

Title: **THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION**

Text: Romans 3:25

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Subject: *Propitiation, Atonement, and Reconciliation*

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Tape # Z-56a

Introduction:

Last Tuesday I tried to show you the necessity of our Lord's death, why it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to make satisfaction for our sins. Tonight, I want to pick up right where I left off last week, and show you **THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION**.

Gospel preachers speak frequently about the satisfaction of Christ, declaring that he has both made satisfaction for the sins of his people and that he shall forever be satisfied with the results of his finished work. Be sure you understand this. It is crucial to the gospel. Indeed, this matter of Christ making satisfaction and of Christ being satisfied is the gospel.

1. **The Lord Jesus Christ satisfied the law and justice of God for his people when he suffered and died as our substitute upon the cursed tree.**

- By obeying all the precepts of God's holy law as a man he fulfilled it as our Representative and brought in everlasting righteousness for us (Romans 5:12-19).
- By dying under the curse of the law, bearing our sins, bearing its penalty to the full extremity of Divine justice, dying as our Substitute under the wrath of God, our all-glorious Christ satisfied the wrath and justice of God for us (Galatians 3:13).
- Thus he put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself (Hebrews 9:27).
- He has forever secured for his people complete, total immunity from all the evil consequences of their sins (Romans 5:8).
- He has secured the eternal salvation of God's elect, by his satisfaction, making it impossible for God in justice to impute our sins to us (Hebrews 9:12).

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- By faith in him we receive this salvation that Christ obtained (Romans 4:25-5:5).
2. **Having satisfied he law and justice of God for us, we are assured that our great Redeemer shall see of the travail of his souls and shall be satisfied.**

He will see his people, every one of them saved: justified, sanctified, and glorified. Not one ransomed sinner shall perish under the wrath of God. This is the good news we declare in the gospel. (Isa. 40:1-2).

(Isaiah 40:1-2) “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
(2) Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”

That is, in a nut shell, the doctrine of Christ’s Satisfaction. As we look at these **THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION** as they are set before us in Holy Scripture, you will have no trouble following me. If you are taking notes, I want to talk to you about these three things: propitiation, atonement, and reconciliation. May God the Holy Spirit be our Teacher and make these three aspects of Christ’s satisfaction a blessing to each of you by his grace.

PROPIFIATION

The word “propitiation” is used three times in the New Testament. In all three places we are told that Christ is our propitiation. The very same Greek word translated “propitiation” in the New Testament is translated “mercy seat” in the Greek version of Exodus 25:21 and in Hebrews 9:5. Whenever you read or think “mercy seat” always think “propitiation.” “Mercy seat” means “propitiation.”

(Exodus 25:21) “And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.”

(Hebrews 9:5) “And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.”

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You will recall that the mercy seat which covered the ark of the covenant and covered God's broken law, upon which the cherubim were fixed, upon which they constantly looked, was the place where the atonement blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled. The mercy seat was the seat of Divine Majesty where God promised to meet his people in mercy. To the mercy seat men were bidden look in the hope of obtaining mercy from and communing with God through the blood of the accepted ceremonial sacrifice, just as we are bidden to come to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need because there Christ has sprinkled his blood.

The publican mentioned by our Lord in Luke's Gospel had a glimpse of Christ as the one represented in the mercy seat. He cried, "*God be merciful,*" be propitious, "*to me a sinner.*" He sought mercy through the propitiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Now let's look at the places in Scripture where this word "propitiation" is used in reference to our Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 3:25

The first place where the word "*propitiation*" is used this way is found in Romans 3:25.

(Romans 3:25) "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

The Lord Jesus Christ was set forth by God the Father to be our propitiation. — He is the One who has made propitiation for us, the One in whom propitiation is found, the One for whose sake God is propitious to sinners, and the One who is himself our Propitiation. Christ is our Mercy Seat. He alone is the place where God meets with sinners, receives us, and blesses us.

