

Six Marks of the Messiah's Mission, Part 3

Luke 9:21-22

Luke 9 verse 18, and we'll read from there to verse 22. "Now it happened that as he" as Jesus, "was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, 'Who do the crowds say that I am?' And they answered, 'John the Baptist but others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.' Then he said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And Peter answered, 'The Christ of God.'

"And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.'" There is a lack of clarity about the meaning and the implications that Jesus is the Christ. That lack of understanding is shared by people in the first and the twenty-first centuries alike, and by everybody in between. People don't know the nature of Jesus' ministry as the Messiah.

They don't know what it means that he is, quote, "the Christ of God."

I've got six sub-points for you. We'll call these six marks of the Messiah's mission. This is what Jews in Jesus' day did not understand, what even the disciples didn't understand, not until Jesus had died on the Cross, was buried in the tomb, and resurrected the third day, ascended into heaven; when he sent his Spirit, all the connections were made. As we were saying, it's what many people today, even many professing Christians today, don't understand. But for you, if you're able to get these six marks down, you have not only apprehended the Gospel, but you have all you need to understand how to be reconciled to a holy God. This brings you to God, who is our greatest joy, our eternal reward, our treasure forever.

Okay, you ready? Here's the first sub-point, letter A, sub-point A, Christ, this is the Messiah's mission, okay? Christ came to represent us before God. Christ came to represent us before God. The Son of Man is actually a picture of perfect humanity, of an ideal humanity. It's got mediating implications. This Son of Man is the ideal man. He is the perfect humanity,

representing us before a thrice-holy God. Christ represents us before God.

Beloved, think about that. If you know yourself, you know your own sin. You know you couldn't stand before God on your own. You need representation. Think about standing before the eternal God, thought, word, and deed, all of it, standing before a holy God to give an account for all of that. Aren't you grateful for the representation of Jesus Christ for you?

Second sub-point, sub-point B: Christ came to fulfill the will of God. He came to fulfill the will of God. Again, verse 22, the Son of Man, and there's just one word for this point, he must. The Son of Man must. Four letters in English language; in the Greek language it's three letters. But it punches way above its weight. The word in Greek is, *dei*. It means, it is necessary, one must, one has to, it must happen.

The necessity Jesus speaks of here has to do with the fulfillment of the divine will. It has to do with the execution and the accomplishment of a divine decree made before the

foundation of the world, something that will come to pass. Why? Because God is God. So Christ came to represent us to God, to fulfill God's will. Here's a third sub-point, sub-point C: Christ came to bear our sins before God. Here's what the Son of Man must do, He "must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Four verbs, there. He must suffer, be rejected, he must be killed, he must be raised.

Four verbs, the suffering, the verb, here, is paschō. You hear the term, paschal lamb, that's this verb, here. Paschō, which has at its root, in the most basic meaning has to do with what happens to a person, an experience that a person undergoes. And when that something is something negative, it refers to enduring, or bearing with, or bearing up under, or bearing on your back, something negative. Like the paschal lamb, the Passover lamb that bore on its back, on its head, the sins of the people.

What did Isaiah 53 tell us the Suffering Servant bore for us, for his people? "Surely, he has borne our griefs; he has carried our sorrows." Why do we have griefs? Why do we have

sorrows? Is it because we're disappointed that we didn't get the job we wanted? We're disappointed because we didn't get the right toy for Christmas? Why the grief? Why the sorrow? Isaiah 53, "We esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted, but he was pierced for our transgressions." That's where the grief, the sorrow comes from, our transgressions. "He was crushed for our iniquities." Iniquities, sin, that's what causes all grief, all sorrow, all sadness in the world. "Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. With his wounds we are healed."

Now who's the cause, here, Luke 9, of Jesus' suffering, of bearing this burden, of enduring and bearing up under it? No man has the authority to assign the sins of others to Jesus. That's something God did. Isaiah 53:10: "It was the will of the Lord," the will of Yahweh to punish him, "to crush him. He has put him to grief."

Four verbs: He must suffer, be rejected, be killed, be raised. The second and the third verbs are about man's responsibility, what they did. But the first, the fourth verbs, God the Father is the responsible party. It's God, not man.

“But God,” 2 Corinthians 5:21, Who “made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf.” It’s God who assigned the role of sin-bearer to Jesus, and Jesus is not a reluctant recipient of that role. I praise God for that! He willingly stepped into that role, 1 Peter 2:24, “he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.” He took this dreadful assignment; he joyfully accepted this heavy, heavy burden.

