



**What is the Atonement?
Romans 3:21-26
#1661 November 1, 2009 pm
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I. Introduction

A. Why did Jesus Christ die?

II. Proposition

A. The righteousness of God is manifested in the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus, which is the ground of redemption to all who believe.

III. Foundational Truth

A. **The wrath of God is revealed against all who sin (1:18-19).**

1. The Human Condition: All (Jew & Gentile) have sinned and deserve God's wrath (3:9-18, 22-23).
2. By our continual sinful activity, we are storing up wrath for ourselves (1:28-2:5)
 - a. God is shown to be righteousness in His judgment against sin (3:5-6).
 - b. But, in fact, God chose to save and this too shows His righteousness (1:16-17).

IV. Questions Raised:

A. **What moved God to save?**

1. God was NOT moved to save us based upon anything in us (Eph. 1:11-12).
2. Ultimately, God was moved to save in order to show Himself all glorious!
 - a. God is shown to be all glorious in His justice; He is also all glorious in mercy (9:22-29)!

B. **Why couldn't God just forgive our sins?**

1. ILLUS: Someone rapes and kills your family, is caught and brought before a judge . . .
 - a. What would justice demand?
2. God would not be just if He did not punish sin!

C. **Was there any other way to save us other than Jesus dying for our sins?**

1. God did NOT have to save us, but once He decided, He HAD to send Christ in the flesh (Heb. 2:14-18).

V. Doctrine Explained: Romans 3:21-26

A. **God displays His righteousness by putting Jesus forward as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin (3:21-26).**

1. God's putting forth Jesus as a propitiatory sacrifice was not plan B; it was attested by the law and prophets (3:21; cf Exodus 12 [Passover]; Leviticus 16 [Day of Atonement]; Isaiah 52:13-53:12).
 - a. As a propitiatory sacrifice, Jesus absorbs God's wrath against sin for Jew and Gentile (3:22-26).
 - b. Penal substitution – Jesus is a substitute who takes our penalty for sin.
 - 1). As a substitute – Jesus lived a perfect life for us (Romans 5:18-19).
 - 2). As a substitute – Jesus received the penalty for our sin.

VI. More Questions Raised

A. For whom did Christ die?

1. Evangelicals agree that . . .
 - a. Christ's death is sufficient to pay the penalty for all (with Arminians)
 - b. The gospel is to be freely offered to all (with Arminians and contra hypercalvinism)
 - c. Not all will be saved (contra universalism): thus, Jesus' death not propitiatory for all.
2. The Bible seems to indicate that Jesus died for a particular people: particular redemption.
 - a. The Father delights in giving a particular people to the Son (John 6:37a).
 - b. The Son delights in receiving and keeping the people whom the Father has given Him (6:37b-40).
 - c. The Father assures that those whom He gives to the Son come to the Son (6:41-48).
 - 1). Jesus knows for whom He died (John 10:14-17)
3. From our perspective, we can say Jesus died for all who believe (Romans 3:21-26; cf. 1:16-17).
 - a. Therefore, we are to offer the gospel to ALL, without distinction!

B. How should we live in light of the doctrine of the atonement?

1. A biblical understanding of the atonement leads us to worship.
 - a. We are brought low (Rom. 3:27) and Christ is exalted (Rev. 5:6-14).
2. A biblical understanding of the atonement helps us take sin seriously and pursue holiness (Rom. 6:1-14).
3. A biblical understanding of the atonement delivers us from seeking revenge (Rom. 12:19-20).
 - a. These truths free us to love our neighbor and bring them the good news of the Christ!
4. A biblical understanding of the atonement grants us confidence in God's Word and assurance of our salvation (Rom. 8:28ff).

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