

Summer Dinner Series – The Big Ideas – Week 8

Why did Jesus die?

What did He accomplish in His death?

For whom did He die?

1) Why did Jesus die? or What as the ultimate cause (purpose) of Jesus' death?

Acts 4

²⁷for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

Is 53

¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

2 Cor 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

God ordered the death of Christ to save his people from their sins.

Mt 1:21

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

This is called the atonement.

Atonement – The atonement is the work of God in Christ, by his obedience and death, by which he cancelled the debt of our sin, appeased his holy wrath against us, and won for us all the benefits of salvation.

- by his obedience – his death would only have given us forgiveness of sins, but still not given us the righteousness God requires.
- won for us all the benefits of salvation - what does it mean to have “won for us”, what are the “benefits”

Many “riches” included in the atonement

- **Propitiation** – God satisfying His own wrath.

Expiation – cleansing us of sin

Justification – legal status before God

Adoption – by God into a new family

Regeneration - made alive from the dead with a new heart

Redemption – relationship/ownership restored

Sanctification – set apart for Him, becoming like Christ

Glorification – ultimate redemption

2) Did the atonement actually accomplish these for us?

Christ is the propitiation for the world.

1 John 2:2

He is the **propitiation** for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

So what does this mean?

All men will be saved.

- No. We know that there is hell and that he the devil, fallen angels and those that are still in their sins will suffer the wrath of God there.

Therefore:

Did Jesus REALLY pay for sins?

- If not, then what does this mean that the atonement accomplished, if anything?
- If so, then why are not all people saved?

Here are 2 answers to this question:

1. Some people refuse to believe in Christ Therefore:
 - a. The atonement only makes propitiation possible, but does not actually save anyone.
 - b. Christ’s obedience and death is wasted on some.
 - c. Faith must be “added” to the atonement to make it effectual
 - d. The atonement is limited in its power to accomplish God’s ends.
2. Though Jesus’ atonement is sufficient for the whole world and is sent to whole world, Jesus’ propitiation is not effectual for everyone.
 - a. Jesus’ atonement actually pays for our sin.
 - b. Christ’s obedience and death accomplished all that was intended.

- c. Faith is “included” in the atonement to make it effectual
- d. It is unlimited in its power to accomplish God’s ends.

Have you considered this before? Why is this important?

We see that Jesus’ atonement was meant to be universal in scope and God has the whole world in view. But we must ask:

- 1) Since not everyone will be saved (Universalism), what did the atonement accomplish?**
- 2) If it did not accomplish anything for us, then what does accomplish redemption?**
- 3) What is left of the good news if we do?**

So, is an atonement that is limited in its power to accomplish God’s ends? (ie. only makes redemption possible) square with the Bible?

Lets see...

John 1:29

²⁹The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Romans 5:6

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Is 53:5

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.

2 Cor 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God

Hebrews 10:14

For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The plain reading of these texts seems to indicate that the atonement of Christ alone accomplishes salvation for us.

If you have made it this far, then you might be thinking this:

What about the role of faith? Isn't that necessary? Yes.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith is necessary. Those that believe in Christ receive the benefits of the atonement. But can we say it really comes down to our individual faith. Is faith the "power" that makes the atonement happen for us?

These are very difficult questions and I am not sure where you will end up, but if our pursuit of the answer terminates with conclusion #1 and we do not pursue this, here is what may happen:

Concerns

- We believe that what actually makes the atonement "work" is something that we provide.
- We must ultimately depend upon ourselves for redemption
- We will struggle to be assured of what God has done for us because we are "faithless" at times. 2 Timothy 2:13 How are we to kept?
- Who will we ultimately thank for our redemption?
- Can we really have joy about what God has done? Or can we only enjoy what we have done?

John 1:12-14

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

So how does God redeem us then? Not only does the atonement secure for us payment for sin and righteousness. It actually secures for us the faith that receives it.

Christ's death was intended by God to obtain the very willingness to believe. In other words, the divine grace that it takes to overcome our hardness of heart and become a believer was also obtained by the blood of Jesus. – John Piper

Here's the Bible for it...

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Eph 2:8-9

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

1 Timothy 1:13-15

¹³though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

¹⁴and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. (NAS)