

# Amazing Grace: Intro to Reformed Theology

## Week 6 - *Limited Atonement*

*Protestant Reformation* - “A 16<sup>th</sup> century movement that rediscovered the true message of the gospel that man is saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone, all to the glory of God alone.”

*Reformed Theology* - “An expression of the Christian faith that is centered and grounded on the Sovereignty of God in all things.”

The 5 Points of Calvinism (main distinctive of RT)

- T - total depravity
- U - unconditional election
- **L - limited atonement**
- I - irresistible grace
- P - perseverance of the saints

### Atonement

- To make a payment, to set things right
- OT sacrifices were established to atone for humanity’s sin (blood covered the sin)
- The perfect sacrifice of Jesus fulfilled the law and atoned for humanity’s sin once and for all
- Jesus made atonement through both substitution and satisfaction (Galatians 3:13)

### Limited

- Quality vs Quantity
- Nothing to do with power (completely sufficient), but design....atonement was designed for the elect
- Christ’s atoning work makes salvation not only possible but actual and certain

### Biblical Defense of Limited Atonement

- John 6:37-39 (certainty)
- John 10:27-30 (specific)
- John 17:6-12 (definite)

### Objections to Limited Atonement

- John 3:16
- 2 Peter 3:9

- If Christ's atonement was for the potential salvation for every single human being without exception, then Christ died in vain (Atonement wasn't made twice)
- Context is critical!

**Why Does It Matter? (practical application)**

- Christ actually accomplished my salvation (doesn't depend on me)
- Motivation for evangelism and missions
- God's love is particular
- Our treatment of the Bride of Christ

**Reflection Questions Below**

## Reflection Questions

1. All Christians, unless they are universalists (i.e. those who believe all people will be saved), believe that Christ's atonement on the Cross was "sufficient for all," but "efficient for some." Said another way, the value and merit of Jesus' atoning death is limitless, but not all people receive the benefits of Christ's atoning death (namely, those who do not believe).

How should we define the term "limited atonement"? In what way is it limited? How does this differ from other views on the atonement?

2. One of the key difference between the Reformed view and other views is that the Reformed view argues that Jesus' atonement does more than make salvation *possible*, and actually *accomplishes* the salvation of the elect. On the other hand, the Arminian view (and others) argues that Jesus' atonement is for all people in exactly the same way, making it *possible* to be saved *if* you choose to believe and remain a believer throughout your life.

Discuss the differences between these views.

3. Pastor Rob discussed three passages from John's Gospel to demonstrate that Jesus' saving work is *certain* (John 6:37-39), *specific* (10:27-30), and *definite* (17:6-12).

Read these three passages, discussing each one individually. How do these passages relate to the question of limited vs. universal atonement?

4. Pastor Rob discussed a few passages that are sometimes seen as major challenges for the Reformed view on this issue (John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9). How do we read those texts in light of John's Gospel? How does the context help us to interpret these texts well?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of each view? Which view do you find most compelling?

5. Personalize this doctrine – what does it mean for you to know that Jesus died for you specifically, individually, and intentionally? The Scriptures say that Jesus went to the Cross with "joy set before him" (Heb. 12:2) because he was going to accomplish the salvation of his people.

How does this help encourage and strengthen us practically for a life of confidence in what God has done in Christ?