

Evening Worship October 21, 2018

““Limited Atonement”

Matthew 7:13-14; Romans 9:22

I. *The simplest way to understand the doctrine of “limited atonement” is expressed by Jesus in Matthew 7:13-14, not everyone will be saved –*

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ “Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14 NKJ)

In fact, according to these verses above, the majority of people go in that broad way that leads to destruction; Hell! Jesus says this. How could he know this without things being predetermined? Foreknown?

Of course, the Arminian says that God does foreknow who is saved, or condemned without predetermining their salvation or condemnation. However this idea leads to all sorts of problems, which ultimately make the Arminian’s view, unless he denies God’s power - , “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. (Genesis 17:1 NKJ) virtually the same as the Calvinist’s for if God foreknows that some will be saved and yet many will be lost, if His ultimate goal, desire is to save EVERYONE, could not He in His almighty power somehow accomplish that?

Unless you strip God of His power, which is proclaimed throughout Scripture, you cannot say God foreknew who would be saved and who lost without His also predetermining, allowing it and yet that is what we see in Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus is telling us the majority of people will be in Hell, they wind up there, because of their sin!

*Calvinists assert God gave Adam and Eve, free wills, meaning they were free from sin. However, since their sin, mankind has walked in the ways of destruction –
And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the*

sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (Ephesians 2:1-3 NKJ)

II. *Now, there is a real, and powerful glory of God displayed in creation and God has reached out to mankind, so man is responsible for their sin –*

<To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.> The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. ² Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. (Psalm 19:1-3 NKJ)

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, (Romans 1:18-22 NKJ)

*Not only has God shown Himself to all, but to some or many He has given special revelation –
But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people.” (Romans 10:21 NKJ)*

Yet, when God displays Himself to all, and gives special privileges to some –

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵ of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. (Romans 9:1-5 NKJ)

And we REJECT both His glory and His grace, yelling - ..., “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” ...” (John 19:6 NKJ)

Is God wrong if He saves only some of the ALL that rejected Him? ---
As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJ)

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. (Romans 3:20-28 NKJ)

III. God not willing, vessels of wrath –

What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, (Romans 9:22 NKJ)

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9 NKJ)

There are two ways of understanding 2 Peter 3:9 that fit with limited atonement –

- 1. God is not willing that any (of His elect) should perish, but all come to repentance. God's ultimate, secret will is in view and of course, none of His elect perish!*
- 2. 2 Peter 3:9, when it says, God is not willing that any should perish is not an expression of God's unalterable secret will / but rather it is an expression of His revealed will which He calls all men to respond to, even despite their sinful inability. This is harder to understand than the its-the-elect-in-view in 2 Peter*

3:9 view but I believe it fits with Scripture and even with this passage –

"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, (Acts 17:30 NKJ)

The will of God pictured here is similar to God's prescriptive will which is expressed in the Ten Commandments, broken by men daily, and other commands –

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NKJ)

Was David an ungodly gentile? Was it God's will he abstain from sexual immorality? Did he? God's will written for David, written for us - "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14 NKJ) is broken by David, so is - "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13 NKJ)

Yet, God is sovereignly merciful to David in a way it seems he is not to Saul before him - <A Psalm of David. A Contemplation.> Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered.² Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. (Psalm 32:1-2 NKJ)

God extends a kind of longsuffering, patience, even to Pharaoh in that he gave him ten plagues, ten chances to repent, and even before plagues Pharaoh was exalted to a high position, you could say God was good to Pharaoh in that he almost certainly enjoyed privileges and pleasures, which others in his time only dreamed of ... He was a sort of opposite of Moses in this –

²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, (Hebrew 11:25 NKJ)

Yet he was prepared for God's wrath - What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, (Romans 9:22 NKJ)

This too (righteous wrath against sin) is God's purpose, prophesied – Revelation 6:13-17; 14:9-13; 19:15-21

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