I can think of all my sins that I know of, and if I add all the sins I don’t know of, just in myself, it’s too great of a burden for me to bear, let alone him. The sinless one, take all of our sins collectively. Could any of us stand under that? To take all the sins of all who’ve ever believed, all whoever will believe, and put them on Christ. He took this heavy burden joyfully. Hebrews 12:2, “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.” No shrinking back. Eagerness to bear our sins. “Behold, I have come. In the scroll of the book it is written, ‘I delight to do your will, O my God.’”

Again, beloved, I know my own sins, and you know yours. Our Savior, Jesus the Christ, the Son of Man, took the full weight of our sin-burden upon himself. What an ugly load to carry. What a terrible burden to bear. No wonder Jesus says here, "The Son of Man must suffer much." And that by the loving will and the saving purpose of God. He bore all our sins away.

So he represents us. He fulfills God's will. He bore our sins in himself. Another sub-point, sub-point D: Christ came to vindicate the wisdom of God. Christ came to vindicate the wisdom of God. As I said, this point and the next point, these have to do with what sinful men did to Jesus, to the Son of Man. But being rejected by men, being killed by men, these are still the marks of the Messiah's mission. "He came to his own," John 1:11, "and his own people did not receive him." That is by divine design. It's not only to accomplish the redemption of God's people; it's to vindicate God, to set in contrast the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God. "For since," 1 Corinthians 1:21, "since in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom," the divine wisdom came in the Messiah. They rejected him and crucified him.

Amazing statement, there, in Luke 9:22. "The Son of Man must," necessary that he, "is rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes..." Those three designations, elders, chief priests, scribes, designates there the Jewish Sanhedrin, the highest ruling court of Israel. Someone summarized it well, writing this, quote, "The Sanhedrin" composed, "comprised 71 members divided into three groups, chief priests, elders, and scribes. Elders, both Pharisees and Sadducees, and scribes, most of whom were, were, Pharisees, constituted 70 members of the Sanhedrin. The ruling chief priest constituted the 71st and lead member of the Sanhedrin although predecessors, member of his family, could also be included in that designation." Hence, chief priests, plural.

So the ruling chief priest, he not only presided over the Sanhedrin, but sort of like the Vice President in a tie vote in the Senate, he acts as the tie-breaking vote in the case of a 35-35 split in the Sanhedrin. So the scribes, who are they? They're the lawyers. They're the scholars in Jewish law. They are the experts in the law, the ones who know the oral tradition, which is like Jewish case law. Scribes had, they had positions, official positions on the Sanhedrin, but they also

sat around the Sanhedrin providing legal advice, like a team of lawyers around the Sanhedrin.

So this Jewish Sanhedrin, what does this represent? In this text, what does this mean to us? Understand, this is the highest court in the land that rejected and killed Jesus. This is the highest legal body on the earth. Why? Because they're handling justice based on divine law, not man's law. They're handling cases with laws revealed to them directly from heaven, written down by Moses. In this group of wise men, all of them respected as elders, revered as intelligent legal minds, backed by the political prowess and the power of the, the, the priesthood, when they came together, when they thoroughly examined Jesus, when they *dokimazo*, that's the verb, here. They put him to the test, they rendered an unfavorable judgment, *apodokimazo*, rejection. We do not want this man to reign over us.

Notice the irony, here. Utterly astounding for Jesus' disciples because it's not the thugs and the reprobates and the criminals and the prostitutes who rejected and killed the Messiah. It's the greatest minds in Israel. One commentator put it, "The Son of Man would not be a victim of criminal

lawlessness and anarchy, but of careful deliberations of lawful and religious leaders, who, in rendering their decisions, believed themselves to render service to God." End quote.

And then the next verb, the Son of Man...be killed, by men? The Jewish Sanhedrin tried Jesus in their courts. Caiaphas, though, handed him over to Pilate. Pilate delivered him to the executioners. James Edward, Edwards said it this way, "Jesus was arrested with official warrants, tried and executed by the envy of jurisprudence in the world of that time, the Jewish Sanhedrin, and also the law of the Romans."

Again, what does this tell us about the mission of the Messiah? Why is it important in his mission that he is tried, examined, rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes? Why is it that Jesus is tried and condemned, tested, and rejected by the highest of all religious expression in the world, by the brightest of all legal minds in the world? To show you that this world cannot save you. As high as you can ascend in this world, the highest philosophy, the highest degrees, the highest training, the greatest education, the highest courts,

the greatest prominence, the most respect, amounts to nothing for your eternal soul.

This vindicates the wisdom of God. Only God has saving truth. "None of the rulers of this age understood this," 1 Corinthians 2:8, "for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." That's why, as Paul said, 1 Corinthians 1:23-25, "we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews,' yes, "a folly to Gentiles," yes, "but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Christ came to vindicate the wisdom of God. Aren't you glad? Aren't you glad that you don't have to be so intelligent that you've got to figure it out on your own?

