

## Christ Alone

**1 Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,**

**1 Timothy 2:2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.**

**1 Timothy 2:3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,**

**1 Timothy 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

**1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,**

**1 Timothy 2:6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.**

There was a television series, now on Amazon, whose plot centers on a man with access to social security numbers of people who are about to be in very bad situations. They may be the victims or the perpetrators. The man (Harold Finch) enlists the help of a former CIA black ops agent (John Reese) to save the victims of these crimes. He offers John the opportunity to be there in time to save them.

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Now reframe this plot into a Christian perspective. There are people who are on their way to the Lake of Fire. You can be there in time to provide them the gospel message. If they act upon it, they will be saved from the Lake of Fire and eternal separation from God. Will you do it?

A Christian cannot save an unbeliever. A Christian can only provide the information which if acted upon can save a lost soul. It might be as simple as saying “Believer on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.” It might start with the book of Genesis and creation. There is a God. He created the universe. Man is separated from God as a result of Sin. Jesus died spiritually in being judged for our sins. Our response should be to trust Jesus Christ (and hence His work on the cross) for salvation. Or it might start with just the witness of our lives. We do that by daily trusting the Holy Spirit. Faith.

You might ask, “How do I “do” faith?” There are many words that illustrate different aspects of faith. We have encountered “wait.” Wait for God to act in our lives. Patience and perseverance are related. These lead to a confident expectation.

Today’s message is based upon the phrase, “Faith alone in Christ alone.” We have encountered many lessons that emphasize the importance of faith in our lives. This lesson is an answer to a valid question. “Why is Jesus the only one to believe in for salvation?” Recently, I have emphasized that the term Bible Doctrine is not some term reserved for the halls of a theological seminary. Bible Doctrine contains Bible answers. Today the doctrine contains an answer to “Why is it “Christ alone?””

**Romans 5:6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.**

Literally:

**Romans 5:6 (Literal) Yet indeed Christ, being of us without strength, still according to (the right) time (in substitution – Greek “huper” #1. Note how many times “huper” is used in three verses) for the ungodly died.**

We will see that verses 6-8 in the Greek each ends with a verb for die. Paul is emphasizing the cost of salvation. Spiritual death required spiritual death as ransom payment for sin. Redemption. This results in God's satisfaction for the payment. Propitiation. This results in man being reconciled to God. But faith in Jesus Christ is necessary for the unbeliever to become a believer. Christ died for us.

**Romans 5:7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.**

**Romans 5:7 (Literal) Perhaps indeed (in substitution – Greek “huper” #2) for a righteous one will die; (in substitution – Greek “huper” #3) for indeed the good one perhaps someone even would dare to die**

In human viewpoint perspective, sometimes a person will sacrifice his own life to save others. There are various accounts of men on the battlefield jumping on a live grenade and dying to save his comrades. He

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has a life to give. But in the spiritual world, unbelievers do not have a human spirit. They are already dead. They have nothing they can offer.

**Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

**Romans 5:8 (Literal) Demonstrates however the of Himself love to us the God that still sinners being of us, Christ (in substitution – Greek “huper” #4) for us died.**

Again, Christ died for us. Paul is emphasizing what Christ did to gain our salvation. Each verse ends with “died.” The Greek preposition “huper” is used four times in three verses to emphasize Christ’s substitutionary death for us.

Douglas Moo, a conservative Bible commentator has this to say about these verses<sup>1</sup>:

“Verses 6-8 form a single argument that demonstrates the abundant and absolute nature of God’s love for us. We may summarize Paul’s argument (making explicit some points that are implicit) as follows:

- a. Human love, at its best, will motivate a person to give his or her life for a truly “good” person (v. 7);
- b. Christ, sent by God, died, not for the “righteous” people, or even for “good” people, but for rebellious and undeserving people (v. 6);
- c. Therefore: God’s love is far greater in its magnitude and dependability than even the greatest human love (v. 8).

