Jesus’ Mission

• Introduction
• Jesus’ view of his mission
• Jesus’ prophecies of his death
• The meaning of Jesus’ death

Introduction

• We must be careful not to read our own understandings into the text.
  – The Synoptics don’t have a fully developed theology of the meaning of Christ’s death.
  – Shows the historical reliability of the Gospels.
• Synoptics remind us that Jesus’ life was as important as his death.

Jesus’ View of His Mission

• See handout “How Did Jesus View His Mission?”
  – As Son of Man, he brings the kingdom.
  – He reconstituted the people of God.
  – He thought of Son of Man as suffering Servant.
  – As Son (of God), he revealed God and his will.
  – Accepted the role of prophet.
  – His purpose was to obey his father’s will.
  – Theme of necessity (Gk. dei) in the Gospels.

Jesus’ Prophecies of His Death

• Did Jesus prophesy his death?
  – Scholars argue if this was possible: vaticinium ex eventu.
  – Common sense could tell where he would end.
  – If he saw himself in the role of Suffering Servant.
  – Ladd: The resurrection wasn’t enough to give the church a theology of atonement.
  – Jesus himself provided the foundation for the thinking of the early church.

The Meaning of Jesus’ Death

• Crucifixion in the ancient world (M. Hengel)
  – Obscene means of torture and death.
  – Punishment for the worst criminals.
  – Cursed by God (Deut. 21:23).
  – Unimaginable as a means of redemption.
  – Very difficult for the church to explain.
  – He became a curse for us!

The Meaning of Jesus’ Death

• Jesus believed his death to be necessary.
• Jesus’ death was voluntary.
• He referred to it as a “cup” or a “baptism.”
• He called it a ransom for many (Mk. 10:45).
  – His purpose for coming.
  – Ransom = latron.
  – Prefix anti = in place of; huper = on behalf of.
  – Sets others free at the cost (not price) of his life.
# The Meaning of Jesus’ Death

- He reinterpreted the Passover symbolism at the last supper.
  - He must have seen his death as redemptive.
  - His death is “for many” (*huper pollon*) or “for you” (*huper humon*).
  - His blood is to seal the new covenant.
  - It will bring forgiveness of sins.
  - His blood is to be “poured out” as an offering.
  - It has an eschatological fulfillment.