

“Christ’s Sufferings – The Apostles’ Ambitions”

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

In our study the shadow of the approaching cross is lengthening and Christ’s message becomes ever more cross and resurrection focused. Towards the end of His ministry – about 6 months or so before the cross Jesus asked the all-important question, “Who do men say that I am?” (Matt. 16:13-16). For the first two and half years of Christ’s ministry the overwhelming emphasis was on WHO Jesus is as Messiah-God.

But Israel rejected the Messianic claims of Jesus and therefore the approaching cross now becomes the great emphasis. The WORK of the cross builds on the PERSON of Who Jesus is. All the gospels present this pattern. They first develop at length the PERSON of Who Jesus is as Messiah-God and then building on that present the truth of the cross.

Slide # 2***Earthly Ministry Emphasis of Christ*****2 and ½ years** (Public Emphasis on PERSON – Messiah-God)**½ year** (Private Emphasis on cross WORK & RESURRECTION)

This is the gospel of Christ – its all about WHO He is as Messiah-God and WHAT He has done in His cross-work and resurrection. Today we pick up the story in Matt. 20:17...

Matthew 20:17–28 (NKJV)

17 Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them,

As the cross approaches the ministry of Jesus became more and more personal with the apostles and less and less public. Now they are headed up to Jerusalem. This would be the final trip to Jerusalem culminating in the cross and the resurrection.

In Israel all roads lead UP to Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem is approximately 2,500 feet above sea level on a relatively high mountain ridge. So literally all roads do lead UP to Jerusalem. But beyond that Jerusalem has an exalted status as “the Mountain of the Lord’s house” (Isa. 2:2-3). Psalm 15 and 24 speak of ascending into the hill of the LORD. 15 Psalms from Psalm 120-134 are called “Ascent Psalms” which would be sung by pilgrim worshipers as they ascended up to Jerusalem.

As Jesus and His disciples begin the final journey up to Jerusalem Jesus took the 12 disciples aside for private instruction.

18 “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death,

19 and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.”

This is now the 4th time out of 5 recorded times in Matthew that Christ privately reveals to His disciples what is going to happen to Him. And as He does so He reveals it progressively – building more detail on what He has previously revealed as He goes along.

Slide # 3***Christ's Private Prophetic Ministry...***

Matt. 16:21 – Must go to Jerusalem – suffer many things from the religious leaders – be killed – rise the 3rd day.

Matt. 17:9-12 – Suffer – Rise.

Matt. 17:22-23 – Betrayed – killed – Rise the third day.

Matt. 20:18-19, 22 – to Jerusalem – betrayed to religious leaders who will condemn Him to death – delivered to Gentiles who will abuse and crucify Him – the third day He will rise again – about to happen.

Matt. 26:2 – On Passover will be crucified.

Here Jesus yet again uses the Messianic title “Son of Man” which traces back to Daniel 7:13-14 in the OT. This was Christ’s favorite Messianic title for Himself being found 81 times in the gospels.

Once again He specifically says He is going to be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes. These were the key religious leaders in Judaism. They will render judgment on Him that calls for the death penalty – which in Judaism would be by stoning.

But note that while they will sentence Him to death they will not carry it out. Rather they would deliver Him to the Gentiles (the Roman authorities) who in turn would mock and scourge Him and then crucify Him.

And then yet again He says that on the third day He will rise again. The added detail at this point was that the Gentiles would be involved. This is the first mention of this. This is precision prediction and the more predictions one makes the greater the proof when it comes to pass.

The Jews were allowed to carry out their religion, but Rome reserved the right for capital punishment. That didn’t stop the Jews from trying to stone Jesus on occasion, but technically Rome alone was to carry out the death penalty and the way they did this was by crucifixion. So the detail here is that while the Jewish leaders would condemn Christ to death it would be the Gentiles who would carry it out -specifically by crucifixion.

I once heard a Christian teacher say that he was from the East. He said that in the East there are lots of supposed prophecies but they are always of the nature that you cannot nail it down. You see “general prophecy” that tells you nothing specific is not really convincing prophecy at all.

In the ancient world the Delphic Oracle was considered by many to be the highest religious authority in the world. There was a high priestess who would supposedly give out prophetic utterances but they were known to be of a cryptic and ambiguous nature.

