

The Believers (at LSU)

Campus Meeting

September 10, 2009

Crucial Points of the Truth in Romans

The Designation of Jesus Christ to be the Son of God—Romans 1: 3—4

(2)

An Additional Word concerning the Essence of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ the God-man

Scripture Reading: Rom. 1:3-4

I would like to present a very important sketch on the first two messages we have covered concerning the center of the gospel of God. This center is a person, Jesus Christ. He is a wonderful, all-inclusive, and all-extensive person with a marvelous work. With Christ's person there are two aspects: the aspect of His divinity and the aspect of His humanity. Since He is one person with two elements, He is God and man.

Throughout the past twenty centuries, Jewish scholars and Christian teachers have studied and argued about who died on the cross. Jewish scholars say that the One who died on the cross was merely a Nazarene who came from a despised city in the despised province of Galilee. Of course, they are short-sighted. Many Christians would say that it was Jesus Christ our Savior who died on the cross. This is correct, but it is far from a complete answer. The One who died on the cross has two elements. The divine element is God, and the human element is man. Thus, the One who died on the cross is a man and also is God.

THE SEED OF DAVID IN HIS HUMANITY

Being a man, a real man, a genuine man, Jesus Christ does have humanity, and this humanity was the flesh. The Word became flesh (John 1:14), not in a positive sense, but indirectly in a negative sense. This flesh, however, was only in the likeness of the flesh of sin, without the poison of sin (Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21a; Heb. 4:15). Still, we must realize that Christ became flesh. In His flesh He was an "old man" (Rom. 6:6). Thus, He belonged to the old creation (Col. 1:15b). The flesh had been poisoned by Satan, corrupted with sin, Satan's nature, and usurped by the world, Satan's cosmos. As such an all-inclusive person, Christ died on the cross. When He died

on the cross, all six items—the old creation, the old man, the flesh, Satan, sin, and the world—were crucified on the cross. Thus, in the eyes of God, after Christ's crucifixion, the entire universe has been cleared up.

Christ was dying on the cross as a human seed belonging to the old creation and as an old man. This old man includes you and me. Actually, we died with Christ on the cross nearly two thousand years ago, even though we were not yet born (Gal. 2:20a). We were there because we were in Adam (see Rom. 5:14, note 4). Many actually came to the United States a few centuries ago when their forefathers came, because they came in them (cf. Heb. 7:9-10 and note 9¹). In the same way, we were also in Adam as the old man when he was being crucified on the cross (Rom. 6:6).

Christ also died on the cross in the flesh. One thing in the whole universe that offends God to the uttermost is the flesh. The flesh is the embodiment of Satan. Satan and the flesh are one. Christ, of course, was only in the likeness of the flesh of sin, without the poison of sin and Satan, but because Christ died on the cross in the flesh, the flesh also died there.

Not only so, when Christ died, Satan was destroyed. Hebrews 2:14 tells us that Jesus partook of blood and flesh to die on the cross to destroy the devil. Three things are the most ugly things in the universe: the flesh, sin, and Satan. The flesh is the embodiment of Satan, and sin is the nature of Satan. This sin was condemned and terminated by the death of Christ. Romans 8:3 says that God sent His Son to condemn sin. The One who died on the cross also judged the world, the satanic cosmos, the evil system, which systematizes all the descendants of Adam. John 12:31 says that on the cross Christ would judge the world and cast out Satan, the ruler of this world.

Thus, Christ's death on the cross as the seed of David in His humanity was with these six items: the old creation, the old man, the flesh, Satan, sin, and the world. This is why His death is the all-inclusive death. We should treasure such a message which unveils to us who Jesus Christ was. He was a man, but what kind of man was He? He was the seed of David. This seed was of the old creation and the old man. This seed had the flesh, which is involved with Satan, sin, and the world. So when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He brought all these items with Him to be crucified there. His all-inclusive death cleared up the entire universe.

Also, Christ's flesh, His humanity, was the incarnation of God, so when this humanity was dying on the cross, God was also there. Hebrews 9:14 shows that Christ did not die on the cross merely as a man. He also offered Himself to God by the eternal Spirit. The eternal Spirit was with Him and strengthened Him to die.

Colossians 2 tells us that when Christ was dying on the cross with God, Satan sent his evil angels to frustrate Him. So while Christ was dying on the cross, God was stripping off all these evil angels (v. 15). The human eyes saw only how the Roman soldiers put up the cross and nailed Christ on it. Peter, Mary, and the disciples saw only this physical view. They did not see that Satan had sent his evil angels to disturb Christ in His death and that God was stripping them off. With the crucifixion there was a physical view and a spiritual view. This is the all-inclusive death of the person Jesus Christ, as the seed of David.

