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**C0830 – September 3, 2008 – Doctrine Of Missions - Part 5**

*“It is incontestable that Christ came for the expiation of the sins of the whole world. But the solution lies close at hand, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but should have eternal life (John 3:15)...For although there is nothing in the world deserving of God’s favour, He nevertheless shows He is favourable to the whole world when He calls all without exception to the faith of Christ, which is indeed an entry into life.” – John Calvin*

Now, we want to bring this question to a close, “For whom did Christ die?” For the elect only or for all men. Now, this is tightly connected to the missionary enterprise and so that’s why we delve into this question. This is by no means a comprehensive treatment. If you want further reading on the issues I recommend a book by Dr C. Gordon Olson, *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, this is not a blanket endorsement, it’s just to say there is a good chapter in that book on the extent of the atonement. If you want to read more on the system of Calvinism called TULIP I recommend Edwin Palmer’s book, it’s the classic treatment called *The Five Points of Calvinism*, there are others by the same title such as Steele and Thomas have written but Palmer’s is the classic. Others I think are helpful include Samuel Fisk’s books *Calvinistic Paths Retraced* and *Election and Predestination* and a concise but thorough work on the extent of the atonement would be Robert Lightner of DTS, *The Death Christ Died*. The simplest treatment would be in Charles Ryrie’s *Basic Theology* for those of you who want to spend five minutes on it. So I suggest you look at one or more of those references depending on your interest. There is a lot more that could be done with this question. What we’re doing is not an exhaustive treatment. I’m just laying out some of the issues and some of the verses.

For our purposes we want to start moving toward the impact this has on missions. That will be more apparent next week as we move into Post-Reformation history and look at the missionaries, but we want to go ahead and ask the question, “What difference does it make?” Does it really matter if I hold to limited atonement rather than unlimited atonement? What difference does it make how I view God’s sovereignty and human responsibility? Doctrine affects how people live and so we want to see the startling results of this for missions.

Now we’ve already dealt with what I would call the heavy hitters, 1 John 2:2; Universal Propitiation, that the Son of God on the Cross Satisfied God the Father in Full. God is satisfied with Christ in full so that all who believe have eternal life. 2 Pet 2:1 Universal Redemption, that Jesus Christ on the cross paid the price for sin in full, all sin of all men, even the false teachers who Peter said deny Him. And the third heavy hitter, 2 Cor 5:17-21, that when Christ was on the cross, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, Jesus Christ removed God’s enmity toward man so that the situation that arises is that God is satisfied, sin is paid for and God is friends with the world. The only thing that remains to be done is for man to believe. No one is going to roast in hell because Christ didn’t die for him. People are going to roast in hell because they didn’t believe in the only begotten Son of God. Now that’s an incontrovertible truth. You can disagree with it but you’ll be disagreeing with the word of God. Some of you listening are Calvinists and you disagree with me but you also have to disagree with Calvin himself, as per the above quote.

Now we want to turn to the question of “Does God love all men?” Can I tell my son “God loves you?” Would I be lying if I told him that? Is the strict Calvinist right when he says, “God does not love all men.” Turn to John 3:16, the most quoted verse in the Bible. We think we know it but we have to look again because this is again a very controversial verse. It comes in the context of this Pharisee Nicodemus who came to Jesus at night. He was, according to v 10, “the teacher of Israel,” so this was not just any man, he was well-trained in the OT Scriptures, he was an expert in the Torah, and he comes to Jesus by night with a question of how to enter the kingdom. Jesus’ response, you must be born again.” Now, as the teacher of Israel Nicodemus should have “known these things.” But he was a scholar of tradition and not of the Scriptures. So in v 15 Jesus sets out the human condition for being “born

