

Heaven's Perspective on the Cross: Sonship

Scripture: Colossians 1:21–22; Hebrews 2:9–10

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How a person views the life and death of Christ is not a question of subjective preference or perspective. The issues are objective and bear eternal consequences. And it is incumbent on believers—who have already experienced the life-transforming power of God's truth—to proclaim it boldly and warn others against believing a lie instead.

To that end, over the last couple weeks we've been examining Christ's cross from heaven's perspective. What did the Lord's death accomplish in God's eternal plan? So far we've seen His death as a sacrifice, submission, substitute, satisfaction, and salvation.

By fulfilling those aspects of God's redemptive plan, Christ provides all that is necessary for believers to become sons of God. Through the sacrifice of Jesus, God welcomes us into His most intimate, familial relationship and fellowship. Put simply, Christ's death is the means of our *sonship* with God.

Sonship doesn't merely refer to the heavenly blessings believers will receive from God—it's a comprehensive term that defines our reconciliation to Him. In Romans 5:10, Paul writes, "While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son." That reconciliation isn't just the removal of sin and guilt—it's full adoption, through which we're grafted into His eternal family.

In Hebrews 2:9-10, the author of Hebrews beautifully sums up the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf, and the blessings we can enjoy because of it.

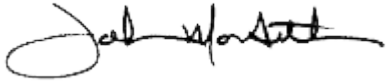
But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

In Colossians 1:21-22, Paul vividly describes our reconciliation: "Although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach." God treated Christ as if He had lived our lives so He could treat us as if we lived Christ's. That's sonship—that's what Christ accomplished on the cross.

Too often today, evangelistic methods overemphasize a person's feelings. But the gospel is not just about loving or hating God. The good news isn't that God is extending His love and friendship toward us, hoping we'll love Him in return. Rather, the good news is that *God is no longer angry with us*. The good news is that God's righteous wrath has been satisfied through the death of His Son, and that all who believe in His Son are welcomed into His family.

What Christ did on the cross was not intended to change the way man feels about God but to satisfy and remove God's enmity toward man. In one decisive act, Christ was able to exhaust God's wrath for all who believe, and establish a new relationship between the Father and sinners. It's only through the cross that we're able to be adopted into God's eternal family.

With that in mind, we join Paul in saying, "May it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John MacArthur". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

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