

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabile.org.

Date: Dec. 28, 2008

Title: The Hero’s Work or the Victory of God

Text: Galatians 4:4, 5

Theme: The hero’s role is not only to exist but to act. There is a very distinct reason as to why the hero exists. He will fulfill the work He was sent to do.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in the Storyline of the Bible. She is determined by design to have a God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching focused on personal discipleship through intentional and systematic instruction; a Global-impacting mission that resolves to be a church planting church; and a Grace-based fellowship where disciples are invited to live under a reigning grace characterized by a Gospel-driven sanctification that celebrates a divine monergism to the Christian life.

The Storyline of the Bible

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THE BIG PICTURE

- The Subject of the Story – The Person and Purpose of God
- The Villain Appears
- The Hero Foretold
- The Hero Arrives
- The Hero's Work
- The Hero's Legacy

The Outline:

- There is an appointed person
- There is an appointed period
- There is an appointed purpose

Its Eternal Value:

In the absence of the hero's arrival and work we will live and die in vain. It is only in the presence of the hero's arrival and work that we will live and die in hope.

The Storyline:

God wrote into the story the hero's role, His work. Creation, transgression, condemnation, all feed this singular thought. It is with the hero's arrival we see the power, justice, and grace of God and in all these actions God receives glory.

The Problem:

Although I believe we value and note this most notable event, we sometimes think there is to be something more as if this is not enough. Everything in the story surrounds a simple thought that focuses on the person and purpose of God. We are here to learn, "Who He is, What He does, and who His people are in Him."

Questions:

1. What does the hero's work mean to you? How does this work infect or dominate your life?
2. What right or authority does the devil have over the people of God?
3. From what sin have the people of God been delivered?
4. What does this mean in my life right now?
5. What does Revelation 5 mean to you?
6. What would life be like in the absence of this work?

7. What can we do individually and as a community of faith to keep the person and purpose of God central to Christmas?

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

To Know: The Holy Spirit desires for us to know the victory of God over sin, death, and hell by God's hero.

To Choose: The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose to live with and accept the work of the hero in behalf of His people.

To Feel: The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of the hero's arrival and work.

Introduction:

Everything in the story has prepared us for this moment in time. From Genesis 3:15 and 3:21 it is clear there will be an identifiable deliverer and deliverance. God has already written into His story the hero's identity and His work. Today we will explore the hero's work or the victory of God.

"Christ's birth at Bethlehem was not an accident; it was an appointment." (Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Free*, 90).

When the Father sent His only begotten Son as the seed of the woman who would bruise the head of the serpent and in turn have His heeled bruised, it pleased Him (Isa. 53:10, 11). When the Son of God, in obedience to His Father, saw the good pleasure of God in the outcome of His sacrifice, He joyfully endured the cross and embraced the shame (Heb. 12:2) and all this was done according to the divine plan.

Yet all this is but a half truth if it is stated apart from the purpose of His coming. Again, we might celebrate the season religiously, but there is something lying beneath the surface calling out to us for it to be unveiled. Remember Abraham in Genesis 22:8?

⁷ Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" ⁸ Abraham said, "**God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.**" So the two of them walked on together. ⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." ¹³ Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided" (Gen. 22:7-14).

In this shadow God stayed the hand of Abraham and provided in type a substitute for his son Isaac. But we know that the shadow was cast by a lamb slain before the foundation of the world, we know that the type will find an antitype, and God the Father will not stay His hand; nothing will keep Him from “crushing Him” (Isa. 53:10). God has unsheathed His sword and He has cut the throat of Christ, His lamb, in order that sin would be destroyed. His people would be delivered and His power, justice, and grace would be declared.

Now let us consider the full import of this season. Let us explore the magnitude of what God did in the sending of His Son, His only begotten Son.

- I. There is an appointed person (See 12/21/08 sermon)
- II. There is an appointed period (See 12/24/08 sermon)
- III. There is an appointed purpose

The seed of the woman, the Son of God was sent at an exact moment in time with a very distinct and defined purpose. Remember Genesis 3:15 and 3:21, how God not only foretold but also “imaged” the hero’s character and mission? Remember how in this one verse five ideas were noted.

First, there is an established limitation as to what man can and cannot do. Man’s response to his shame, guilt, and fear was woefully inadequate. Only God could undo what was done.

Second, there is the introduction of an innocent victim. The animal from which the skin was taken did nothing to deserve death.

Third, there was the shedding of blood. When the animal was offered in sacrifice its blood was shed. From the beginning God’s pattern was established, “Without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sin” (Heb. 9:22).

Fourth, there is the idea of substitution. The innocent animal sacrificed took the place of the guilty party. Adam and Eve were the ones deserving death, but their place was taken by another.

Fifth, there is an acceptable offering that satisfied the immediate demands of the king against His rebellious subjects. God accepted the blood sacrifice of the innocent offering in order that the sin of Adam and Eve could be forgiven.

We also noted how these five elements help us understand the person and work of the future hero.

First, the hero will be capable of doing something that the natural man cannot (Rom. 8:1-4).

¹ “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ **For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did:** sending

His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1-4).

Second, the hero will be blameless of the sentence against Him (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

Listen carefully to the following three statements taken from Matthew's Gospel.

"[**Judas**] saying, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.'" But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" (Matt. 27:4).

²² "**Pilate** *said to them, 'Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Crucify Him!' ²³ And he said, '**Why, what evil has He done?**' But they kept shouting all the more, saying, 'Crucify Him!'" (Matt. 27:22, 23).