again,” from Scripture as “whoever believes.” And He uses the same expression in the Greek in verse 16, if we were to literally translate this it would say, “all the one’s believing,” or “each one believing.” That is set forth as the only condition. Now let’s back up and start at the beginning of the verse. **For God so loved the world**, that expression means manner of love, not quantity of love, it does not say “God loved the world so much...” but “God so loved the world,” So this is setting out how God demonstrated His love toward the world. **He gave His only begotten Son**, so love is defined as giving. God gave a gift to the world and His Son is the gift. And this Son is His only **begotten Son. only begotten**, *monogenes*, this word has Jehovah’s Witnesses in a fuss because they interpret it as meaning that Jesus Christ as having a beginning and therefore He’s not eternal. They say only the Father is eternal and Jesus was God’s first creation. So there is no Trinity in Jehovah’s Witness, it’s a solitary monotheism. That’s not what this word means. Besides, what day of creation was Jesus created on since all things were created during creation week? Are you really going to tell me that the most important creation of all was left out of the Gen 1 account? In reality the background for *monogenes* comes from Gen 22 where Abraham called Isaac his “only son.” But Abraham had other sons so how could Isaac be his “only son?” See, what this expression means, and sometimes you have a note in the margin, what it means is “unique.” Jesus Christ was the unique Son of God. There is no other “Son of God,” only Jesus. And **whoever believes in Him**, that is, all the one’s believing into Him, or each one believing into Him, **shall not perish**. Now that expression is in the middle voice, the middle voice means the subject is both the actor and the recipient of the action. For example the active voice means, “I hit the ball,” the passive voice means, “The ball hit me,” and the middle would be, “I hit myself with the ball,” and so we translate this the one who believes in Him will not perish himself. They shall not send themselves to eternal hell, **but** rather they will **have eternal life**, everlasting life. Now if we drop down to verse 18 briefly the same thing is taught. Why is a person condemned? Is it because God didn’t love him? Is it because Christ didn’t die for him? No, it’s because he has not believed. That’s what the verses say.

Now some will come back and say, okay but in John 3:16 when it says God so loved the world it means “world of the elect.” Now, that is very difficult to sustain but what people try to maintain is that God loves only the elect and so Christ died only for the elect and the elect are the one’s who will believe.

To get that out of these verses takes a task of immense proportions but men have tried because their system of theology is more important than the text. I've read several of the treatments and they always say, "God does not love the unbeliever, God hates the unbeliever. God loves the elect and hates the non-elect." I talk with people who hold this and you bring John 3:16 up and they say "John Owen, John Owen answered that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century." And it always bothers me that these people can never delineate his argument. And I often wonder if they understood what John Owen really said because I've read it myself but if you've been in the literature then you've read that no one has ever answered that Puritan divine John Owen. And that's just not true. The Scriptures answer it, Robert Lightner answered it in his book *The Death Christ Died*, you can check it out from our library. The problem is not that it hasn't been answered, it's that they haven't read the answers. Now, to see that this cannot mean "world of the elect" turn over to John 17:9. If "world" in John 3:16 means "world of the elect" and God loves the world of the elect then why in John 17:9 does Jesus say He prays not for the "world of the elect?" "I ask" or pray "on their behalf;" that is the 11 apostles, the believers minus Judas, "I do not ask on behalf of the world," Are we to say He does not pray on behalf of the "world of the elect?" See, it is not consistent to say in John 3:16 that the Father loved the world of the elect but then to say in John 17:9 that the Son did not pray for the "world of the elect." If John had wanted to limit God's love to the elect he could have said that very easily, but that's not what he said. Besides, God is love, how do you put a limit on God's love. Further, there is not a single lexicon that defines "world" (*kosmos*) the way of the strict Calvinist does. It always means "the world system that is against God." Nevertheless, Arthur Pink says, "*To tell the Christ-rejector that God loves him is to cauterise his conscience, as well as to afford him a sense of security in his sins. The fact is that the love of God is a truth for the saints only, and to present it to the enemies of God is to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs.*" So he says we are to say that God hates the sinner and not only that God hates the sin.

Often this doctrine that God hates the unbeliever is taught from Rom 9. So turn there. This is where Paul is dealing with the nation Israel, Rom 9-11 and answering the closing verses of chapter 8, what about Israel. If God's promises are certain then what about Israel. And in v 13, Paul quoting the OT says, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Quote from Mal 1:2. Esau was an unbeliever, they reason, therefore conclusion, God hates all unbelievers. Now,

