

The heart of the matter

A. What is at the heart of Christianity?

I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, ...

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

• What was the main reason Jesus came?

1 Timothy 1:15

Matthew 1:21

Mark 10:45

Luke 19:10

B. What does Jesus' death accomplish?

What does sin do?

Romans 5:16

Romans 6:23

John 8:34

Colossians 1:21

Ephesians 2:3b

What has Jesus death & resurrection brought?

► Romans 5:9 (first half)

► Lev 17:11, 1 John 2:2

► Ephesians 1:7

► Colossians 1:22

► Romans 5:9 (2nd half)

J_____n

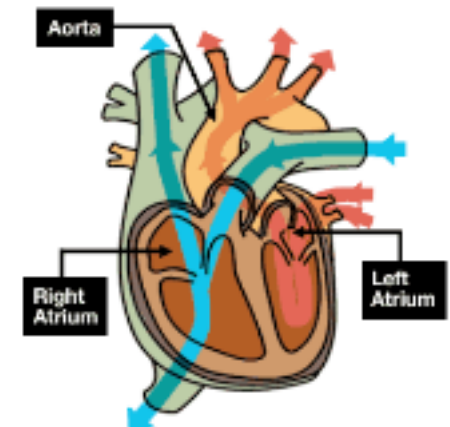
A_____t

R_____n

R_____n

S_____n

- Try and represent each of the 5 concepts with a diagram on Butcher's Paper.
- Where do you see these aspects of sin in your life?
- What can you do to make it up to Jesus for what he has done for you?



C. Just how important is this?

Nearly every letter in the New Testament begins with a reminder of what Jesus has done (the Gospel/truth) and how important this is. Quickly, What is said?

Rom 1:1, 16

1 Cor 1:18

2 Cor 1:20

Gal 1:4,8

Eph 1:3,7-8

Philippians 1:6,11,21

Colossians 1:13-23

1 Thessalonians 1:3,10

2 ThesSalonians 1:8,12

1 Timothy 1:15

2 Timothy 1:9-10

Titus 1:1-3 (& 2:13-14)

Philemon 3-6

Hebrews 1:3

James 1:18

1 Peter 1:2,10,19

1 John 1:9, 2:2

Revelation 1:18, 5:9-10

D. Suffering a heart attack!

So the ransom to be truly in line with God's justice, had to be strictly an equivalent - a perfect human, "the last Adam." Thus when God sent Jesus to earth as the ransom, he made Jesus to be what would satisfy his justice, not an incarnation, not a god-man, but a perfect man, "lower than angels." (Hebrews 2:9; compare Psalm 8:5,6.) How could any part of an almighty Godhead - Father, Son, or holy spirit - ever be lower than angels?

taken from "Should You Believe in the Trinity?" by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1989

It is claimed we should never isolate any attribute of God, that we should remember God is justice and love. It is asserted that God in his love paid the penalty which justice demanded. ... if we claim that God satisfied his justice by laying the penalty for man's sins on Jesus, then he satisfied his justice by the greatest act of injustice, the world has ever seen, for Jesus was the only perfectly good person who has ever existed.

Thus the idea of Jesus becoming a substitute for us will not stand up under examination, even though it is an idea that is very dear to many.

taken from "Who is Jesus" by William Barclay, 1975

• How do these verses help us?

Psalm 49:7-9.

John 20:28

Colossians 1:15,19.

2 Corinthians 5:19

Keep the heart pumping

The sacrificial concept that focuses on the saving blood of Jesus that somehow washes me clean, so popular in evangelical and fundamentalist circles, is by and large repugnant to us today. This understanding of the divine-human relationship violates both our understanding of God and our knowledge of human life.

taken from "Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism" by John Shelby Spong, 1991

See:
1 Corinthians 1:18

Where might this man obtain his 'understanding of God'? Read 1 Corinthians 1:18.

A. Quick Recap: In Pairs, Fill in the blanks:

What does sin do?

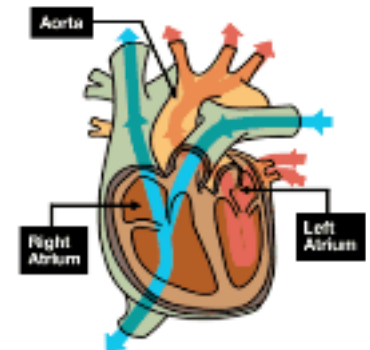
Romans 5:16	Made us C _____
Romans 6:23	Leads to D _____
John 8:34	Makes us S _____
Colossians 1:21	God and I are A _____
Ephesians 2:3b	We are objects of W _____

What has Jesus death & resurrection brought?

➔ Romans 5:9 (first half)	J _____ n
➔ Lev 17:11, 1 John 2:2	A _____ t
➔ Ephesians 1:7	R _____ n
➔ Colossians 1:22	R _____ n
➔ Romans 5:9 (2nd half)	S _____ n

B. Read Galatians 1:6-10.

- What has happened? How serious is this?
- What do we learn about the problem in Galatians 2:21-3:3?
- If Paul was still on earth today how would he react to a group who came along wanting people to get to heaven by human effort?



C. What might Paul say about the following?

Q. Does the Catholic Church ever impose acts of atonement on her members?

A. Yes, for example, at the conclusion of a confession the priest always assigns a definite act of piety (usually saying of some prayers) which the penitent is to perform in expiation [or atonement] of the sins which he has just confessed. This act of piety is called penance.

Q. What happens if a person dies before he has had the opportunity to expiate [or atone] fully for the sins he committed during life?

A. His soul is sentenced to suffer for a time in purgatory.

Q. Are the souls confined in purgatory certain of arriving in heaven?

A. Since they die in the state of sanctifying grace, the souls in purgatory, are absolutely assured of salvation. They possess complete certainty that after their period of expiation and atonement is over they will be admitted to the face-to-face vision of God.

p254 of This is Catholicism by John Walsh

• Why is it important for us, in today's society, to be reminded that there are 'churches' with a different gospel?

D. How should the heart pump in my life?

Galatians 2:20-21

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Ephesians 5:1-2

Mark 8:34-38

- What temptations to lose heart might we face in life?
- What would you find hard to give up for the sake of the gospel?

No longer living for o_____
but together
living for Jesus and the G_____