- Christ is the One by whom justice has been appeased.
- He is the One who is our Peace.
- He is the propitiatory Sacrifice for our sins.

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Just as God, in the Old Testament types smelled the sweet savor of the typical, legal sacrifices, and was ceremonially content with them, so Christ's precious blood is a sweet smelling savor to him.

John Gill said, "His sacrifice was an offering of a sweet smelling savour to (the Father). He was well pleased with it. It gave him content and satisfaction, because his justice was appeased by it, and the demands of his law were answered, yea, it was magnified and made honorable."

The Spirit of God declares (Rom. 3:25) that God the Father has set Christ forth as propitiation. How has he done so? **How has God the Father set forth his dear Son as our Mediator to be the propitiation for our sins?**

Obviously, Paul does not suggest that the Son was compelled to be subservient to the Father. Not at all. This thing was agreed upon by both the Father and the Son. The Son was just as willing to be our Propitiation as the Father is willing to receive his propitiatory sacrifice. Yet, the Holy Spirit here tells us that it was God the Father who set forth his Son to be a propitiation. How has he done so?

1. **Christ was set forth to be the propitiation for our sins in the eternal purposes and decrees of God.** — He is the Lamb of God who, verily, was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be slain as the ransom price and propitiatory sacrifice for his people. His sufferings and death as such were according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (1 Pet. 1:19; Acts 2:23; 4:28).

(1 Peter 1:18-20) "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; (19) But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: (20) Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

(Acts 2:23) "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"

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(Acts 4:28) “For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”

2. **Christ was set forth to be our Propitiation in all the promises, prophecies, and pictures of the Old Testament Scriptures.** — He is the Seed of the woman promised to Adam and Eve in the Garden who must come to crush the serpent's head. — He is the paschal lamb, the brazen serpent, the morning and evening sacrifice, and the promised Substitute of whom the prophets wrote.

3. **In the fulness of time the Son of God was set forth as our Propitiation in human flesh.** — He was actually made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem his people who were under the law (Rom. 5: 6; Gal. 4:4-5).

(Romans 5:6) “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

(Galatians 4:4-5) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

4. **Our Lord Jesus is still set forth to be the Propitiation for our sins, and shall be until time shall be no more, in the gospel.** — In the Book of God — By the Servants of God — By the Spirit of God.

1 JOHN 2:2

Our Savior is also called the propitiation for our sins in 1 John 2:2.

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.”

Our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ is the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of God's elect Jews and Gentiles, throughout all the world, the sacrifice by and through which God is merciful to us, being pacified towards us for all that we are and all that we have done (Heb. 8:12; Ezek. 16:6).

(Hebrews 8:12) “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

(Ezekiel 16:63) “That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.”

1 JOHN 4:10

We see the same thing in 1 John 4:10.

(1 John 4:9-10) “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (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.”

Because of his great love for us God the Father sent his darling Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins by offering up his soul and body as a sacrifice to Divine justice to make atonement for us.

ATONEMENT

That brings me to my next point. As propitiation, or appeasement, is one aspect of Christ's satisfaction, a second aspect of it is atonement.

The word atonement is frequently used in the Old Testament in connection with the typical sacrifices of the law and making expiation of sin (Lev. 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 16:6, 10, 11, 16-18, 27, 30, 32-34; Lev. 17:11). The basic meaning of the word is “to cover”.

- The Pitch Used To Cover Noah's Ark
- The Sprinkled Blood Covering The Mercy Seat and The Ark.
- The Blood Upon The Door Posts and Lintel

Christ, by his sacrifice, the antitype of these, is a covering to his people, — from the curses of the law we have broken, — from the wrath of God we have deserved, — and from avenging justice of the holy Lord God to which our sins expose us.

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ROMANS 5:11

However, the word “atonement is only used one time in the New Testament. We find it only in Romans 5:11.