it's an assumption that Esau was an unbeliever. If you were here summer of 2006 then you heard Dr Meisinger argue persuasively that Esau actually was a believer. That what Esau did was forfeit his inheritance but inheritance was not salvation or else it would have meant loss of salvation. His inheritance was by birthright and that's what he forfeited. So the verse is not talking about salvation anyway. Probably Esau was a believer that failed miserably in the Christian life. So what does it mean "Jacob I loved, Esau I hated?" First, it cannot mean God hated Esau because of something Esau had done. Verse 11 denies this saying God's hatred of Esau pre-existed his birth; God hated him before he had done anything. Second, Paul wrote this, Paul was a Jew and so this is not love/hate in the Western sense but in the Semitic sense. And that sense is that God chose Jacob and did not choose Esau. So it could read, "Jacob I chose, Esau I did not choose." And what He chose Jacob for was His covenant line. He did not choose Esau to be a covenant recipient. So this verse has nothing to do with running around telling unbelievers God hates them. Yes, God hates sin, yes those who refuse to believe will spend eternity in hell, but you will never read a verse in the Bible where God says, "Tell people I hate them?" or "Do not tell people I love them." At times strict Calvinists have published tracts with the titles, "Does God Love You?" or "God May Not Love You!" Scripture however is quite clear that God loves the sinner but hates his sin, and as long as a person refuses to believe he stands condemned (John 3:18).

To see how the love of God relates to the unbeliever turn to Mark 10. This is the Rich Young Ruler, someone asked me a few weeks ago if he was a believer or not. To answer that we want to look at the text. If we look at verse 17 in Mark's account he asks how to "inherit eternal life." Now, inheritance is a rewards issue, it is more than entering into eternal life which is by faith alone. You can receive eternal life today simply by trusting in Jesus Christ but to inherit eternal life is based on works, it is a future rewards acquisition. So Jesus is being asked about the future reward of eternal life, a higher enjoyment of eternal life. That's why in verse 21 Jesus talks about having treasure in heaven. To have treasure in heaven is more than being in heaven. But we learn in verse 23 that Jesus knew the rich young ruler was not a believer, he was not even going to heaven. Riches are a stumbling block to people because they find security in their wealth. So two things are involved here; going to heaven (cf v 23-27) and having treasure in heaven (cf v 21, 28-31ff). That's what makes this a difficult passage. But when a Jew thought of

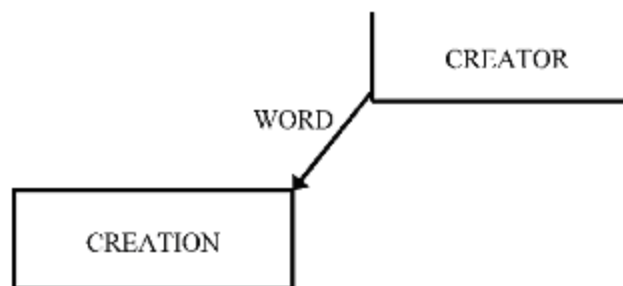
the kingdom they did not think of just getting in by the hair of their chinny-chin-chin, they thought of entering with an abundance of rewards. The Rich man lumped it all together, confusing entering with inheriting. But Jesus separated the two. Most of the Jews thought they were going to enter the kingdom just because they were the physical descendants of Abraham and that to inherit rewards they must do works. This was partially correct. But Jesus said that entrance into the kingdom/eternal life was by faith alone and that inheritance into the kingdom/eternal life was by works. But this man did not even have faith, he was an unbeliever, and yet in verse 21, "Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him..." and that's *agapao* love, this is a warm, affectionate love, this is not just friendship or brotherly love. This is Jesus loving an unbeliever. And you can't say, "Well Jesus loved this unbeliever because he was an elect unbeliever." There is no such category in Scripture. Show me one unbeliever in Scripture who is elect. The only elect people you ever see in Scripture are believers. So what do you do with that? It's inescapable the conclusion, Jesus does love unbelievers. Yes I can tell my children God loves them, Jesus loves them. Yes I can sing "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." The word of God teaches it and we should proclaim it. We should personalize the gospel and this is where it gets into missions.

