

The L in Tulip, The Limited Atonement of Christ's Blood

The Arminian View	The Calvinist View
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>L</u></p> <p>Christ's death was for all men without exception making salvation possible if they believe; Or, Universal merits of Christ; Or, Universal atonement.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>L</u></p> <p>Jesus' death saved His people from their sins; Or, The limited atonement of Christ's shed blood.</p>

It is necessary for everyone who genuinely desires to know the truth of the whole topic of *grace* to reserve judgment until having read or heard the entire argument. (Pv.18.13) Faith is a system of interrelated doctrines. Arminianism is a system. Calvinism is a system. Presbyterianism, Methodism, Lutheranism, and so forth are all examples of systems of faith. Each of these have divisions of systems. The Baptists have various systems and divisions as well. Not only are there the SBC, ABA, BMA, BBF, and many independent churches but even within theses are divisions. The faith of Christ is a system of doctrinal and practical theology. What we must do is to conclude with that personal system which accords with the Word of God. Knowing this, we should find a church of like *faith* and *order* as we perceive the Scriptures to teach. The doctrine of grace is a system within a system.

The that we consider today is, 'For whom did Jesus Christ die?' Did our Lord Jesus Christ die for all men without exception and thereby make salvation possible for everyone? Or, did He die for all men without distinction making salvation sure to those for whom He died? There are Scriptures that seem to teach both positions.

*1Jo 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.***

*Mt 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: **for he shall save his people from their sins.***

While, personally, I cannot answer every question that concerns this topic, my stance is that, being there is no contradictory statement in the Bible, the

prevailing truth serves as a governor of my mind until such a time that further illumination overrules. At which time I can and should change my mind to agree with the Word of God more. We all have an imperfect understanding of the Word of God and are always growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The true doctrines of the Lord, stand as one harmonious body of truth. However, for us there are, so to speak, a few bugs still to be worked out.

Two of the most prominent issues that obstruct the saints from drawing good, sound conclusions from Scripture is mostly attributable to the lack of considering *context* and *definition*. We cannot afford to be ignorant of the context in which Scripture is placed.

Biblical Hermeneutics, Milton S. Terry, p.210, 'The word *context*, as the etymology intimates (Latin, *con*, together, and *textus*, woven), denotes something that is woven together, and, applied to a written document, it means the connexion of thought supposed to run through every passage which constitutes by itself a whole. By some writers it is called *the connexion*. The immediate context is that which immediately precedes or follows a given word or sentence. The remote context is that which is less closely connected, and may embrace a whole paragraph or section.'

Two of the most improperly defined words in the Bible are the words *all* and *world*. Therefore, two of the most misunderstood statements of Scripture that should be interpreted by context and, if need be, by the prevailing truth of God's Word are:

*1Ti.2.1 ¶ I exhort therefore, that, first of **all**, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for **all** men;
2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.
3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;
4 Who will have **all** men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

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*1Jo 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole **world**.*

These are probably two of the most frequently cited texts in opposition to the doctrines called Calvinism, or doctrines of grace. But while there might be a few texts Scripture which have the appearance of Arminianists viewpoint, if the preponderance of the Bible teaches the doctrines of *grace*, then we are obliged to understand them in the light of *grace*, not Arminianism. Our concerns is not with trying to strike a *balance*. We are concerning with receiving and believing the truth as it is delivered to us.

First, to determine those for whom Christ died, let us consider **to whom** the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is directed. No less than 16 times do we find the words *He that hath, Who hath, If any man hath, And If any man have ... an ear(s) to hear, let him hear*. (Interestingly enough the number 16 stands as that number associated with the love of God.)

Mr 4:9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

What is meant by this statement? From the beginning let me state that grace does not exclude preaching Christ indiscriminately to every creature. Those who hold true to the doctrines of grace do not deny this commission. Having spoken with a number of Arminianists I know that this comes as quite a surprise to them. Grace churches are evangelistic.

Mr 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

But now we must ask ourselves, 'Does every man have ears to hear?' Can we say that this statement was directed to every soul without exception? No it does not say that. This statement has a qualification within it. Those that are bidden to hear must be qualified to hear. They must have *ears to hear*. The text does not say, 'Everyone hear me!' By searching the Scriptures we conclude that only those given the grace to hear can hear.

