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Made To Be Sin

By Doy Moyer

Sometimes I am struck with the beauty of a passage while, at the same time, humbled by the fact that its fullness and depth is out of my reach. The passage becomes a never-ending source of thought, ideas, and encouragement.

Such is the case for me with 2 Corinthians 5:21 — “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Who can understand the depths of this? Who can explain all that this passage sums up? I cannot. Even so, I often dwell on it, seeking to know and understand more of what it says. So brief a passage packs more power than I can fathom.

Jesus knew no sin. He was never guilty of sin. One becomes guilty of sin by commission, and Jesus did not commit sin (1 Pet 2:22). Ever. He was the innocent suffering Servant, a perfect sacrifice with no blemish.

Yet he was “made to be sin.” Given that He was never guilty of sin, we should not think that Jesus, in some way, became “lawlessness” (1 John 3:4) or fell short of God’s glory (Rom 3:23). While, again, I do not fully understand what or how it all happened, I do not believe we are looking at a concept that turns Jesus into a sinner. I do not pretend to know what all

happened on the cross with Jesus. Yet here are some additional thoughts that might shed some light:

“By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:3). Jesus became sin in that He took on the likeness of sinful flesh and, through His life and sacrifice, condemned sin.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us— for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.” (Gal 3:13-14)

In the context of one who is cursed by hanging on a tree, Deuteronomy 21:22 says, “if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree...”

Jesus did not commit any crime punishable by death, yet He still hung on the cross as if He had. The curse here is death, and certainly by looking at Jesus on the cross, any would esteem Him “stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted” (Isa 53:4). One would see the effects of sin in Jesus hanging on the cross, particularly as His body went limp and He breathed His last.

Ultimately, though, I believe that the phrase (to be sin) means He became our sin sacrifice, an offering made on our behalf in order to display God’s righteousness in bringing about His promises and to provide forgiveness for us that we may be righteous. I find this passage interesting in this light:

In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. (Psa 40:6)

Note the phrase, “...sin offering you have not required.” The term here for “sin offering” is the term for an offense, for sin, and is so used in other passages (e.g., Ex 32:21, 30-31; Psa 32:1). Here, “sin” stands for an offering for sin. I believe that is the essence of what 2 Corinthians 5:21 teaches us.

Christ is our offering for sin. This agrees with what Peter wrote: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Pet 2:24).

Yet, what do I really know? As I reflect upon the death and resurrection of Jesus, I find that I know little to nothing, for this is not a plan that I would have ever dreamed up. It is not a display of my wisdom, power, or righteousness. Yet it displays God’s in ways that we can hardly grasp.

Praise God for His wisdom, power, and righteousness. “But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:23-24).

The point, though, of 2 Corinthians 5:21 is not to be a source of theological dispute over matters that we can hardly understand. Rather, it is meant to be an encouragement for being reconciled to God. Verse 20 is an appeal by the apostle, “We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” Then, 6:1 is an appeal not to receive God’s grace in vain. While containing some deep theology, the message is meant to be practical. We may never fully understand the depths of what happened on the cross, but what we do know should be sufficient enough to evoke a response of submission to God’s will. Jesus died for us. What will we do now?

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Many are recovering from surgery and sicknesses (Brenda, Ray, Chad, Larry, Crystal)
- Those diagnosed with Cancers: Laura Matlock, Tammy Woodward, and Evey Trokey
- Ben is traveling in Eastern Wyoming. Planning to return tomorrow
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class at Chad and Kass' on evangelism postponed for next 2 weeks
- Joe Price will be bringing lessons for us May 19-24

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Lord's Table – Ben Palmer Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Invitation – Ross Ward
<u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Lord's Table – Tom Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward

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Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM

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