When Croesus, the king of Lydia was contemplating war with Persia he consulted the Delphic oracle and was told, “If Croesus wars with Persia he will destroy a great nation.” He of course took it that he would destroy Persia but as it turned out the nation that he destroyed was his own. [Source John Phillips]. As I say, ambiguous prophecies are really no valid prophecy at all.

But in contrast to the ambiguousness of false prophets I want you to note that there are at least 8 very specific prophecies here that were fulfilled historically to the letter in the person of Jesus Christ.

Slide # 4

Eight Prophecies in Matt. 20:18-19

1. To Jerusalem.
2. Betrayed.
3. To the chief priest/scribes.
4. They will condemn Him to death.
5. Deliver Him to the Gentiles.
6. The Gentiles will mock and scourge Him.
7. The Gentiles will crucify Him.
8. The third day He will rise again.

Statisticians claim that the odds of one person fulfilling 8 predictions is one in 10 to the 17th power. That is a 10 with 17 zeros behind it. The equivalent of this would be to fill the state of Texas with 2 feet of silver dollars. Mark one of them with an X and then thoroughly mix. The odds of having a blindfolded man pick out the X marked silver dollar is one in 10 to the 17th power. Yet, Jesus fulfilled not merely 8 prophecies but scores of them.

Every aspect of these prophecies was fulfilled to the letter. This totally validates the claims of Christ and shows that He was the fulfillment of God's plan as prophesied in the OT Scriptures. The gospel of Christ is according to the OT Scriptures as stated by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:1-4.

The Judeo-Christian faith is a prophetic faith which is unique among all the religions of the world. Prophecy is God's specialty. Only God knows the future and only He controls it and therefore He alone can predict with absolute certainty what is going to happen.

Isaiah 42:1-9 is one of the prophetic Messianic songs found in Isaiah. It describes the Messiah as One who uniquely has the Spirit, Who will bring forth justice, Who brings light to the Gentiles, Who opens the eyes of the blind and delivers the prisoners who sit in darkness.

And then in this Messianic context the LORD says He will not share His glory with any other as seen in Isaiah 42:8. And what is this glory – it is a prophetic glory – the glory to prophesy things and bring them to pass – especially in context in relationship to the coming Messiah.

Slide # 5

Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)

8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And **My glory I will not give to another,** Nor My praise to carved images.

9 Behold, the former things **have come to pass,** And **new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.**”

Prophecy has been called the great apologetic (defense of the faith). Everything stands or falls on the issue of prophetic truth. And the prophetic truth surrounding Christ is airtight, solid and irrefutable.

He fulfilled to the letter the OT prophecies concerning His first coming related to His birth, ministry, death and resurrection. The details He added during His earthly ministry were also fulfilled to the letter. And because of this we can have absolute confidence that all those prophecies related to His second coming will likewise be completely fulfilled to the letter.

Even though Christ repeatedly made the reality of His coming death and resurrection abundantly clear to His disciples, yet they remained oblivious to what was about to happen. In the parallel passage of Luke 18 we read...

Slide # 6**Luke 18:34 (NKJV)**

34 But **they understood none of these things**; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

The disciples weren't thinking about the way of the cross, but rather were still focused on the idea of the coming kingdom and their place in it. After all in this same context as seen in Matt. 19:28 Christ had just promised them 12 thrones in the kingdom ruling over the 12 tribes of Israel. Therefore, their minds were on the kingdom and not on the looming cross. They just didn't get it – not yet at this point.

Footnote: Who is responsible for the death of Jesus?

Slide # 7

Although the Church has historically held the Jewish people responsible for the death of Jesus, obviously Jesus includes Gentiles as responsible parties in this conspiracy of guilt (see Acts 4:27-28).

– *The Moody Bible Commentary*

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.

Talk about being unaware of the context and thus insensitive. Here Jesus is talking about His coming horrific experience climaxing in death and here comes Mrs. Zebedee with her sons with a kingdom request.

Mrs. Zebedee is elsewhere called "Salome" (Matt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40-41; 16:1; John 19:25). It is thought that in all probability she was the sister of Mary – the mother of Jesus. This would make her the aunt of Jesus and her two sons James and John would then be His cousins. If so, this was "all in the family".