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1Co.2.7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

*9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, (yet they had eyes, and could not see) nor ear heard, (yet they had ears, and could not hear) neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared **for them that love him**. (God has prepared something specially for them, not everyone. And who is *them*? They are the ones that love Him.)*

*10 But **God hath revealed them unto us** by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

Mk.4.20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

We acknowledge that the Lord made all the ears and all the eyes,

Pv.20.12 ¶ The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

but just as he did not make every eye to see or every ear to hear after the natural order (Jn.9.25-27; Acts 9.8), neither did he make them so in the spiritual. So the gospel is directed to those whose spiritual ears are opened to hear the Word. In the next verse we find that the Word of the Lord is directed to all that *fear God*.

Ac 13:26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

Then we read that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, not to everyone, but to those who believe.

*Ro 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation **to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

*Eph.1.13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, **the gospel of your salvation**: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise ...*

Now, to determine those for whom Christ died, let us consider briefly to whom his love is directed. Does God love everyone without exception? The very first instance of the expression of the love of God is found in Ex. 20.6.

Ex 20:6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

The Lord states that he loves those that love him. We need to know more of this love. He loves Israel. But particularly he loves the remnant that is in it.

*De 7:7 The LORD did not **set his love** upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people...*

By the Word of God we must qualify the love God. He does not love all men without exception.

*Ro 9:13 As it is written, Jacob **have I loved**, but Esau have I hated.*

Ps 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. (The eternal God is not angry and loving at the same time to the same people.

Jer 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Since it is an everlasting love it cannot change in all of eternity and throughout all of time. God does not love one and then change His mind later to hate, or visa versa. This refers to His love for his remnant. [vs. 1], and His love for them is eternal.)

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And while we contemplate the love of God, recall that there are untold numbers of Gentiles upon whom was never set this discriminating and eternal love.

Since we read that the Lord loves those who love Him, how does any sinner come to love the Lord? From our first lesson on depravity the sinner cannot and will not love God. It takes a sovereign act of God first. By so doing, the Lord loves those who love Him.

Deu.30.6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

(We could read Isaiah chapter 69. This tells the whole story of Israel's rebellion to their final salvation. Especially verses 5-10, 17-19.)

What is the testimony of Scripture of all that love the Lord?

1Jo 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

*1Jo 4:19 We love him, **because** he first loved us.*

The answer is that His love is bestowed.

1Jo 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

His love is a discriminating love. He loves those whom He chastens. He does not chasten everyone.

Re 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

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Heb 12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

There are those who will never love the Lord because their father is not God, but Satan. They were children of the devil. The seed of the woman was never the seed of the serpent. (cf. Ge. 3.15)

Joh 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Next, to determine those for whom Christ died, let us consider who these people are. There is a special people to the Lord in all the earth.

Joh 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Throughout the Bible there are many terms used to define two people in the earth.

Those who are not the people of God	Those who are not the people of God
wolves and goats	sheep
lost	saved
chaff	wheat
children of the devil	children of the woman
evil	good
unjust	just
unrighteous	righteous
those who are hardened	those who obtain mercy
vessels of wrath	vessels of mercy
a lump to dishonor	a lump to honor

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the ordained to condemnation the hated cast away	the ordained to eternal life the loved elect
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If we would believe in the God of the Bible rather than the false god that religion has created from their own imagination we would understand that this is all the more true. God knows from eternity who are His. He knows the end from the beginning. That is why the angel could report to Joseph, as our Lord's earthly body was being carried about in the womb of Mary,

*Mt 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he **shall save** his people from their sins.*

of a sure salvation for the people of God. The angel did not declare a possibility. He declared with an absolute certainty that His God would do what He purposed from eternity.

Who are these people that Jesus shall save? To all who object to the doctrines of grace, there are two considerations that are commonly overlooked. First, what about the masses of Gentiles who have been born since Adam to this time? Second, what about the angels. (1Ti.5.21; Jude v.6) I've never heard an Arminian complain how apparently unjust it is for God not to have given all angels the same supposed opportunity to be saved. Yet, there is no denying that just as there is an election of angels not to fall, there is an election of mankind unto salvation. Who does Mt.1.21 refer to? Who are these that Jesus shall save? Was He referring to all of the Jews? No. He was referring to those the Father had given to Him.

