

The Atonement of Jesus Christ Applied

Introduction:

For centuries there has been much heated controversy over the “value” of Christ’s atoning death.

The Calvinists teach a “limited atonement” — holding the death of Christ to be sufficient just for the elect. The Arminians hold that Christ died for all men in such a way that they can all be saved through their cooperation with God. (So-called “Four-point Calvinists” reject the notion of a limited atonement, but this is of no real consequence since they hold that only the elect will be saved.)

During the 18th and 19th centuries, English Baptists were divided by this issue — the Particular Baptists believing in a limited atonement for a particular group (the elect), and the General Baptists holding to a general atonement.

The Issue for us is, “What does the Bible teach?” When the Word of God is honestly studied, the conclusion is that neither Calvinism or Arminianism is Scriptural.

I. The Scope of Christ’s Atoning death.

The Bible knows nothing of a “limited atonement.”

The atonement of Jesus Christ is unlimited in its invitation, but limited in its application.

The atonement is sufficient for all men, and efficient for all who believe.

See: Romans 3:22 “...unto all and upon all that believe.” This verse teaches that salvation is freely offered to all, but is only for all who trust Christ.

See also: I Timothy 4:10.

A. Christ Died for the Whole World

Isaiah 53:6; Luke 19:10; John 1:29; 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; II Corinthians 5:19; I Timothy 1:15; 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; I John 2:2; 4:14.

No Scripture teaches that Christ died only for a chosen few.

B. Salvation is Freely Offered to all Men

John 1:12; 6:37; Romans 10:13; Revelation 22:17.

Note: An unlimited atonement does not mean an unlimited salvation — it must be appropriated personally by each person.

Note: The standard Calvinist reasoning here is, that if the Atonement is unlimited, then Christ died in vain, since all will not [cannot] be saved. The fact is, that on the Day of Judgment no hellhound sinner will be able to say, “No one died for me!” or, “There wasn’t enough blood to cover my sins!” How greatly the unlimited atonement magnifies God’s justice.

II. The Nature of Christ’s Atoning death.

A. Christ Suffered a Physical Death.

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He died physically, which involved the separation of His soul and spirit from His body.
See: Luke 23:46

B. Christ Suffered a Spiritual Death.

He died spiritually, which meant He was cut off from God. See: Matthew 27:46

He who from all eternity past was in the bosom of the Father was God-forsaken, Why?
See: II Corinthians 5:21.

C. Christ Suffered a Judicial Death.

He paid the wages of sin in full. I Corinthians 15:3

Note: Ezekiel 18:4 "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die."; Romans 6:23

D. Christ Suffered an Intense Death.

He was able to (and did) suffer for all the sins, past, present, and future, of the whole world.

John 1:29; Hebrews 2:9; I Peter 2:24.

III. The Value of Christ's Atoning Death

A. In General

1. A Day of Salvation is Initiated.

A period of grace has come upon the world — God's hand of judgment is delayed, and all men everywhere have an opportunity to be saved.
II Peter 3:9; II Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:13-15.

2. A Propitiation is Provided.

The way of Salvation is now made available to all men — John 12:32
("all men" = "all races")

B. In Nature

God's creation is tainted with sin. Christ's death now assures a "new creation" to come.

Romans 8:19-23; Colossians 1:19, 20; Revelation 20:11; 21:1

C. To the Believer

1. The Power of sin has been broken — Romans 6:14.

2. The Curse of the Law has been lifted — Galatians 3:13.

3. Deliverance from bondage is provided — Galatians 4:3-5.

4. The barrier of race is broken down — Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 3:11.

5. A New Relationship with God is secured — Romans 5:10.

6. Fellowship with God is restored — Ephesians 2:13.

7. Peace is made — Romans 5:1

8. There is Forgiveness of sins — Ephesians 1:7.

9. There is Cleansing from Sin — I John 1:7, 9.

10. There is Justification before God — Acts 13:39; Romans 5:9.

11. There is no more Condemnation — Romans 8:1.

12. There is no more Fear of Death — Hebrews 2:14, 15.

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13. There is Sanctification unto God — Hebrews 13:12.

14. There are Spiritual Blessings Received — John 14:13; Romans 8:32; Galatians 3:14; Ephesians 1:3; Hebrews 9:15.

15. An Eternal Inheritance is Received — I Peter 1:4.

D. To Satan.

1. Satan is Defeated.

Satan is not yet bound as he will be during the Millennium (Revelation 20:2-3), but he is judged and his doom is sealed because of Calvary — John 12:31.

The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ delivered a “death-blow” to the devil. He is mortally wounded — we may say we are living in the days of his “death_throes.”

2. Satan's Hosts Are Defeated Hosts. — Colossians 2:15

IV. The Atonement and Healing

One of the cornerstones of Pentecostal and Charismatic theology is that there is physical healing in the atonement. These groups generally believe that the death of Christ provides both spiritual and physical salvation — primarily based upon I Peter 2:24 which cites Isaiah 53:5.

The atonement of Christ does not provide physical healing, and this is seen from the following:

A. The Context of I Peter 2:24 Indicates this healing is Salvation.

1. “Ye Were healed” — indicating a past event, not continued healing.

2. Verse 25 — continues the thought of verse 24 and indicates healing from the effects of sin.

B. The Fact that many Believers are not healed.

II Corinthians 12:7-10; Philipians 2:26-27; I Timothy 5:23.

C. The fact of the General Bible teaching concerning healing.