

Q25: Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?

Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God graciously imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own and will remember our sins no more.

2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Commentary

Though one sin was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gift of grace in Christ is of many offences unto justification. And we have a sure ground for this, for the righteousness of Christ is God's righteousness, and God will thus glorify it, that it shall stand good to those that by faith apply it against their daily sins, even till at once we cease both to live and sin. For this very end was the Son of God willingly made sin, that we might be freed from the same. And if all our sins laid upon Christ could not take away God's love from him, shall they take away God's love from us, when by Christ's blood our souls are purged from them? O mercy of all mercies, that...he would vouchsafe to...make us his by such a way, as all the angels in heaven stand wondering at; even his Son not only taking our nature and miserable condition, but our sin upon him, that that being done away, we might through Christ have boldness with God as ours, who is now in heaven appearing there for us, until he bring us home to himself, and presents us to his Father for his for ever!

Richard Sibbes (1577–1635). An English Puritan theologian, Sibbes was known in London in the early 17th century as "the Heavenly Doctor Sibbes." Preacher at Gray's Inn, London and Master of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, his most famous work is *The Bruised Reed and Smoking Flax*.

From the sermon "Of Confirming this Trust in God" in *The Soul's Conflict and Victory over Itself by Faith* (London: Pickering, 1837), 325–326.

Further Reading

"Sinlessness" in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

Prayer

O Lord, I do not deserve a glimpse of heaven, and I am unable with my works to redeem myself from sin, death...and hell. Nevertheless, you have given me your Son, Jesus Christ, who is far more precious and dear than heaven, and much stronger than sin, death...and hell. For this I rejoice, praise, and thank you, O God. Without cost [to me] and out of pure grace you have given me this boundless blessing in your dear Son. Through whom you take sin, death...and hell from me, and do grant me all that belongs to him. Amen.

Martin Luther (1483–1546). A German Protestant pastor and professor of theology, Luther was the son of a mining family, intended to become a lawyer, and at first took monastic orders. On 31 October 1517 Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of a church in Wittenberg, sparking the Reformation. His refusal to retract his writings at the demand of Pope Leo X and Emperor Charles V resulted in his excommunication. Luther wrote many works, including his small and large catechisms, and preached hundreds of sermons in churches and universities.

From Luther's *Prayers*, edited by Herbert F. Brokering, from the translation by Charles E. Kistler (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 1967), 15–16.

Q26: What else does Christ's death redeem?

Christ's death is the beginning of the redemption and renewal of every part of fallen creation, as he powerfully directs all things for his own glory and creation's good.

Colossians 1:19-20

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Commentary

Jesus is a Redeemer, that is his name; he came into the world on this very business to redeem.... He hath shed his precious blood.... Therefore let us act faith on [i.e. rely on; believe in; trust in] our dear Redeemer and upon his redemption; and let us believe that shortly the day of our full redemption will come, when we shall be delivered fully and for ever from sin, Satan, and the world; from all our burdens, fears, and sorrows, temptations and tribulations.... Either God is ours, or he is not; either Christ is ours, or he is not; if God and Christ be not ours, we have cause enough of heart trouble.... But if God be ours, and if Christ be ours...and if we have rightly and truly received Jesus Christ the Lord, for our only Lord and Saviour; and have unfeignedly given up our whole selves to him; then may we act our faith upon God, as our God, and upon Jesus Christ as ours, and may claim our right in God and in Christ, and in all that God and Christ is and hath, as our own; and then, what cause of any heart trouble? If God be ours, if Christ be ours, all his ours, life ours, death ours: what if we want relations and friends, honour, wealth and health, is not the all-sufficient God enough? Is not Jesus, in whom dwells all fullness, enough to supply the want of all?... Jesus Christ is all and in all; and if Christ be yours, all is yours; God is yours, and the good of both worlds are yours; and what can you desire more.

John Bunyan (1628–1688). Known as the tinker of Elstow, Bunyan underwent a dramatic conversion experience and became a leading Puritan preacher. As his popularity grew, Bunyan increasingly became a target for slander and libel and was eventually imprisoned. It was during his time in prison that he commenced his best known work *The Pilgrim's Progress*, first printed in 1678.

From "Heart's Ease in Heart Trouble" in Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*; *Heart's Ease in Heart Trouble; The World to Come*; and *Barren Fig-tree* (Philadelphia: JJ Woodward, 1828), 191–211..

Further Reading

"Goodness" in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

Prayer

Our heavenly Father...give us...a call...to bow our hearts more completely and not let other things get in the way...and then, Heavenly Father, to realize that everything belongs to the Lord Jesus. That He died not only to take our souls to heaven—but that our bodies will be raised one day from the dead. The one day, as Peter said, just right after His ascension, "He's going to heaven until He comes back to restore all things." That His death there on Calvary's cross is for us individually, but it's not egotistically individualistic. Our

individual salvation will one day be a portion of the restoration of all things. It is our calling until He comes back again that happy day, to do all we can—while it won't be perfect as when He comes back—to see substantial healing in every area that He will then perfectly heal.... That if there is a true preaching of the Gospel, it carries with it then an action out into the social life around us into the world. That the Church is to preach the Gospel, but it is also to live the Good News.... Help us! Forgive us! Use us!... Help Thou us, so we ask, and we ask it in no lesser name than the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lamb and our God. Amen.

Francis Schaeffer (1912–1984). An American Presbyterian pastor and philosopher, Schaeffer is most famous for his writing and his establishment of the L'Abri ("The Shelter") community in Switzerland. He wrote 22 books, the best known being the trilogy *The God Who Is There*, *Escape from Reason*, and *He Is There and He Is Not Silent* as well as his *A Christian Manifesto*.

From an address "A Christian Manifesto" at the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 1982, available from www.intotheword.org/apps/articles/default.asp?articleid=36268

Adapted by Timothy Keller and Sam Shammas from the Reformation catechisms
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