"Now the **centurion**, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'" (Matt. 27:54).

It is for this reason the apostle Peter will pen the following words.

¹⁸ "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, **as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ**" (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

Third, the hero will offer up His life and shed His blood.

¹⁸ "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ **but with precious blood**, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

Fourth, the hero's sacrifice will replace the shame, guilt, and fear of the deserving party.

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

Finally, what the hero does will satisfy the eternal demand for justice by the offended party.

"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, '**God, be merciful to me, the sinner!**'" (Luke 18:13).

"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people**" (Heb. 2:17).

It is for this reason we have the following statements.

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.** 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 3:16, 17).

“We have seen and testify that **the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world**” (1 John 4:14).

What this all entails is openly and clearly noted throughout the New Testament. We will note three consequences of the hero’s work.

A. The Hero’s work destroys the works of the devil

Notice the language of Acts 26:18 and the three purposes mentioned: to open, to turn, and to receive.

“to open their eyes so that **they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18).

“From the authority and domination of Satan; for as the kingdom of darkness is his kingdom, so those who live in this darkness are under his dominion; and he has authority and right over them. The blessed Gospel of Christ is the means of bringing the soul from this state of spiritual darkness and wretchedness to the light and liberty of the children of God.” (*Adam Clarke’s Commentary* on Acts 26:18). The unbelieving are under the authority and rule of Satan. It is the person and work of Jesus Christ that breaks his stronghold over us and places us under the authority and rule of His grace. Listen to the language of Paul in Colossians 2.

¹³ “When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴ having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ When **He had disarmed the rulers and authorities**, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him” (Col. 2:13-15).

“In the Cross of Christ God showed his power openly without aid or help of angels. On the Cross the triumph was won.” (A.T. Robertson on Colossians 2:15)

Listen to the shadows of this great triumph.

“The Resurrection of Aslan”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2O3VpubRq8&feature=related>

It is like Tarzan standing over the lifeless body of his slain enemy and with foot on foe he raises his voice and beats his chest openly declaring his conquest. It is like Bruce Banner as the Hulk meeting his worst fears when power-hungry soldier Emil Blonsky becomes the Abomination. There is a final moment when Hulk stands over his defeated foe and roars his victory for all to hear. In those moments we get the proverbial "goose-bumps." All of these are shadows of something greater. Jesus Christ at the cross stands over the conquered body of His defeated foe and roars, "It is finished," and forever the decision is made and final.

¹⁴ "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that **through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**,¹⁵ and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives" (Heb. 2:14, 15).

"the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. **The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil**" (1 John 3:8).

"The Christian is a freeman. His great Captain has subdued all his enemies, and we should not allow them again to set up their dark empire over our souls." (Albert Barnes' New Testament on Colossians2:15).

B. The Hero's work delivers His people from sin and its consequences

³"So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. ⁴**But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵**so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons**" (Gal. 4:3-5).

³"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave Himself for our sins so that **He might rescue us from this present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen" (Gal. 1:3-5).

This deliverance encompasses three consequences.

1. A deliverance that encompasses the penalty of sin
2. A deliverance that encompasses the power of sin
3. A deliverance that encompasses the presence of sin

I do not expect us to fully grasp the magnitude of our deliverance from sin's penalty, power, or presence, but I do expect us to be humbled by and rejoicing in what we only know in part.

May God protect us from tiring of this truth, but in His arrival and work . . .

- We are redeemed from our sin debt
- We are declared not guilty of the crimes against us

- We are welcome into a house from which we had been alienated
- We are in communion where once only animosity existed
- We are always right where once we were only wrong
- We are cleansed from a state of defilement
- We are freed from all past and present bondage

In the Hero's work, the victory of God secured for Himself His people once and forever more. Yet there is a third reason I want us to consider and it is this.

A. The Hero's work declares His power, His justice, and His glory

In the coming of God's only begotten Son and in the work of His cross He concretely establishes His power over evil, His rightness in what He does and the superabundant outworking of His grace for "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

Please follow along as we read Revelation 5 in its entirety.

¹ "I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. ² And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?' ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. ⁴ Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; ⁵ and one of the elders said to me, '**Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.**' ⁶ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. ⁸ When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.' ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, '**Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.**' ¹³ **And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, 'To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.'** ¹⁴ **And the four living creatures kept saying, 'Amen.'** **And the elders fell down and worshiped**" (Rev. 5:1-14).

"That is, he has acquired this power as the result of a conflict or struggle. The word used here refers to such a conflict or struggle, properly meaning to come off victor; to

overcome; to conquer; to subdue: and the idea here is that his power to do this, or the reason why he does this, is the result of a conflict in which he was a victor." (Albert Barnes' New Testament on Revelation 5:5).

Every obstacle placed before Him, He conquered. Everything we have seen in shadow is now openly displayed. Oh friend, rejoice the Lord our King, God's hero, is here! He has won, the victory is secure and we are living in the glow, in the aftermath of His finished work!

SHEPHERDING THE PEOPLE: (What is the NEXT STEP?)

1. Today, you and I are living in the afterglow of His victory. We are victors.
2. Do you know the super abounding grace of God?
3. Have you tasted His power in your deliverance from sin?
4. Have you thanked Him for the rightness of His actions?
5. Friend, with joy we celebrate His arrival, and yet may all of our joy have a note of somber reflection for it is only in His death, a death that is voluntary and effectual, that we have life.