*Joh 17:2 (Our Lord Jesus praying to the Father and speaking in the 3rd person.) [T]hou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many **as thou hast given him**.*

Some of the elect were of the Jewish people:

*Joh 1:11 He came unto his own, and **his own received him not**.*

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12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power [the right or authority] to become the sons of God, **even to them that believe** on his name: (Notice that the sons of God are define ... even to them that believe.)*
13 *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

All of them are called to Christ:

*Ac 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even **as many as the Lord our God shall call.***

All of them are known by name and hear His voice:

Jn.10.1 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

*3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and **he calleth his own sheep by name**, and leadeth them out.*

*4 And when he putteth forth **his own sheep**, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for **they know his voice.***

All of them shall come to repentance and faith in Christ:

*2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but **is longsuffering to us-ward** (literally, to us), not willing that any should perish (any who ... of us), but **that all** (of us) should come to repentance.*

What a distinction can be seen in those for whom Christ did **not** die. And keep in mind, the only difference between us and them is *the grace of God* in Christ Jesus:

*Mt 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, **who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** (The obvious answer to this question is, John did not, and neither did Jesus.)*

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Jn.8.39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (Our Lord is referring to the text of Ge.3.15, and the distinct seeds in the world.)

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

Jn.10.24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

*25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and **ye believed not**: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.*

*26 But **ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep**, as I said unto you.*

*27 **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:***

*28 **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish**, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

The conclusion is that, since the gospel and the love of God have a specific people for its object, then the atonement of Christ applies only to them. The doctrine of limited atonement or particular redemption is a true doctrine of Scripture. It harmonizes with the whole theme of an absolutely Sovereign God. The doctrine

of Arminianism on the other hand relegates God to being a *spectator* in those being saved.

Let me ask this. In all of the O.T. sacrifices was there ever a sacrifice that Israel offered that atoned for the sins of the Gentile world? No. Their sacrifices provided a temporary covering for the sins of the nation of Israel, and no more. As limited an application of all of the O.T. sacrifices had to Israel, so Christ's sacrifice was limited to His own elect people.

*Joh 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd **giveth his life for the sheep.***

...

*15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and **I lay down my life for the sheep.***

*16 And **other sheep I have**, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

When Jesus said that he gives His life for the sheep, and for other sheep that were not of this fold, He meant that the benefits of his death was limited to them. The sheep are some of Israel and some that are scattered among the nations of the gentiles. Our Lord's statement means that He did not die for wolves and goats, the chaff, the children of the devil, the evil which remain evil, the unjust that remain unjust, the unrighteous that remain unrighteous, for those who are hardened, for the vessels of wrath, for the lump made to dishonor, for the ordained to condemnation, for the hated of God, and for the castaways. (Re.22.11)

*Isa 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and **to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?***

We could read all of the personal pronouns in Isaiah chapter 53. Do that sometime. It is a real blessing to see the love of God for His people, all of the elect.

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*Isa 53: 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant **justify many**; for he shall bear their iniquities. (Who are the many? The same whose sins He shall bear.)*

*12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and **he bare the sin of many**, and made intercession for the transgressors. (It does not say that Christ bore the sins of all world without exception else the whole world would believe and be saved. That is not the testimony of the Bible.)*

*Ac 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which **he hath purchased with his own blood**. (... all the flock, the church of God.)*

Re 1: 4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

*5 And from **Jesus Christ**, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that **loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood ...***

*Re 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for **thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation...*

These plural possessive pronouns necessarily excludes – them.

In closing, an answer to these Scriptures that we cited in the beginning as presenting an apparent contradiction:

That the Lord will save men of various authority:

1Ti 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

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1Jo 2:2 And he is the propitiation (LXX, atonement, the place of propitiation, forgiveness; Christ is the person and the place of mercy.) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (This at least emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ's atonement for every one of the elect of God, from now unto the end.)

When we consider that the elect *before the foundation of the world* were given by the Father to the Son from eternity; that the Son stood as a Lamb slain from that same eternal perspective; that their every name was known to him then; that His death atoned for their sins against God; that every one of them shall be saved; what else can we conclude but that the Bible teaches a limited atonement or particular redemption? The Word of God states this so simple that every child of God can perceive it and believe it, if they will but put away all of the personal bias and every other opinion of man. Let us learn to take the Word of God at face value.