Salome was one of the women who followed Jesus and ministered to Him (Mk. 15:40-41). She was at the cross and then later witnessed the empty tomb (Mk. 16:1). Jesus called her sons James and John "the sons of thunder" (Mk. 3:17).

From the cross reference in Mark 10:35-37 we find that not only was the mother making this request but so also were the sons.

They were all involved. Evidently, they came with their mother and initially she very humbly on behalf of her sons kneels down before Jesus and initiates this request.

21 And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, “Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.”

Again, while Jesus is now focused on His death they are still focused on the kingdom. The request was that her two boys have the key positions of prominence, prestige, power, and honor in the kingdom – one on Christ’s right hand and one on the left. She wasn’t asking for much – just for the premier positions in the kingdom under Christ.

It seems very possible that her request was based on what Jesus had just earlier promised to the 12 disciples – that they would sit on 12 thrones ruling over the 12 tribes of Israel in the kingdom as seen in Matt. 19:28.

The link with 19:28 – a verse that speaks of both “throne” and “glory” is unmistakable. – **D.A. Carson**

Now give them credit. They did believe Christ is going to set up the kingdom and that they were going to share in it. They were true believers. And Christ did not correct their view of the coming kingdom. They were right in this understanding.

But what they failed to understand is that the cross comes first. They didn’t even get the idea of the cross yet at this point although Christ has repeatedly stated it. Furthermore, Christ makes this correction concerning positioning in the coming kingdom....

22 But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.”

Jesus points out that the question is asked in ignorance! The “You” here is plural and so it is directed not only to the mother but also to the sons.

This position is reserved for those who most closely identify with Christ in His sufferings. You see they were asking for a prominent position and not for a role of suffering.

They were ignorant of what is involved in being rewarded with this position. It goes to those who partake of Christ's cup of suffering and identify with Him in this way.

The word "cup" is imagery that refers to what is divinely allotted to a person – in this case to the allotment of suffering (cf. Mt. 26:39, 42; also Jer. 25:15; Ezek. 23:32; Hab. 2:16; Rev. 14:10; 16:19; 18:6).

We are not left to wonder what He meant by the cup; He had just described it in verses 18 and 19. He must suffer and die.

– ***William MacDonald***

The older manuscripts do not have the phrase about baptism in Matt. 20:22 and 23 but it makes the same point as baptism has the idea of identification. But note that the parallel text in Mark 10:38-39 does include the phrase about baptism. So it is represented.

Again, they were not thinking of the suffering involved in the way of the cross, but only of reigning in the kingdom. Lots of Christians get off track here. For many its all about "kingdom now" forgetting that now for the Christian is all about the way of the cross. First the cross – then the crown. That was true for Jesus, and it is true for His followers as well.

The Corinthians in the early Church apparently were involved in the error of an early form of "***kingdom now***" theology and Paul sarcastically corrects them.

Slide # 8

1 Corinthians 4:8 (NKJV)

8 You are **already full!** You are **already rich!** You have **reigned as kings without us**—and indeed I could **wish you did** reign, that we also might reign with you!

Paul is saying that they seemingly had a "***kingdom now***" theology that claimed they were already reigning. To this he responds that he wishes it were true so that they might all share in it together. But the point is that it is not true. They are not yet reigning. They were just holding to an errant theology.

Christ's followers are not in the kingdom yet. Yes, positionally we are there but not practically (cf. Col. 1:13). As we pray for the Messianic kingdom to come, we are called to follow Christ in the way of the cross. We are told to take up our cross daily and follow Christ (Lk. 9:23). The way of the cross is not the kingdom. The cross precedes the kingdom.

Peter writes to the suffering saints...

Slide # 9

1 Peter 5:6 (NKJV)

6 Therefore **humble yourselves under** the mighty hand of God, that He may **exalt you in due time**,

This is not the time for kingdom exaltation, but rather the time of humbling down in cross bearing. Even after the resurrection the disciples still had “kingdom now” on their mind saying to Christ in Acts 1:6, “***Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?***” Jesus responded by saying that they should not be preoccupied with “kingdom now” thinking but rather with serving as His witnesses (cf. Acts 1:7-8).

The kingdom will come in the Father’s good time but in the meantime, we are called to be Christ’s witnesses to the ends of the earth.

However, ignorance is a hard thing to shake. In their ignorance they say to Jesus, “***We are able***” to drink of this cup.

