



# Northside Proclaimer

*Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord*

1 Thessalonians 1:8

**Northside Church Of Christ Welcomes You!**

**December 21, 2014**

## **“Jesus Became A Curse For Us!”**

*Bryan Garlock*

We have at least one more topic to cover in reference to our study on Premillennialism. However, I’ve decided to forgo that topic for a couple of weeks so as to better understand the arguments and how to accurately answer them.

There is a subject often overlooked that seems dark and melancholy but is actually the opposite. It is something we ought to be thankful for and deserves our praise to our heavenly Father above.

In the context of Galatians chapter three, Paul taught the Gentiles that obedience to circumcision, as if it was binding on them to begin with, was disobedience to God’s Word (cf. Gal. 5.1-4). In the midst of his argumentation, he reminds them that Christ had died on a tree for their sins and uses gloomy, but beautiful language to describe our Savior’s role on the cross. Paul declared, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”)” (Gal. 3.13).

The fact that the Jews were under a curse is obvious from the context. Paul, penned, “[f]or as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’” (Gal. 3.10).

It was impossible for the Jews to keep strict obedience to the law, other than Christ. Therefore, every Jew was “under the curse,” i.e., those who did not continue in obedience to the Law of Moses.

We should add here that just because the law was done away with by the death of Christ (Col. 2.14), and consequently the curse the Jews were under, it did not release them from their punishment. They had already sinned by transgressing the law and therefore only through their obedience to the gospel could the blood of Jesus cover their punishment of the curse as though they had never been cursed. That’s what John called propitiation, i.e. a covering for our sins (cf. 1 John 4.10).

It saddens me, however, that many, even of our own brethren, erroneously apply the Jews’ curse to our Lord and Savior. What I mean is, they say Christ became the same curse the Jews were under. Since those under the curse were spiritually dead, if Christ took their curse, Christ spiritually died. Are we bold enough to say a member of the Godhead died spiritually? Spiritual death is spiritual separation from God. Was Jesus separated from His Father? May it never be. *Continued on back...*

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It is however, a different curse our Lord was under. When Paul spoke of our Savior becoming a curse for us he referenced Deut. 21.22-23. There, Moses recorded, “[i]f a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ‘his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day...for he who is hanged is accursed of God.’”

It should be noted that our Savior knew no sin (1 John 3.5), but he was treated as if he was a sinner. The Jews wanted Him on that cross because they thought Him to be a blasphemer and a fraud. God wanted Him on that cross to redeem us from “the curse of the law” (Gal. 3.13).

Therefore, under the microscope, there are two curses mentioned by Paul. The first curse was the curse of disobedience. The second curse was that of hanging on a tree. The “curse” that Christ was made was not the same “curse” the Jews were under. He redeemed them from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for them. He did not take the curse the Jews deserved. He became a different curse.

Christ becoming a curse for us is to our benefit. He redeemed us from sin by dying on that tree. This was the curse He became. The curse He took released them from their curse because it did away with the law, again, however, on the condition that they obeyed the gospel. Since they were no longer cursed, they could truly say, “[t]here is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8.1) and therefore it is of necessity that we be found in Christ before its eternally too late.

For those of us who do not obey, we too are under a “curse.” Jesus declared, “...whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” and “[w]hoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him” (John 3.18, 36). Will you take advantage of this curse Christ became? Paul said we take advantage of such when we are crucified with Christ through baptism (Gal. 2.20; Rom. 6.3-4). BG

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