

## *Pulling It All Together*

Although I have suggested that the objection to the free offer, supposedly raised by unbelievers on the grounds of particular redemption, may not be as real for them as is often made out, nevertheless it is a genuine question which looms large in the minds of many believers, and has to be faced. As John Murray said: One question ‘which the free and unrestricted overture of grace makes unavoidable [is] the extent of the atonement’.<sup>349</sup> In particular, how does particular redemption affect the free offer? Does it mean its abolition? My answer is: Certainly not! And having set out my reasons at length, I conclude with a summary of the main points:

**What is offered in the free offer?** Full salvation in Christ. *Not that Christ died for you.*

**To whom is it offered?** To sinners, as sinners, all of them. *Not to sinners as elect sinners, sensible sinners, repentant sinners, awakened sinners, convicted sinners, redeemed sinners, conditionally-redeemed sinners, applicably-redeemed sinners, sufficiently-redeemed sinners, or any other sort of sinners. Just sinners.*

**What is the warrant for the offer?** God’s command. *Not that Christ died for all, whether absolutely, provisionally, conditionally, applicably or sufficiently.*

**Who will welcome the offer, and come to Christ?** Only the elect. *And no others.*

**How will they come?** Having been unconditionally elected by the Father, particularly redeemed by the Son, being effectually awakened by the Spirit, and brought in repentant faith to Christ. *And in no other way.*

**Does this not seem contradictory?** It certainly does.

**Can we explain this?** No.

**Does this matter?** No.

**Why not?** Because God in his word has not required us to explain it, and, consequently, not told us how to do it. Therefore we have no warrant or need to try. As a result, any explanation must be pure speculation, taking us beyond what is written, in an effort to be consistent according to mere human logic.

**The conclusion?** In our preaching to sinners, let us keep to the simplicity of the gospel: ‘Jesus... will save his people from their sins’ (Matt. 1:21). There is no call for adverbs to qualify the ‘save’ – adverbs such as ‘sufficiently’, ‘conditionally’, ‘applicably’ or ‘provisionally’. Christ died for his people to save them from their sins. And that is that! But when sinners have come to the Saviour, *then* they can say: ‘Christ... suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring *us* to God’ (1 Pet. 3:18); *then* they can rejoice individually in ‘the Son of God who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*’ (Gal. 2:20); *then* they can feel assured of their interest in the one ‘who gave himself for *our* sins, that he might deliver *us* from this present evil age, according to the will of *our* God and Father’ (Gal. 1:4); and *then* they can rest themselves in the one who ‘is faithful and just to forgive *us our* sins and to cleanse *us* from all unrighteousness’ (1 John 1:9). Yet, when preaching to unbelievers, what better terms can we use than: ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’ (1 Tim. 1:15)? There is no need for adjectives to qualify the ‘sinners’. What the sinner needs to hear is: ‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16). Consequently, ‘God... commands all men everywhere to repent’ (Acts 17:30); therefore, ‘believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved’ (Acts 16:31); for, ‘unless you repent you will all... perish’ (Luke 13:3,5); and so on.<sup>350</sup>

In other words, particular redemption does not hinder the free offer in any way whatsoever. Quite the opposite. In the free offer, all sinners are offered a definite, full redemption.