Can a missionary go out and say, "Jesus loves you," or not? Can we say, "Christ died for you," or not? Many say "No. He cannot say that because he does not know if the person is elect or not. They may be non-elect and therefore God does not love them and Christ did not die for them and you would be telling a lie." So the missionary must say something general. "God loves sinners or Christ died for men," by which he means secretly that it only pertains to the elect. But is it not deception to say it that way since secretly you're not letting on what you really mean? I can state and Paul stated to men unequivocally that "Jesus Christ died for your sins." Jesus said, "he who believes has eternal life." There's a difference between a personal gospel and a general gospel. We do not know who the elect are and the non-elect are, that is information in the mind of God, don't worry about that, that's up to Him, the responsibility of man is to tell unbelievers what the Scriptures state, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and *you* shall be saved." That's what Paul told the Philippian Jailer. That's what Paul told the men at Athens, "God is declaring to all men everywhere that they should repent," that's pretty universal and by the way repent there is being used as metonymy for

faith (Acts 17:30). Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin, not two separate acts.

So what we're saying is that what Christ accomplished on the cross was sufficient for all men to be saved, it was a provision for all men to be saved but only those who believe have that provision applied to them for eternal salvation.

Does the fact that men must believe put the plan of God in jeopardy? If Christ's work on the cross saves no one automatically, if the cross does not purchase faith for the elect, does this mean there is the possibility that no one will be saved? No, God's plan is always secure. It can never be thwarted. We preach the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. Notice I did not say "free will" of man. I did not say that because "free" implies "unlimited," yet the human will is the creation of God so of course it is limited, it is subject to God. Yet man is a responsible agent. Undoubtedly it will be said that I have contradicted myself. How could God love all men and not all men be saved? How could Christ die for all men and not all men be saved? How could God desire all men to be saved and not all men be saved? How could God be totally sovereign and man have genuine choice? The answer to this has been hinted at tonight already in John 3:16, in that man perishes himself but God gives everlasting life. *The solution harks back to the Creator-creature distinction.*

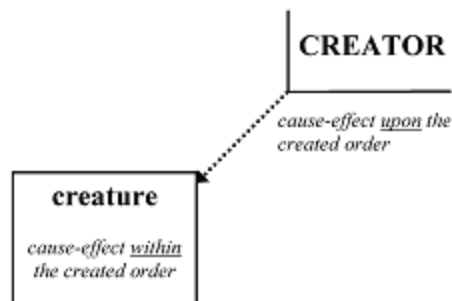


God is the Creator and sovereignty is a creator (q)uality. Man is a creature and his choice is a creature (q)uality. It is under the sovereignty of God. In fact, God's sovereignty is what makes man responsible to Him. If God was not sovereign over man then man would not be responsible to Him. People always think that if God is sovereign then man can't be responsible but it's exactly the other way around. God must be sovereign for man to be responsible. The problem, Van Til said, is not that God is sovereign and man is responsible. *The problem is when you try to bring the two together. You can't get them*

together. The minute you bring them together you have brought everything down into one existence, one level of being and being is continuous, you are in the Continuity of Being. This is where both the strict Calvinist and the Arminian err. The strict Calvinist errs in thinking that for God to be sovereign He *must* control things the way men controls things, in a mechanistic way, otherwise God's plan/desires will be thwarted. But this is attributing to God a creature (q)uality. The Arminian errs in thinking that for man to be responsible he must have free will. But this is giving to man a Creator (q)uality. Both views falter in that they violate the Creator-creature distinction. The failure of man is always in that he tends to project a vision of God from self. He starts from himself and creates a god in his own image. It is difficult for people to think otherwise but the Scriptures state otherwise.

Once the Creator-creature distinction is firmly established in your thinking then you can understand that the Creator's cause-effect upon the created order is not identical to cause-effect within the created order.

#### CREATOR-creature DISTINCTION



\*Cause-effect upon the created order is not identical to cause-effect within the created order.

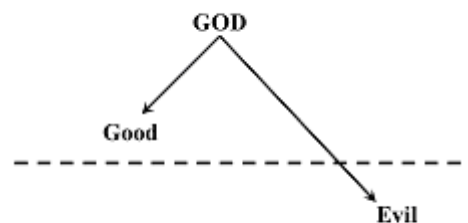
When you and I, as creatures, try to imagine having total control we can only think of a machine. How else can you get total control? But God is not subject to that. He can and does have total control over all things in non-mechanistic ways. We are not privy to how He does it. Moses says, "the secret things belong to the Lord," Isaiah says, "His ways are not our ways," Paul says, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How...unfathomable His ways!" What are these men saying? That God is incomprehensible, that He is beyond the ability of human reason to encapture, that God is unlimited, that the God of the universe is an infinite-personal God. To be sure we can know God truly but we can never know God exhaustively. We have to submit to the fact that He has ways of accomplishing things that are beyond our capacity to understand, they could



never be understood by us, we are limited and finite. The ways he accomplishes many things are not paralleled by any process in all creation. Don't try to figure God out. You can't figure Him out. If you figured Him out you'd be Him.

