

Week 7 - Consummation

As we have learned this season, ever since the first man and woman sinned in the Garden of Eden, every human being afterward has suffered from a debilitating disease called sin. Sin was first seen as Adam and Eve chose to serve themselves rather than obey and worship their Creator, God. They sinned and ruined their perfect relationship that they had with God up to that point. They were separated from Him because He cannot tolerate or be around sin.

God is just and fair, so He has to punish sin. The fair punishment for any sin is death and separation from God. This punishment was made clear from the very beginning as God told Adam, but something else was also made clear right after that first sin in the Garden: God promised to get rid of and defeat sin. He promised Adam and Eve that He would not let them suffer the consequences without any hope; He promised to send a Savior, Christ, who would defeat sin.

In the last couple weeks, we saw how God fulfilled His promise by coming to earth and taking on human flesh. Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man. He never sinned, but chose to come to earth to suffer and die in order to defeat the power of sin.

You see, when Jesus died on the cross, he didn't deserve it. Instead, he chose to suffer because he loved you and loved me. He decided to die on the cross in our place so that we wouldn't have to. He desperately wanted to restore the relationship with us, and dying was the only way to make it possible. Jesus suffered and died on the cross so that he could take our punishment and offer us forgiveness if we believe in him and his sacrifice.

And as great as that story is, it isn't even the whole thing! Three days after Jesus died on the cross, he came back to life to display his power over even death! Jesus showed in his greatest miracle that he was, in fact, God and that he could save the world from the corrupting and destructive nature of sin. He showed that he had the power necessary to take the punishment for all the sin of the world and even overcome it. And he made another promise that he would defeat the power of sin for anyone who would surrender to him and trust in him take care of it. The Bible says many times that anyone who believes in Jesus and will be forgiven for their sins and given life that lasts forever in a restored relationship with God.

Jesus died and rose from the dead about 2,000 years ago. He taught his disciples all about how people could experience forgiveness and peace with God like we were created to have from the beginning. Then Jesus ascended as he went back to heaven with the promise that one day he would come back defeat sin and all suffering altogether.

At this last practice, we are talking about the end of the story, or the **consummation** of Jesus' promises. Today we are still waiting for Jesus to come back. We are excited for him to fulfill that promise so that we won't need to suffer in sin anymore. We are eager to see him and experience the grace he can offer fully. And while we wait, it is important that we tell other people about Jesus and all that he did. People that you know probably think that being a good person will get you to heaven or that God will not punish anyone, but the truth is that only those who believe in Jesus will be forgiven the penalty for their sin and have eternal life. This is the most important message in the history of the world and we need to get that message out. If you haven't yet trusted in Jesus to forgive you from what you have done and all that you will ever do wrong, please do so today; don't wait! God is waiting for us to return to Him and have a relationship with Him like we were supposed to in the beginning. Let's make sure we do that today.