

God's Sovereign Saving Grace

*Total Inability - Unconditional Election - **Definite Atonement** - Invincible Grace
Conversion - Justification - Adoption - Sanctification - Perseverance - Glorification*

The Doctrine of Definite Atonement: The Bible teaches that Jesus died in the place of His people in order to secure their salvation. Jesus came to earth in order to provide a way for those chosen by the Father to be saved from sin and its effects.

The Question:

When Jesus died on the cross, did He pay for the sins of the entire human race or only for the sins of those whom He knew would ultimately be saved? Here are the four options...

1. He died for all the sins of all people.
2. He died for all the sins of some people.
3. He died for some of the sins of all people.
4. He died for some of the sins of some people.

The Non-Reformed or Arminian View:

- since the gospel is offered to all people, and this offer is genuine, therefore Jesus must have paid the penalty for sins for all people
- if Jesus did not die in the place of all men, the gospel cannot be freely and in good conscience offered to all people

The Reformed or Calvinistic View:

- if Jesus died for all people, then all people will be saved without exception since in His substitutionary death Jesus accomplished salvation
- if God condemned to eternal judgment those whose sins were paid for that would demand double payment and make God unjust

New Testament Words That Describe Aspects of the Atonement:

"sacrifice" - to make an offering for sin in order to erase our guilt

- Hebrews 9:11-14 "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

"purchase" - buying us to bring us to God and out of the clutches of Satan

- 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20 "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

"redeem" - set free from our bondage to sin by the paying of a price

- Titus 2:13-14 "...waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all

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lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."

"propitiation" - removing God's rightful and just wrath toward us

- Hebrews 2:17 "Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

"reconcile" - removing our alienation from God and replacing it with love

- Romans 5:10,11 "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."

What We Learn: Jesus' atonement was definite and effectual: It fully satisfied God's justice, fully paid the debt of sin, and fully saved those He died for.

Why a Limited Atonement?

- What is limited is not the *effectiveness* or value of the atonement, but its *application*. The atonement is applied only to those Christ died for.

To the Word: For Whom Does the Bible Teach Christ Died?

- John 10:11-15 "I am the good shepherd. *The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.* ... I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and *I lay down my life for the sheep.*"
- Acts 20: 28 "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for *the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*"
- Ephesians 5: 2, 25 "And walk in love, as Christ loved us and *gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*" "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and *gave himself up for her...*"
- Romans 5:6-11 "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – but God shows his love for us in that *while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God." Note the context here: this verse is addressed to Christians alone!
- Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a *ransom for many.*"

What About "Whosoever Will?"

Some passages use words like "all" or "world" as they describe the atonement. Most of the time, a careful look at the context will make it clear that the "all" is limited to a certain group, meaning all without distinction, not all without exception. (Example from Mark 1:5: "And *all* the country of Judea was going out to him, and *all* the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.")