So we teach that God is sovereign and man is responsible. Both of those statements are true but you can only understand them when you keep them apart and not try to bring them together. One is a Creator (q)uality and the other is a creature (q)uality. Is He sovereign over rocks in a different way than He is sovereign over animals? Yes. Is He sovereign over animals in a different way than He is sovereign over man? Yes. Why? Because those creations differ in constitution. Men and rocks are not the same. Men and animals are not the same. Is God sovereign over evil in a different way than He is sovereign over good? Yes. And this gets to our point. God is sovereign over both good and evil but not in the same way. God is sovereign over good in such a way that He is the author of it (Jas 1:18). God is sovereign over evil in such a way that He is not the author of it. God's sovereignty is asymmetrical not symmetrical. To see this turn to Rom 9:21-23.

#### ASSYMETRICAL SOVEREIGNTY



Everything above the line God is responsible for.  
Everything below the line man is responsible for.

Verse 21, “Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?

<sup>22</sup>What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? <sup>23</sup>And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory.” The image of the potter and the clay wasn't original to Paul. Paul got that out of the OT, so let's go back to where he got it, Jeremiah 18, holding Rom 9.

Jer 18:2, “Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I shall announce My words to you. <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. <sup>4</sup>But the vessel that he was making of clay

was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make.” What happens to the vessel that’s being made, notice the text, he’s making it on the potter’s wheel and it gets screwed up so he has to remake it. In the analogy what’s happened? God made the human race, He made that at Creation. Then what happened next? The Fall happened, so the human race got screwed up, it got marred, the clay has been marred, so election has in view not only Creation but it also presupposes the Fall, so you have the lump of clay, you have the event of the Fall and now the clay is all messed up. What election asserts is that God comes in as the Creator and He can remake the clay, so He remakes the clay, but He leaves some of it, that is what election is all about.

The question is how does that happen? In Rom 9 we see something about the verbs that are used.. In Rom 9:22-24, those who like conjugating verbs notice something. Verse 22, “What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power know, endured with much patience vessels of wrath *prepared* for destruction?” What is the voice of the verb “prepared” in verse 22, active or passive? Passive, they were prepared, or the Greek form is also the middle voice which is reflexive, it could be that they prepared themselves. In either case they have been prepared; this is the damaged vessel from that Jeremiah 18 illustration. And then it says in verse 23, “And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy which *He prepared* beforehand for glory.” There’s the verb again, “prepared” but now what voice is it, active or passive? It’s active. So here God prepared the vessels, before the subject was left out, we aren’t told who prepared them for destruction which leads many commentators to conclude this is a middle voice, that they prepared themselves for destruction. But what is very strong and clear is that God prepares some vessels beforehand for glory, the vessels of mercy, but He doesn’t share that relationship with the vessels prepared for destruction. What we have here is something you will observe over and over in Scripture, that there’s an asymmetry to God’s sovereignty. Here’s God’s sovereignty, He controls good and He controls evil, but His control over the good is more direct than His control over evil, we don’t have a lot of detail as to how but there’s an asymmetry here, it’s not the same. The Bible has various ways of telling this, through verb tenses, voices of the verb and so forth but in the final analysis He gets all the credit for the good and man gets all the credit for evil. Now, some of you think this is just something Jeremy is making up. This is just my

twist. So I quote Calvin in my defense. This is nothing new, theologians have recognized asymmetry for centuries. He says, *“Here, however, men will continually offer one uniform excuse for Adam - that it was not possible for him to help or avoid that which God Himself had decreed. But to establish the guilt of Adam forever, his own voluntary transgression is enough, and more than sufficient. Nor, indeed, is the secret counsel of God the real and virtual cause of sin, but manifestly the will and inclination of man.”*<sup>vi</sup> Calvin saw that man was the author of evil and not God. He saw asymmetry here. We’re not alone in this observation.