(Romans 5:11) “And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

This atonement was made for us by Christ our Surety, Head, and Representative. The knowledge, blessing, and benefit of it, the application of it, comes to us by the Spirit of God, who takes the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and applies to us, and shows us our interest the atonement, causing us and enabling us to receive the effect of it by trusting Christ. The effect of it is joy, peace, and comfort in the knowledge of redemption accomplished.

The word used here properly signifies “reconciliation”, and is translated that way at times, just as the Hebrew word for atonement is sometimes translated “reconcile” (Lev. 6:30). **The fact is atonement and reconciliation are two words that, in a sense, speak of the same thing. Both imply a satisfaction made for sin and accepted by God.** The word “*atonement*” means “at one with”. Believers are brought to be at one with God by the sin-atonement blood of Christ. As soon as you believe on the Son of God, you are at one with God because God has reconciled you to himself by the death of Christ for you. Now, let’s consider this third aspect of Christ’s Satisfaction.

RECONCILIATION

(2 Corinthians 5:18) “And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”

Ours is a ministry of reconciliation. We proclaim reconciliation accomplished and seek to persuade sinners who are by nature haters of God to be reconciled to him, bowing to and trusting his dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Reconciliation began with God himself, not with us. — “*All things are of God,*” in nature, providence, and grace, “*Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.*”

- Reconciliation began in the thoughts of his heart, which were thoughts of peace.
- It was brought up council chambers of eternity, and settled in covenant of grace and peace before the world began.
- It was executed and accomplished by Christ, by his death, and the blood of his cross (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20-22).

(Romans 5:10) “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

We were reconciled to God judicially “*by the death of his Son.*” We are reconciled to God experimentally by faith in his Son, “*by whom we have now received the atonement*” (Romans 5:11).

(Romans 5:11) “And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

(Ephesians 2:16) “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”

(Colossians 1:20-22) “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. (21) And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled (22) In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.”

The ransom price of Christ's blood was paid to God, against whom sin is committed, whose law we have broken, and whose justice we have offended, the Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16). **Christ's blood was shed to make a reconciliation for sin, to make atonement for it** (Daniel 9:24; Hebrews 2:17).

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(Daniel 9:24) “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

(Hebrews 2:17) “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

Christ died to reconcile men and women to God who are by nature of sinners and enemies in their minds to God (Romans 5:10 Colossians 1:21).

(Romans 5:10) “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

(Colossians 1:21) “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”

And all who have been reconciled to God by the sin-atonement death of his Son shall, at God's appointed time, be reconciled to him in their hearts by the power and grace of his Holy Spirit. Let me just show you three things from 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; and I will be done.

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

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1. **Reconciliation has been made for sinners by the death of Christ.** — The way is open for sinners to come near unto God and come with full assurance of faith. The way is Christ: His Propitiation and His Atonement.
2. **God Almighty has sent me to you with the Word of reconciliation to persuade you to be reconciled to him.** — Imagine that! God has sent a man to you with the Word of his grace; and God himself speaks through that man's voice and calls you to be reconciled to him!
3. **The motive by which God urges you to be reconciled to him is the blessed promise of all things new in Christ.**

Propitiation is the appeasement of God's wrath by the blood of Christ. — **Atonement** is union made between God and sinners meeting at the Mercy Seat, where Christ's blood covers our sins. — **Reconciliation** is reuniting of God and his elect in the person of his dear Son, both looking to the blood of atonement. Christ is our Propitiation. Christ is our Atonement. Christ is our Reconciliation. In him, by his blood and righteousness, by the power of his grace and in union with his Person, sinners are reunited to God forever!

(2 Corinthians 5:20-21) "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Soon our blessed Savior shall reconcile all things to God (Psalm 130:7-8; Acts 3:20-21; Ephesians 1:9-10).

(Psalms 130:7-8) "Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption. (8) And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

(Acts 3:20-21) "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: (21) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

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(Ephesians 1:9-10) “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (10) That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him.”

Amen.