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD AND THE FIRSTBORN SON OF GOD

Now we want to consider the element of Christ's divinity. Christ as God is divine, but it is difficult to understand the involvement of Christ's divinity. The divinity of Christ is involved with His being two kinds of Sons of God. First, as the divine One in His divinity, He is the only begotten Son of God from eternity (John 1:18). Second, He is the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29). As the only begotten Son of God, He is merely divine and is self-existing and ever-existing, eternal, without beginning or ending. But His being the firstborn Son of God involves much more because the firstborn Son of God is a composition of His divinity plus His humanity. His divinity is exactly the same as the divinity of the only begotten Son of God, but His humanity was added by His being incarnated. The only begotten Son of God with only divinity put on blood and flesh. This means that when He was incarnated, He put humanity upon His divinity. Then He became a God-man. From His incarnation to His death, He still was the only begotten Son, and this only begotten Son is the divine part of Christ as the God-man.

The cross killed His human part, but His divine part still lived and was very active. This part of divinity is called by Paul in Romans 1:4 the Spirit of holiness. In resurrection the divine part of Christ, as the Spirit of holiness, resurrected the killed human part of Christ by germinating it with the divine power. Thus, the killed humanity of Christ in resurrection was uplifted. This is what Paul means when he says that Jesus Christ as the seed of David was designated the Son of God. This designation was a kind of process.

In these many years, through a deep study of the Bible, the Lord has shown us the crystallization of this word *designate*. How was the seed of David designated to be the Son of God? This took place first by the seed of David as a man being put on the cross to be killed. Right away this God-man's divinity as the Spirit of holiness was a kind of power to resurrect His humanity by germinating His killed humanity with the divine element to raise it up, to uplift it. This is designation. In this designation Jesus Christ became the firstborn Son of God.

The humanity of Christ became divine in Christ's resurrection. Christ's divinity had the power to uplift His crucified humanity, to resurrect that humanity. When Paul said that Jesus Christ was designated the Son of God, this means that Christ's resurrection uplifted His humanity and put

His divinity into this humanity. So by this resurrection, His humanity was born to be a part of the Son of God. This is why Acts 13:33 tells us that in resurrection, Christ as the Son of Man was born to be the Son of God. As the Son of God with humanity, He is the God-man. This composition of divinity and humanity becomes a God-man, and this God-man is a prototype to produce something.

In His resurrection, all His believers were born, regenerated, with Him as His millions of “twins” to make all these twins the same as He is (1 Pet. 1:3). These many twins are the reproduction of the prototype. The prototype is the firstborn Son of God, and the reproduction is the many sons of God. *The Firstborn* indicates that more sons are coming. If there were not more sons to follow, He would remain merely the Only Begotten. When Jesus as the Son of Man through death and resurrection was born to be the firstborn Son of God, the millions of God’s chosen people were born in the same birth.

Now He is the God-man, with humanity mingled with divinity, including His death and His resurrection. He is such a prototype to produce millions of God-men. These millions of God-men are the mass reproduction who are exactly the same as the wonderful person Jesus Christ. This mass reproduction of the prototype becomes the members of the prototype to be His Body, the Body of Christ, and this Body of Christ consummates in the New Jerusalem, which is the corporate expression of the Triune God, processed and consummated in Christ and becoming the life-giving Spirit.

As the only begotten Son of God, in His resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b). In His divinity He was the Holy Spirit already. But in His resurrection He put the uplifted humanity into His divinity, and this One in resurrection became the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is the very germinating power to germinate every part of the new creation of God. The new creation of God is the Body of Christ, and the Body of Christ will consummate in the New Jerusalem, which is the unique expression of God’s mingling Himself with man for eternity. This shows us the all-inclusive and all-extensive involvement of Christ’s divinity in His wonderful person.

The life-giving Spirit is the consummation of the Triune God and the Consummator of the tripartite man as Christ’s Body, which ultimately consummates in the New Jerusalem. By this we can see that the person of Christ involves the entire New Testament, from the first page of Matthew to the last page of Revelation. The first page of Matthew speaks of the genealogy of Christ (1:1-17), and the last page of Revelation speaks of the Spirit and the bride (22:17a). This is the consummation. (*The Crystallization Study of the Epistle to the Romans*, Message Three, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, Ca.)