If you want another glimpse of this, turn to Deut 4, it’s a comment on what’s going on here as He pulls Abraham out of the pagan world; this is the Mosaic commentary on it. Notice how He talks about His elect nation verse the non-elect nations, because the concept is the same even though here it’s nations and in Abraham’s day it was the family. In Deut 4:19, He’s warning them not to worship the creation and He says, “And beware, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which the LORD your God” notice this clause, “has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. <sup>20</sup>But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt,” there’s the picture of the clay all screwed up and what God does; He reaches down and reworks, but when He reworks He doesn’t rework all of it, He only reworks some of it. The rest is portrayed as responsible for its own destiny. So the background imagery of election is that a Fall has happened, we’re all screwed up on the potter’s wheel and He reaches down and re-works some of it.

For a final glimpse turn to Matt 25:41. We have to discipline ourselves to pay close attention to the Scriptures and stop reading 100mph. There are little hints in the text that show you the heart of our God and here we have another one. “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;’ Prepared for who? Men or angels? Angels. Obviously men will be there but Jesus insists it was not made for men. Doesn’t that reveal something of the heart of our God toward man in His image? See the incongruity. Certainly anyone who reads the Scriptures can see God’s disproportionate dealings. Even in Jonah itself, from which this study was prompted, God gave Nineveh yet 40 more days. And this apparently because

He is a compassionate God, abounding in lovingkindness and so forth. And that's why we have to insist that if we are going to send out missionaries then they have to preach that Christ died for all men's sins and rose from the grave on the third day. We can't just generalize the message. It's a personal message from an infinite-personal God.

And so we see from three lines of evidence Universal Missions. First, from the events of Gen 1-3 where you have the Unique Creation of All Men in Adam, the Universal Fall of all Men in Adam and the corollary truth, the Universal Provision of Salvation in Jesus Christ. Second, from the historic events which portray judgment/salvation, for one the Flood of Noah where you have an ark with both man and nature on board and from what hydrodynamic engineers are telling us, about half the ark was empty, conveying that there was still more room, if people would come. Remember, after Noah and his family boarded the ark the door remained open for seven days before being sealed by God. What is that conveying about universal intent? The other OT portrayal of judgment/salvation is the Exodus, in that event when you come to the tenth and final plague, anyone who heard the revelation of God, that he should place the blood of a lamb over the door, and actually did it enjoyed the salvation of his household. That was a provision made for Hebrew and Egyptian alike, that any that might hear and believe might be saved. And finally, the third line of evidence from the NT data itself, the penultimate event portraying judgment/salvation, the cross of Jesus Christ and the numerous texts expounding the universal intent of God with respect to His death. For He Himself is the propitiation for our sins *and not ours only but for the sins of the whole world.*" That on the cross, "God was in Christ *reconciling the world to Himself...*" That "Jesus...by the grace of God tasted death for everyone." That "God...*desires all men to be saved* and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, *and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* <sup>6</sup>who gave Himself as a ransom *for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*" Are we to stifle the universal intent of these passages by re-interpreting them racially, as Jews and Gentiles, geographically, people in all places or some other contrivance?

Alright, next time we turn to how one thinks about sovereignty and human responsibility emphasizes the missionary endeavor. We just want to take a snapshot of what has taken place in Church History. Your theology affects

how you look at missions, the importance of getting the gospel out, what the gospel is and so forth.

Now that we know the message the missionary must ultimately preach, the problem with so many missions organizations or missionaries is the way they are presenting the message. There's a methodology that should be used. I call that the framework methodology, you may call it the chronological approach, but either way you start not with the Cross of Jesus but with Creation of God. There is a logical progression to get to Jesus and our hearts were made for truth. But the cross is the resolution of the problem of sin and if I don't even know what sin is then how can I understand the significance of the resolution. So for years and year missionaries would go into some tribe and they'd immediately start by translating the Gospel of Mark and then they'd wonder what in the world happened because these people would come down and make this profession and the next day they're pulling out Bible verses and using them as magic spells to keep demons away. What happened? They never understood the gospel. They just amalgamated it with all their other beliefs. And so now you have Jesus mixed in with all the pagan ritual. Were they ever converted? No. Jesus was just an add on not a replacement. They never understood the gospel.