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<sup>1</sup> Moo, D.J. (1996). The Epistle to the Romans. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. p306

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We tend to think of the apostle John as the apostle of “love.” Yet, in Paul’s epistle concerning the gospel (Romans 1:16 and three other mentions of the gospel in that chapter; ) he emphasizes the requirement for righteousness but also includes other topics like life and love. When we get to chapters 6-8, we enter into the discussion on the spiritual life of the believer.

I am reminded of something Adolf Deissmann said in his book on Paul. “John is the oldest and the greatest interpreter of Paul.”<sup>2</sup>

I never found any published work in English from Deissmann on this topic. It is an observation that fascinates me. But it is only now that I understand that John, certainly having read Paul’s letters, was himself guided by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the same truths to different audiences. But John has his own unique vocabulary.

Let us see this by first looking again at

**Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

Now look at a similar thought from John

**John 3:16 (Wuest, a literal translation) For in such a manner did God love the world (i.e. God demonstrated His love), insomuch that His Son, the uniquely-begotten One, He gave (i.e. Christ died spiritually and then physically), in order that everyone who places his trust in Him may not perish but may be having life eternal (Romans**

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<sup>2</sup> Adolf Deissmann (1972). Paul. Gloucester. Peter Smith. p7

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5:9 & 10 references to being saved. Paul emphasizes righteousness; John emphasizes eternal life)

**John 3:17 For God did not send off His Son into the world in order that He might be judging the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.**

Go back and reread these verses. I hope it strikes you the same way it does me. Here in Romans 5:6-8 is Paul's version of John 3:16-17. John's version is succinct for gospel presentation. But, if you want a few more details and Jesus' effort included, you could just as effectively use Paul's version.

Adolf Deissmann was observant to see the similarities between Paul and John. They both concentrate on the gospel. Deissmann understood John as interpreting Paul. Certainly John was knowledgeable of Paul's writing and perhaps learned much from it. But it is really the Holy Spirit using two different writers with two different ways of writing to say the same thing.

There is another observation to make here in Romans. Paul is not saying that Jesus is better than Buddha or some other religious figure as far as salvation is concerned. No. He is saying there is none other than Jesus for salvation. He explains the substitutionary redemption provided by Jesus Christ that is unique. There is no other.

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Peter tells us this in the book of Acts:

**Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit is inerrant), said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people,**

**Acts 4:9 if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well,**

**Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health.**

**Acts 4:11 He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief corner stone.**

**Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”**

If you are looking for a Bible verse that specifically says “Christ alone,” there it is.

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**John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**

**John 3:17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.**

**John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**

This is another verse that specifically says that “he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

**John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey (a word for refusing to believe) the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”**

**Genesis 15:6 Then he (Abraham) believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.**

This is an often used verse to document the paradigm for faith.

There are other words used for faith in the Old Testament.



**Exodus 14:13 But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by (i.e. wait patiently) and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever.**

**Exodus 14:14 The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”**

**Exodus 14:30 Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.**

**Exodus 14:31 When Israel saw the great power which the Lord had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses.**

Jehoshaphat’s prayer and God’s response is another of my favorite Bible passages.

**2 Chronicles 20:17 You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the Lord is with you.”**

When Jews realize that Isaiah chapter 53 is fulfilled by Jesus Christ, they often believe in their Yeshua the Messiah.

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**Isaiah 53:4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore,  
And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves  
esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and  
afflicted.**

**Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our  
transgressions, He was crushed for our  
iniquities; The chastening for our well-being  
fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are  
healed.**

**Isaiah 53:6 All of us like sheep have gone  
astray, Each of us has turned to his own way;  
But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all  
To fall on Him.**

**Isaiah 53:11 As a result of the anguish of His  
soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His  
knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant,  
will justify the many, As He will bear their  
iniquities.**

**Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now  
been justified by His blood, we shall be saved  
from the wrath of God through Him.**

Justified. Justification is the declaration by God that a believer has been imputed with God's righteousness.

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**Romans 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

**Romans 5:11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.**