Fifth sub-point, just briefly, sub-point E: Christ came to propitiate the wrath of God. I really shouldn't be brief because this is so important, but time is ticking away. I'm not going to go into a lot of detail in these final two points. They're related, but I'll just say this, sub-point E: Christ came to propitiate the wrath of God. The Son of Man, whom the elders and

the chief priests and the scribes rejected and killed, Isaiah 53 says, "He was despised and rejected by men. He is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. As one from whom men hide their faces. He was despised and we esteemed him not, but rather," verse 4, "we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted."

That's the irony of it. The elders, chief priests, scribes, they thought they were doing God's will, killing a false Messiah. But again in a turn of divine irony, in another sense, these men in their heinous sin of pride, of jealousy, of envy, they in their heinous sin, they accomplished God's decree, didn't they? They sacrificed the sin-bearer. God did provide another lamb, paschal Lamb of God and it is God "who made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." "He is the propitiation for our sins," wrote John, a Jewish believer, 1 John 2:2, "and not for ours only," the Jewish nation, "but also for the sins of the whole world." Aren't you glad, as a Gentile? I am. "God put Jesus forth as a propitiation by his blood," Romans 3:25. "In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins."

What does propitiate mean? To satisfy the wrath of an angry deity. God took away the wrath. His death substituted for our death. His death satisfied, expiated the full wrath of God for our sins. That is the Gospel, beloved. There's no, if you believe in Jesus Christ, if you repented from your sins, believe in him, if you're walking in obedience to the truth, you have no fear of an angry judge hovering over your head. But when you stand before him, you're going to cry, "Abba, Father!" and run into his arms. You're not going to cower before him like those who do not believe. Such good news.

Christ came to represent us, to fulfill God's will, to bear our sins, to vindicate God's wisdom, propitiate God's wrath, the final sub-point, sub-point F: Christ came to triumph in God. This is the capstone of the story. We must know this, that he is raised from the dead, that he conquered death. Sub-point F: Christ came to triumph in God. Just briefly, it's necessary for the Son of Man to bear our many, many sins. It's necessary that he's rejected, killed by men.

And all of that in order that he should atone for the sins of the people. But after that, "If he did not," 1 Corinthians 15, "If he did not rise from the dead, your faith is in vain." Ah, but he did raise from the dead. He did triumph over death; God raised him from the dead. That, too, was necessary. I'm going to make this point as briefly and as powerfully as possible, not with any words I say, but with, with the preaching of Peter in the book of Acts.

Go over to Acts chapter 2. Acts chapter 2, Peter is preaching, there, to his fellow Jews on the Day of Pentecost. Jesus at this point has risen from the dead. He's ascended into heaven. He is sitting at the right hand of the Father, interceding for the church. He sends the Holy Spirit to the church, and the Apostles there are preaching. All these Jewish pilgrims have come for the Feast of Pentecost. They are gathered in Jerusalem, and Peter and, his, the Twelve Apostles break out of the room, filled with the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:22-24, "Men of Israel,' they say, "hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know." By the way, no one denied his miracles. No one denied the

supernatural, then. They saw it with their own eyes. As you yourselves know, "this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men." But, "God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it."

And Peter goes on and proves his case from the Old Testament in Psalm 16, is it possible for the Holy One to see decay? Next chapter, look at chapter 3 verses 13-15. Peter said, that "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob," Act 3:13-15, "the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One." You preferred a murderer to be granted to you. You killed the author of life. What a contrast. Give us Barabbas the murderer; kill the author of Life. Whom God raised from the dead, to this we are witnesses.

Peter didn't let them off the hook, did he? Not at all. But he did speak words of mercy and grace to them. Look at verse 17, he said, "Brothers, I know you acted in ignorance, as did

your rulers. But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent, therefore, turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus.”

One more portion of Peter’s preaching, Acts 4:10-12, “Let it be known to you, to all of you, to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified,” but, “whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well.” The stone, this Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, but has become the chief cornerstone. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Getting the point, beloved? I hope so. If you make the connection that this is Peter speaking, Peter who made the good confession, but then was silenced by Jesus because he didn’t understand enough. Once Peter understood the true Gospel, once he understood the real mission of the Messiah, the ban of secrecy and silence is lifted, and now there’s no shutting this

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guy up. I mean, you can kill him, you can throw him in prison, he's not going to stop talking. He knew what we all know now, that Christ came to represent us, to fulfill God's will, to bear our sins, to vindicate divine wisdom, to propitiate God's wrath, and to triumph over death itself. Praise be to God! Now you know the truth, too, don't you? You know the marks of the Messiah's mission. You know the Gospel, and that means that you, too, can go and proclaim as well. Amen?