

TEACHING GOAL

Study the sinless perfection of Christ.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?
- A. Christ the Son of God, became Man, by taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her yet without sin.

S.C. 22; L.C. 46-50; W.C. of F. VIII; Savoy 8; Young 47-48

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: I Peter 2:11-25

Support Passages: Isaiah 53:9-12; Matthew 26:59-68; John 8:43-47, 18:33-40; Romans 8:3; II Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 7:26-28; I John 3:5

BIBLE STORY

John 5:1-18; The healing of the sick man at Bethesda.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens." (Hebrews 7:26, ESV)

APPLICATION

Christ is our example in the way we should live. If we suffer, let it not be for our own sin but for our stand for Christ, for doing that which is right in the eyes of the Lord.

SUMMARY

It is alleged that Jesus made a confession of sin. Says C. G. Montefiore, "we may be sure that of Jesus, both in fact and in His own estimate of Himself, the adage was true: 'there is no man that sinneth not.'"¹ This was said in regard to Jesus' answer to the rich man's question, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life (Mark 10:18ff)? Jesus answered, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone."

The greeting Good Teacher was very unusual indeed. Edersheim writes, "In no recorded instance was a Jewish Rabbi addressed as 'Good Teacher'"², and indeed in the whole Talmud there is no instance of a Rabbi being addressed in that manner. So strange was this greeting that it invites our attention and shows us in stark relief the flippancy and irreverence shown to the Lord of glory.

The rich man did not really want to know how to be saved but he intended to ridicule Jesus. This is evidenced by the supreme vanity of his egotistical lie, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up." He went away grieved at the thought of selling his goods and following Christ. His lust for wealth; his covetousness not only revealed his true attitude toward Jesus, but took his soul into the fires of hell. What did he really know of the goodness of God? Jesus answer was not at all a confession of sin but a confronting of this proud man with God's holiness. The sinner will be quick to insert the words, "I am not good, only God is," into the statement of Jesus, but He really did not say this at all. Jesus really rebukes the man. He says in effect, what do you know about goodness? You obviously do not believe that I am good and therefore that I am God. You love your money more than you do Me. Jesus plows this stony hard heart with the holiness of God and his law, but the seed is choked by the deceitfulness of riches and dies.³

The Bible clearly states that Jesus is without sin. "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens -- a son made perfect forever" (Hebrews 7:26ff). Peter applies Isaiah 53:9 to Jesus when he writes, "Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth" (I Peter 2:22). John writes, "and you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin" (I John 3:5), and Paul's estimate of Christ in this regard is, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf" (II Corinthians 5:21). Even the ungodly Pilate could "find no guilt in Him" (John 18:38).

An interesting problem is raised by Paul in Romans 8:3 where he notes that God sent "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." It is clear that the Word who became flesh was without sin and did no sin, but Paul implies that

His flesh also was sinless. Notice that Paul does not say that the Lord had sinful flesh but the "likeness" of it. This means that the curse to which He was subjected was not that of Adam's first sin but the curse of the sins of His people. He was made sin on our behalf, Christ became a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). Warfield sums it up as follows:

"He was accursed, not because He became man, but because He bore the sins of His people; He suffered and died not because of the flesh He took but because of the sins He took. He was, no doubt, born of a woman, born under the law (Galatians 4:4), in one concrete act; He issued from the Virgin's womb already our sin-bearer. But He was not sin-bearer because made of a woman; He was made of a woman that He might become sin-bearer; it was because of the suffering of death that He was made a little lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:9). It is germane to our inquiry, therefore, to take note of the fact that among the emotions which are attested as having found place in our Lord's life-experiences, there are those which belong to Him not as a man but as sin-bearer, which never would have invaded His soul in the purity of His humanity save as He stood under the curse incurred for His people's sins."⁴

¹ C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 1909, pp. 246-247

² Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Christ*, Vol. II, p. 339.

³ Walter J. Chantry, *Today's Gospel Authentic or Synthetic*, London, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1970, p. 19ff

⁴ Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ*, 1950, pp. 144-145