“The NTM missionary team learns the tribal language and understands the culture, so the message of the Gospel can be presented in the language and the manner the people will understand. They translate God's Word, teach people how to read and write their own language, and teach through the Bible chronologically, laying a foundation for the Gospel among people who have never met the God of the Bible. Missionaries disciple the new believers, equip them to lead their church, and help them reach out to other villages within their own tribe and to neighboring tribes.”<sup>iii</sup>

Does God exercise his sovereignty over good and evil in the same way? Is God sovereign over good and evil in the same way? The answer is no. God is sovereign over all things including the human will, He created it. But that does not mean determinism or robotic-like control. That is assuming that God must operate according to creature cause-effect. But God is the Creator. He is not subject to laws of causality in His created order. He speaks those into existence and His cause-effect upon the created order, how He accomplishes things is not identical to how we cause things. The only way the human can envision total control is by a machine. But God is not a machine, He is a

person. And His ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts. So God can and does remain sovereign and man is responsible. In fact, if God were not sovereign then man could not possibly be responsible. God's sovereignty is the pre-condition for responsibility. For if God is not sovereign then He is not ruler of all and man would not be responsible to Him. On the other hand. Man is the creature. He is subject to the Creator. He is subject to cause-effect within the created order. In short then, God's sovereignty is not identical to cause-effect within the created order. The problem, Van Til said, is not that God is sovereign and man is responsible. What we assume, wrongly, is that God must operate according to cause-effect I experience. The most we can say is that God is sovereign over evil but He is not the author of it. This is what the Bible teaches. Certain passages do in fact teach that God is sovereign over good and evil in a different way such that He is sovereign over good in a way in which He is responsible for it and He is sovereign over evil in a way in which He is not responsible for it. So that God is responsible for every soul in heaven and man is responsible for his own soul if in hell. This is the explicit teaching of John 3:16 and Rom 9:22-23. A man cannot claim responsibility for his going to heaven and God does not claim responsibility for a man going to hell.

for a single second. So the second point is that **Universal Missions Rests Upon the Universal Call to Salvation**. The gospel can and should be preached indiscriminately because Christ died for all.

Since this is the case there must be missions, we must preach the gospel for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Not all people will believe but Universal Missions certainly Rests Upon the Universal Substitutionary Blood Atonement. Christ died once for all, solving the sin problem once for all. And the Universal Call to Salvation. "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." "Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in me has eternal life." Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, you and your household." It's very simple. Just preach the word. "Go out" to all the nations and tell them who Christ is and what He has done for them.

Now, there are many other passages we could look at (Rom 5:18; 1 Tim 2:3-6; 4:10; Heb 2:9, 17), all of which teach the same basic idea. What Christ

accomplished on the cross was a provision of salvation sufficient for all to be saved, it did not actually save anyone, God's salvation must be personally appropriated by faith (John 3:18; Eph 2:8-9; Rom 4:1-3; Acts 17:11) in this present life (John 11:25-26) and if it is not then the person will spend eternity in the lake of fire (Dan 12:2; Matt 25:46; 2 Thess 1:9; Rev 14:11; 20:10; 20:11-15).

We are to go out to the nations with the message, not our own personal experience, how Jesus helped me stop drinking or something, but what Jesus Christ did in history. He died for our sins and rose from the dead. Now if we turn to Matt 28 we see the Great Commission.

Acts 17:30 "all men everywhere to repent," repent meaning a change of mind and being used metonymically for faith, a part for the whole. Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin. They are not two different coins. One may have repentance without faith but not faith without repentance. The two are inseparable when it comes to eternal salvation. So here the call is obviously universal in extent, Paul preaches as if the substitutionary blood atonement is sufficient for all men. I think everyone actually could agree to this statement but I just want to point out that I think the terms all men and everywhere are not distinctive but inclusive of each and every man and in that sense not all would agree.

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<sup>i</sup> Deaden, make of no effect.

<sup>ii</sup> John Calvin, *The Eternal Predestination of God*, in *Calvin's Calvinism*, trans. & ed. by Henry Cole, 125

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.ntm.org/about/>

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