

Limited Atonement – Part 1

Sermon 5 in the Doctrines of Grace Series

Today's gospel has become – God loves you and Jesus died for you.
The true gospel message is – you must repent and believe the gospel.

I. Limited Atonement is a Christian Doctrine

While it is true that Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption) is a difficult doctrine – it is also true that every true Christian knows the atonement is limited. Only Universalists believe otherwise.

We must admit the limit of the atonement is either because it is only a potential atonement or it is God's purpose for the atonement.

John Owen, "It was then the purpose and intention of God that his Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth, value, and dignity, sufficient *in itself* for the redeeming of all and every man, **if it had pleased the Lord** to employ it **to that purpose**. (*Works*, vol. 10, pp. 295, 296) (emphasis mine)

II. Substitutionary Atonement is a Christian Doctrine

Galatians 3:13 -- Christ has redeemed **us** from the curse of the law, **having become a curse for us** (for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree").

2 Cor. 5:21 -- For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that **in him** we might become the righteousness of God. (R.V.)

1 Peter 2:24 – He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. (*obviously only applicable to Christians*)

1 Peter 3:18 -- For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ("might" does not mean maybe – it is part of a purpose clause)

Matthew 1:21 -- And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save **His people** from **their** sins."

III. The Purpose of the Atonement

A. The Triune God's Purpose in the Atonement Eph. 1:3-14

We see Trinitarian harmony in our salvation.

The Father elects 1:3-6

The Son redeems 1:7-12

The Holy Spirit seals 1:13-14

As we read these passages – take note of the pronouns.

B. The Purpose of the Atonement from the Mouth of an Opponent John 11:45-52

The context is the hostility and anger of the religious leaders. The religious leaders began to plot the execution of Jesus – but not just Jesus but also Lazarus whom he raised from the dead.

v. 51-Not only for that nation, only, but a substitutionary death for sin that would not be limited to Jews alone, but even to Gentile nations.

There is also exclusion: It was for the children of God who were scattered throughout the world that would be saved.

C. Christ's Purpose of Saving the Sheep John 10:11, 14-16, 25-30

We see purpose, along with inclusion and exclusion.

Revelation 5:9 -- “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals;
For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

D. Christ as our Great High Priest – John 17:1-3, 6, 9, 20, 24-26

- We don't know who the elect are – **until they believe** – but God knew them before the foundation of the world.
- We don't know who Jesus died for – **until they believe** – but Jesus died for the very ones the Father elected before time.
- We don't know when or to whom the Spirit **will apply** the work of Christ next but we can see the results where He HAS applied it.

John 3:8 – The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.