

3. JESUS' DEATH UPON THE CROSS

1 PETER 2:22-25 & ISAIAH 52:13-53:12

INTRODUCTION: SIGNIFICANCE AND BACKGROUND TO THE ATONEMENT

1. AS JESUS DIES UPON THE CROSS AT WHOM IS GOD ANGRY? (MARK 15:33-34)

ANSWER: ON THE CROSS JESUS WAS PUNISHED BY GOD IN OUR PLACE

Questions for group discussion. Read Isaiah 53:4-12 and ask of these verses:

- What is God doing?
- What is the servant doing?
- What are we doing?

(a) Introducing “penal substitutionary atonement”

- Explanation:
- Illustration:

(b) PSA in the Bible

- 1 Peter 2:22-25
- Isaiah 53:4-6
- Elsewhere: Exodus 12 (Passover); Leviticus 1-7 & 16 (sacrificial system and day of atonement); Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Mark 10:33-45, 15:33-34; John 3:14-18, 11:47-52; Romans 3:21-26, 4:25, 5:8-10, 8:1-3, Galatians 3:10-13; 1 Peter 2:21-25, 3:18

2. HOW CAN A JUST GOD FAIRLY ACQUIT GUILTY PEOPLE?

ANSWER: ON THE CROSS JESUS BORE THE SINS OF EVERYONE IN UNION WITH HIM

(a) God deals with us in covenant relationships (e.g. 2 Sam. 21, 2 Cor. 5:14)

(b) Christians are joined to Christ

- Romans 6:5, “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (ESV).
- This union with Christ permits a double exchange – of both righteousness and wickedness
- 2 Corinthians 5:21, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

3. HOW CAN THE FATHER FAIRLY PUNISH HIS INNOCENT SON?

ANSWER: ON THE CROSS FATHER, SON & SPIRIT TOGETHER ACCOMPLISH SALVATION

(a) An accusation

(b) Two insufficient answers

- "Jesus was a willing victim"
- "It's fair because God does it"

(c) A proper understanding of the holy Trinity

- John 5:19, "Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."
- Who gave Christ to be Crucified? F = Romans 3:25; S = Galatians 1:3-4

4. WAS THE TRINITY BROKEN AS JESUS DIED?

ANSWER: ON THE CROSS GOD THE SON WAS FORSAKEN AS A MAN

(a) The Trinity cannot be broken (John 10:30)

(b) God the Son is without end and cannot die (1 Tim. 1:17)

(b) We needed a human substitute for human sin (1 Pet. 2:24, Heb. 10:5)

(d) The eternal Son suffered *in his human nature*

5. DID JESUS DIE FOR EVERY PERSON WITHOUT EXCEPTION?

ANSWER: ON THE CROSS JESUS DIED FOR THOSE WHOM GOD HAS CHOSEN

(a) Hypothetical universalism or limited atonement?

(b) Biblical evidence for definite atonement

- (i) Texts stating that "Jesus died for some" (and not for all)
 - His sheep (and not those outside his flock), John 10:14-15, 26
 - The church, Acts 20:28
 - The elect, Romans 8:32-34
- (ii) Texts showing that Jesus' death actually works salvation
 - 1 Peter 3:18, Romans 5:9
- (iii) Texts showing that if Jesus died for you then you will receive all blessings
 - Romans 6:5, Romans 8:32-34

(c) Five big problems if Jesus did die for every single individual

- (i) Jesus' death saves no-one
- (ii) God is unjust, punishing the same sins twice
- (iii) Penal substitution is not true
- (iv) The will and plan of God fails
- (v) The will of God is divided

(d) What about Bible texts speaking of “all”, “every”, the “world”?

(e) In our evangelism can't we say that “Christ died for you?”

(f) If God loves everyone surely Jesus must have died for everyone?

6. HOMEWORK

For reflection:

- Read, pray and worship in the light of Isaiah 53:4-6
- Read Charles Wesley's hymn) and think about its words

1. **Yes, finished! The Messiah dies,**
cut off for sins, but not his own;
completed is the sacrifice,
the great redeeming work is done.
Yes, finished! all the debt is paid,
justice divine is satisfied,
the grand and full atonement made:
God for a guilty world has died!

2. The temple curtain is torn down,
the living way to heaven is seen;
through Christ, the middle wall has gone
and all who will may enter in.
The ancient shadows are fulfilled,
the law's harsh sentence is applied,
the sinless Lamb of God is killed,
the covenant is ratified.

3. The reign of sin and death is done,
and all may live, from sin set free;
Satan and his pretended throne
are swallowed up in victory.
Saved from the curse of God I am;
my Saviour hangs upon a tree!
See there the meek and silent Lamb;
his final breath he breathes for me.

4. In Christ accepted and brought near
and clothed in righteousness divine,
I see the path to life made clear,
and all your merits, Lord, are mine.
Death, hell and sin are now subdued,
all grace is now to sinners given,
and so I plead the atoning blood
and by your gift, receive your heaven.

Charles Wesley 1707-88
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Next week: Jesus' resurrection, ascension and heavenly rule

- Please read 1 Corinthians 15