It is often ignorance that seeks leadership, power, and glory: the brothers do not know what they are asking. To ask to reign with Jesus is to ask to suffer with Him. – ***D.A. Carson***

In ignorance they claim to be up to the challenge of entering into the sufferings of Christ – not even realizing what they are saying. They say that ignorance is bliss, and perhaps sometimes it is, but often it is also in for a rude awakening. And thus, Jesus gives them a jolt of reality.

23 So He said to them, “You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.”

Christ then informed them that indeed they would share in His cup – that is His destiny of suffering. They would in a limited sense enter into the suffering of Christ as their lot in life. We as Christ’s people are called to follow in the steps of Christ’s example of suffering (1 Pet. 2:21). We do enter into “the fellowship of His suffering” (Phil. 3:10, cf. Col. 1:24; Act 9:4).

Slide # 10

Hast Thou No Scar? by Amy Carmichael

No wound? No scar?
 Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,
 And piercèd are the feet that follow Me.
 But thine are whole; can he have followed far
 Who hast no wound or scar?

Indeed, James became a martyr early in the Church age and John in his old age was exiled to the isle of Patmos where he received the Revelation (cf. Acts 12:1-2; Rev. 1:9, see also Jn. 21:20-23). James was the first of the apostles to die and John the last.

James died a martyr's death; John lived a martyr's life.
 – **Robert Little**

Interestingly Jesus said this, “***is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.***”

Slide # 11

In the mystery of the Trinity, the Son is one with the Father in substance and equal to the Father in power and glory; yet He willingly submits to the Father's will and defers to the Father's authority as the incarnate, well-pleasing messianic Son, even in His exaltation (1 Cor. 15:28). – **The Reformation Study Bible**

There is total equality amongst the members of the Godhead and yet they do have differing roles. The Son in His role defers to the Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.

When the 10 knew of the brothers request for Jesus to give them most prominent positions in the kingdom they were greatly displeased because evidently, they too wanted those positions. All the disciples were thinking about their own greatness at this point in competition with each other, with the irony being that Jesus was focused on the cross.

The disciples without exception were completely overlooking what Christ had been emphasizing about kingdom greatness being related to humility as noted in Matt. 18:1-4. The disciples, and dare I say us as well, are often slow to get it. The self-centered flesh runs deep in all of us.

So, it was time for another lesson to reinforce what Jesus had already taught them. When you don't get the lesson, you have to be taught it again and again as is necessary. Oh, the patience of Jesus in working with His disciples – which fellow believers includes you and me.

25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.

This is how the world typically carries on. The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over their subjects. To “lord it over” means “to have mastery over”. It means to have dominance often with the nuance of heavy-handedness.

Those in positions of power exercise authority over the people meaning they throw their weight around in a controlling manner.

Great leadership according to the world often means to be in the position of dominance and control. It's a dog-eat-dog world as the strong scratch and claw their way to the top. But in Christ's family that is not to be the paradigm. In fact, Christ turns the way of the world on its head in relationship to His followers.

26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

Once again Christ points out the way to greatness in His kingdom is the way of humble service. ***“The difference in attitude between secular leadership and spiritual leadership rests in the attitude of servanthood.” (Ed Glasscock)*** Greatness is not seen in ruling over others, but rather in serving them. (Charles Ryrie)

The word “servant” is the Greek word (***diakanos***) from which we get our word deacon. The word “deacon” literally means ***servant, minister, or helper***. This is not a ruling position but merely one of service. The office of “deacon” involves a special role of serving the body as they serve as the special assistants to the elders.

Notice Jesus said if anyone desires to be great let him be the servant. That is the exact opposite of asserting yourself and walking over people to get to the front of the line. The entire spirit is different. The world represents selfishness and a me first spirit, Christ exhorts His people to be other centered to serve others before self.

27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—

The language here gets stronger. If you want to be great, be a servant. If you want to be first be a slave (Gk. doulos). A slave had no rights of his own. He lived to serve another. That is the attitude of a slave. It lives to serve the highest good of others with no thought for self.

The more humble the position on earth the greater the position in the kingdom. Those assuming the role of the “slave” will be first in the kingdom. So much for vying for prominence in which self is served!

In the pagan world the idea of humility was seen as a vice and not as a virtue. It was literally “a put down”. It was unthinkable that a slave be placed in the most favored position of being FIRST. But again, the kingdom values of Jesus turns things upside down or rather right side up.

