

EFCA Doctrinal Statement 5, Part 1

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We live in a culture in which all truths are considered the same. Yet, there are truths that inevitably collide. Value systems and belief systems often counter each other. That is never more true than in the realm of religion. Not all “truths” are created equal, which means that the search for truth is perhaps the most important thing we do.

Christianity makes a number of claims that are unique. As we have been studying Jesus who is fully God taking on humanity and living a sinless life is a unique claim. Based on His unique nature, the Bible makes other unique claims. One of the most foundational of those claims is that Jesus Christ died on our behalf. He is the **one and only** sufficient sacrifice for our sins.

The entire Bible is a picture of and statement of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus the Christ on our behalf. The prophets predicted Him, Israel’s history pictures Him, and the NT declares His arrival and saving work on our behalf. Jesus literally died in our stead.

That statement carries great weight. First, it implies that we deserved to die. In the book of Romans, Paul clearly outlines our guilt before God as sinners. Paul declares in Romans 3 that we are all equally condemned. We all have sinned and stand guilty before God. We cannot in any way overcome our guilt. We are all under the curse of the law.

Paul continues to describe in Romans 5 that we are all identified in Adam. We all died in Him. Christ came to pay the price for our sin. Those who are identified in Christ have been given life in Him. Jesus became our representative and our substitute. It is through His blood and only through His blood that our sins can be forgiven and we can have peace with God. ([Romans 3:21-26](#); [Ephesians 1:17](#); [Ephesians 2:8-10](#); [Colossians 1:19-20](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [2 Corinthians 5:21](#))

These are only a sample of passages that describe Jesus dying as our substitute. He bore **our sin in His body**. He paid the penalty that we could not. He died to redeem us. Because of who He uniquely is and what He only could do, He is the only solution for our sin. [Isaiah 53:6](#) is a favorite verse of mine.

That makes Jesus’ claim in [John 14:6](#) make sense. If He indeed is God’s only begotten Son, sent to earth in order to die for our sin, then He is the one and only way to God. It allows Peter to declare rightly in [Acts 4:12](#), there is only one name by which all men might be saved. That is absolutely true, or it is absolutely false. There really isn’t any gray area in between those two statements that makes sense. Christianity rises and falls on the exclusive person of Jesus and His exclusive work on our behalf.

So, what is a proper response? To embrace Jesus by faith and choosing to follow Him. Forgiveness and salvation comes only by faith in Jesus, the one and only Christ. ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#); [John 3:16](#))

Questions to consider:

1. I think that we get used to the “idea that Jesus died on our behalf”. How can we continue to keep that before our eyes?
2. How does an ongoing focus on Christ’s death for us, or on our behalf impact our lives? (2 Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 4:2)
3. How can we continue to be mindful of the absolute truth of the Gospel of Jesus and its implications for our daily lives?