion with and in dependence on God. This spiritual life is only attainable through Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished.

Through Jesus Christ we can have eternal life rather than death

For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that *everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ...* ³⁶*The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. The one who rejects the Son will not see life, but God's wrath remains on him.* [JOHN 3:16, 36](#) NET

Jesus said to her, *"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live even if he dies, ²⁶and the one who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"* [JOHN 11:25-26](#) NET

Jesus is the one through whom resurrection and life come (v. 25a). Those who believe in him will live even though they die physically (v. 25b). At a spiritual level they will never die (v. 26a), but live eternally.

Salvation for the Gentiles through Jesus Christ

In OT times it was firstly only the Israelites, then after the Babylonian captivity more specifically the Jews, who were "God's people" and knew of God's salvation. But through Jesus Christ's mission, God has made salvation open to the Gentiles.

Jesus Christ died for all people

But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, so that *through God's grace he should die for everyone.* [HEBREWS 2:9A](#) GNT

Salvation is now open to everyone who will accept it by repentance and faith (cf. *I. Getting Right with God*, p. 176).

God has made the way of faith in Jesus open also to Gentiles

God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ. ... ³⁰*God is one, and he will put the Jews right with himself on the basis of their faith, and will put the Gentiles right through their faith.* [ROMANS 3:22A, 30](#) GNT

II. Salvation for the World

Prior to Jesus Christ's mission, God dealt primarily with Israel, as his people. What Christ accomplished had great implications for all people – notably in making God's salvation, with eternal life, freely available to every person. An associated outcome is that people from all nations can readily become one of God's own people.

The Savior of the World

God provides salvation through Jesus Christ . . .

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. [JOHN 3:17](#) ESV

. . . Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world

[JOHN:] And we have seen and testify that *the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.* [1 JOHN 4:14](#) NET

We can only be saved through Jesus Christ

Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us. [ACTS 4:12](#) GNT

Jesus replied, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." [JOHN 14:6](#) NET

The first statement may well mean that: Jesus is the way to the Father because he is the truth and the life. The second statement emphatically states that he is the only way to God, one implication of which is that Jesus is the only source of salvation.

Life through Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ brings spiritual life

[JESUS:] The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; *I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.* [JOHN 10:10](#) NET

The "life" spoken of in the NT that Jesus Christ provides is spiritual life. It involves being "alive to God" (Rom 6:11), with God's Holy Spirit

for them. Jesus Christ's offering or sacrifice of himself has a number of striking parallels with this OT practice. Furthermore, his death in fact fulfilled this requirement of the OT law once and for all, making such offerings no longer necessary. The atonement made by Jesus Christ's death is central to the Christian faith.

Jesus Christ's sacrifice means that our sins can be forgiven . . .

[JESUS:] For *this is my blood of the new covenant that is being poured out for many people for the forgiveness of sins.* [MATTHEW 26:28](#) ISV

But now, at the end of the ages, *he has appeared once for all to remove sin by his sacrifice.* ²⁷Indeed, just as people are appointed to die once and after that to be judged, ²⁸*so the Messiah was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people.* [HEBREWS 9:26B-28A](#) ISV

. . . and that we can therefore be righteous before God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Much more then, because *we have now been declared righteous by his blood*, we will be saved through him from God's wrath. [ROMANS 5:9](#) NET

Consequently, through Jesus Christ's death we can be reconciled to God . . .

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] You used to be far from God. Your thoughts made you his enemies, and you did evil things. ²²*But his Son became a human and died. So God made peace with you, and now he lets you stand in his presence as people who are holy and faultless and innocent.* [COLOSSIANS 1:21-22](#) CEV

. . . and so through Jesus Christ we can have peace with God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* [ROMANS 5:1](#) ESV

Thus, Jesus Christ was the atoning sacrifice for sins, saving people from God's wrath

It is he who is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world's. [1 JOHN 2:2](#) ISV

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] For *God did not destine us for wrath but for gaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.* [1 THESSALONIANS 5:9](#) NET

Redemption from Sin

To “redeem” someone was to set them free by paying a ransom, a payment of comparable value. Such terminology was often used in NT times in reference to paying the price to free a slave. In the NT Scriptures it is applied to Jesus Christ redeeming or freeing believers from enslavement to sin by giving his life as a ransom.

Jesus gave himself as a ransom for us, to free us from sin

For there is one God and one intermediary between God and humanity, *Christ Jesus, himself human*, ⁶*who gave himself as a ransom for all*, revealing God’s purpose at his appointed time. [1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6](#) NET

[JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] To the one who loves us [Christ] and *has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood ...* [REVELATION 1:5B](#) NET

Christ redeems or frees people from enslavement to sin, through having given his life as a ransom for them (cf. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 ↑). This concept of redemption is complementary to that of atonement.

Jesus Christ’s death sets us free from sin’s control

He gave himself for us to set us free from every kind of lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are truly his, who are eager to do good. [TITUS 2:14](#) NET

God’s people have been bought by Jesus Christ’s death

They [heavenly beings] were singing a new song: “You [Christ] are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals because you were killed, and *at the cost of your own blood you have purchased for God persons from every tribe, language, people, and nation.* [REVELATION 5:9](#) NET

An implication of believers being redeemed from sin by Jesus Christ’s death is that they have been bought for God – to whom they are now slaves (as the following subsection indicates).

As such, they are free from sin and are now slaves to God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] But now that *you have been freed from sin and have become God’s slaves*, the benefit you reap is sanctification, and the result is eternal life. [ROMANS 6:22](#) ISV

Jesus Christ’s Resurrection and Salvation

Jesus Christ’s resurrection has a key part in us being saved

[PETER, SPEAKING TO BELIEVERS AND MAKING REFERENCE TO BAPTISM:] It is not the washing away of bodily dirt, but the promise made to God from a good conscience. *It saves you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ...* [1 PETER 3:21](#) GNT

By what baptism symbolizes (as opposed to the act of baptism) we are saved by Jesus Christ’s resurrection – the culmination of his saving work.

Jesus Christ’s resurrection was essential for our resurrection

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *And if Christ has not been raised*, your faith is useless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Furthermore, *those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished.* ¹⁹For if only in this life we have hope in Christ, we should be pitied more than anyone. ²⁰*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.* ²¹*For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man.* ²²*For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.* ²³*But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; then when Christ comes, those who belong to him.*

[1 CORINTHIANS 15:17-23](#) NET

The “firstfruits” (vv. 20, 23) alludes to the firstfruits of the harvest which were offered to God. As well as preceding the rest of the harvest, they were seen as a confirmation that the rest would take place. Here the term is applied to Christ, as like the firstfruits of the harvest, his resurrection precedes and is an assurance of the resurrection of all believers.

Pray for persecuted Christians