Slide # 12

The world may assess a man’s greatness by the number of people whom he controls and who are at his beck and call; or by his intellectual standing and his academic eminence; or by the number of committees of which he is a member; or by the size of his bank balance and the material possessions which he has amassed; but in the assessment of Jesus Christ these things are irrelevant.

– ***William Barclay***

God’s grades greatness in the kingdom according to humble service in the here and now. The true servants will be great and the those who serve in lowliest position as a slave will be first.

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Again, Jesus uses the Messianic term “Son of Man” in referring to Himself. As the Messiah in His state of humility this term of designation was that most commonly used by Jesus to refer to Himself. Yes, He is also the Son of God, (meaning of the order of God) but His Messianic mission on earth emphasizes Him as the “Son of Man” (meaning of the order of man). In order to accomplish His Messianic mission as representative of the human race He had to be a man and this title emphasizes that reality.

Now, He wasn't merely a man – but rather the God-Man – fully God and fully man in one person. But again, the emphasis in relationship to His earthly Messianic mission was on His humanity (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5).

There is overlap but during His earthly ministry the overwhelming emphasis is on the aspect His person related to Him being the “Son of Man”.

Following His resurrection the overwhelming emphasis is on the aspect of He person related to Him being the “Son of God”. Romans 1:4 says that in the resurrection He was declared to be “the Son of God”.

Again, there is overlap but the emphasis at this juncture is in relation to the cross and the emphasis therefore is on Christ's humanity as the “Son of Man”.

As the Son of Man in His state of humility He did “***not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.***”

To be great is to be the servant of many; to be first is to be the slave of many; but to be supreme is to give one's life for many. Jesus is the supreme example and role model of humble service.

Here Jesus summarizes the purpose of His coming in one line, namely, to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. He didn't come to be waited on but rather to serve. He was not here to promote self but to serve others. He is the ultimate example, and His followers should follow in His footsteps. This is the key to kingdom greatness.

And then for the first time Christ plainly tells His disciples the ultimate purpose for His coming. He had previously told them that He was going to die, but He had not told them WHY. Here for the first time He spells out the WHY – the PURPOSE for His coming - namely to give His life as a ransom for many.

The word ransom (*Gk. lutros*) commonly referred to the price paid to redeem a slave. To redeem means to deliver by paying a price. So the idea of ransom here is “to buy the freedom of”. This is what Jesus came to do – to pay the price for our sin through His death so that believers in Him might go free.

This is what we mean by Jesus being our Savior! He paid our sin debt on the cross so that we might go free. Thus, He saves believers from their sin debt.

The word “for” (Gk. anti) means “in the place of”. Jesus became our substitute – He took our place. Jesus became our ransom (the purchase price) for our sin. This is what the cross was all about. It was the payment – the ransom for our sin.

Slide # 13

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 For He made Him who knew no sin **to be sin for us**, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

And then He says this ransom was for “**many**” (Gk. pollon).

First, it was 1 animal sacrifice per person (Adam/Eve Gen.3). Then, 1 animal sacrifice per family (at Passover Ex.12). Then, 1 animal sacrifice per nation (Day of atonement). Finally, 1 sacrifice per world (John 1:29 Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world) – **Brian Bell**

Some believe that “many” here refers to the idea that Christ died only for a specific group of people. This is called by reformed theologians “particular redemption” meaning Christ died only for a particular group of people called the elect.

However, **many** may simply be a qualifying word regarding those who would receive the salvation He purchased. And when one considers the whole counsel of God I believe this is the proper sense. Christ died for all and salvation is offered to all, but only the “many” (i.e., the elect) receive it.

Slide # 14

Jesus’ ransom was paid to God to satisfy His holy justice, and it was more than sufficient to cover the sins of everyone who has ever lived and ever will live. His death was sufficient for “the whole world,” says John (1 John 2:2). Although His ransom is sufficient for every person, it is valid only for those who believe in Him. It is in that sense that His redemption is for many, rather than for all. – **John MacArthur**

The sacrifice of Christ was sufficient for all but is efficient only for the MANY who accept Him as Lord and Savior.

Many (pun intended) scholars believe that Christ’s use of many here in Matt. 20:28 is a reference back to Isaiah 53.

