

EXPIATION and PROPITIATION: Last time, we briefly mentioned the concepts of EXPIATION and PROPITIATION. Put simply, EXPIATION means “removal,” and PROPITIATION means “satisfaction” or “appeasement.” I note here:

- *Things* are expiated, *people* are propitiated. That is, sins (things) are expiated, or “removed”; God (a person) is propitiated, that is, His wrath is “satisfied” or “appeased.” Another way: The object of expiation is a thing; the object of propitiation is a person.
- The Old Testament illustration is the Day of Atonement (Lev 16), whereupon two goats were involved.
 - The first goat is KILLED as a sin offering, which symbolizes the propitiation of God’s wrath against sin (which deserves death; Rom 6:23).
 - The second goat is not killed, but is sent outside the camp into the wilderness/darkness as a symbol of the expiation (removal) of the sins of the people of Israel from their midst.
- The New Testament illustration of these concepts is the Cross itself.
 - The vertical beam of the Cross reminds us of the propitiating work of Christ on behalf of sinners, whereby He (Jesus) suffered under the righteous wrath against our sin, as our Substitute. Jesus propitiated/satisfied – vertically – the wrath of the Father against sin, so that we do not have to.
 - The horizontal beam of the Cross should remind us of the expiating work of Christ on behalf of sinners, whereby He (Jesus) has taken our sins upon Himself, removing them as far from us as the east is from the west (Psalms 103:12). Jesus expiated/removed our sins, as our Scapegoat, so that we bear them no more.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 4. This death is of such infinite value and dignity because the person who submitted to it was not only really man and perfectly holy, but also the only-begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, which qualifications were necessary to constitute Him a Savior for us; and, moreover, because it was attended with a sense of the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin.

I.e., The death of Jesus is sufficient to satisfy the infinite/eternal punishment that sinners deserve (Article II.1), because Jesus was not only a man (which qualifies Him to be a Substitute for men), but He was the divine Son of God, which was necessary because only *God* could suffer under the *wrath of God* and survive.

DOCTRINAL NOTE: When we bring people to Jesus, it is important that we bring them to the *real* Jesus, the *Biblical* Jesus. Jesus was not *merely* a great Teacher (though He was a great teacher); Jesus claimed to be God and we must affirm Him and proclaim Him as such. C. S. Lewis said that we **CANNOT** merely affirm Jesus as a great teacher, because by *claiming to be God*, He did not leave that option open to us ⇒ **LUNATIC, LIAR, LORD:** these are a man's only options!

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 5. Moreover, the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.

I.e., Whoever repents of their sin and believes/trusts in the finished work of Christ on the Cross will be saved and pass from death into eternal life. This is the wonderful promise of the Gospel, which ought to be declared to all persons. Period. This is our joyful work!

We withhold the Gospel from **NO ONE** for **NO REASON!**

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 6. And, whereas many who are called by the gospel do not repent nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves.

I.e., Not everyone to whom we witness personally will repent of their sin and believe in Jesus Christ for salvation and forgiveness of sins. This is not due to some defect in the Gospel message itself, but wholly due to the stubborn and resistant nature of the person who rejects the Gospel message.

EVANGELISTIC NOTE: We have a responsibility to minimize the barriers or “excuses” that others may have for not coming to Christ. In this, we should:

- Learn, know, and present the Gospel message in its most clear and accurate terms.
- Pray for opportunities to share the Gospel, and then pray also for wisdom and courage when those opportunities arise.
- Live our Christian lives in such a way so as to minimize the stumbling blocks that might turn others away from the Gospel. We should “be holy even as God is holy”; be in regular fellowship with other Believers at a strong, God-centered, Gospel-proclaiming church; and allow the offense of the Gospel to be seen clearly without adding to its offense in ourselves.