Slide # 15**Isaiah 53:11–12 (NKJV)**

11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant **shall justify many**, For He shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, **And He bore the sin of many**, And made intercession for the transgressors.

But in balance we should note that the “many” of Isaiah 53:11-12 builds on the “all” of Isaiah 53:6.

Slide # 16**Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)**

6 **All** we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, **every one**, to his own way; And the LORD has **laid on Him the iniquity of us all**.

Isaiah 53:11–12 (NKJV)

11 **shall justify many**, For He shall bear their iniquities.

12... **And He bore the sin of many...**

There is no contradiction to Christ taking on Him the iniquity of all who have gone astray in verse 6 and the fact that He bore the sin of “many” in verse 12. Both are true. Christ died for all – many will be justified. This is consistent with Paul’s theology in the NT.

Slide # 17**1 Timothy 2:4–6 (NKJV)**

4 who **desires all men to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave Himself **a ransom for all**, to be testified in due time,

God in desiring all to be saved has provided a ransom for all. All has the same universal application in verse 6 as it does in verse 4. But here is the catch. The truth of the gospel has to be applied by faith.

Slide # 18**1 Timothy 4:10 (NKJV)**

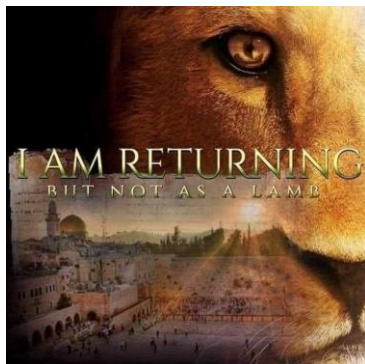
10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the **Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.**

I believe Paul is here building on the emphasis of “***all men***” seen in 1 Tim. 2:4-6. Thus, he is emphasizing God as the Savior of all men in the sense that provision has been made for all, but it ultimately applies only to those who believe. The word “***especially***” expresses the idea of “***particularly***”.

Yes, Jesus is ***the Lamb of God*** who takes away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29). Yes, He is “***the Savior of the world***” (Jn. 4:42). Yes, He is the propitiation for the sins of “***the whole world***” (1 Jn. 2:2). But it only applies “***especially of those who believe***”. Just like the blood of the Passover lamb had to be applied so the blood of Jesus must be personally applied by faith.

All through their history the Jews looked for a Messiah who would come and deliver them. They thought in terms of a mighty conquering king who would smash their enemies and put Israel in the leading position over all the kingdoms of the earth. They looked for the raging Lion of Judah but did not realize their greatest form of bondage was spiritual and not political. They looked for a Messianic Lion but instead got the gentle Lamb of God Who came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.

But there are two parts to this story. The first time He came as a Lamb to give His life as a ransom but in His second coming He is coming as a Lion to reign in power and glory.

Slide # 19

We see what the disciples failed to see – first the Lamb then the Lion – first the cross then the crown. As we await the second coming we are called to walk in the way of the cross and as we do so faithfully we will be rewarded.

Note the Bible makes a clear distinction between the gift of salvation and rewards for humble service.

Slide # 20

Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Revelation 22:12 (NKJV)

12 “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

Slide # 21

Salvation

Gift
Received by Faith

Rewards

According to quality of service

Christ’s sacrifice for sin was a sufficient payment for all the sins of the world but is efficient only for those who by faith receive Him as Lord and Savior. Have you done this? Only this will secure you a place in the kingdom. We are saved by grace alone (the cross) through faith alone in Christ alone!

But if you are a believer now the issue is your quality of service. The believer’s judgment is all about rewards based on service and not about the penalty of sin because Christ paid our penalty in full once for all on the cross. There is now “no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

In terms of reward, if you want to be great in God’s kingdom learn to be the servant of all. If you want to be prominent (first) then learn to be the slave of all. And Jesus set the standard for us all in coming to serve and giving His life as a ransom.

The disciples were all about the “crown” but didn’t realize the road to the crown is the way of the cross. The crown comes later for those who faithfully walk in the way of the cross. First the cross then the crown.

Slide # 22



If you want to share in the reward of a crown of glory first comes the crown of thorns in the way of the cross. First the cross – then the kingdom! First the labor – then the reward.

God help us to live accordingly!