

26 QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING!

QUESTION #12: WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

Q. Did Jesus really have to die? Was there no other way? What did his death really accomplish?

A. All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. We have offended and alienated God by our sin. We need atonement to be made for us. Jesus, in his perfect life and death accomplished atonement. That means that he forever removed the effects of the curse and purchased the blessings of salvation

1. WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THE ATONEMENT?

A. LOVE

John 3¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

B. JUSTICE

Rom 3²⁵ God put [Jesus] forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

2. WAS THE ATONEMENT REALLY NECESSARY?

A. NO, BECAUSE GOD DIDN'T NEED TO SAVE ANY

2 Pet 2⁴ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment... (cf. Heb 2.16)

B. YES, BECAUSE GOD CHOSE TO SAVE US

Matt 26³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (cf. Luke 24.25-26; Rom 3.25-26)

3. THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT

A. IT WAS TOWARDS THE FATHER

Heb 9¹⁴ ... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

B. CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE WAS FOR US

Phil 3⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith... (cf. Rom 5.19; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5.21)

C. CHRIST'S SUFFERING WAS FOR US

I. IN ALL OF HIS LIFE

Isa 53³ He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

II. IN HIS CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH

Jesus bore physical pain (Mark 15.24), the pain of bearing sin (Isaiah 53.6; Gal 3.13; 1 Pet 2.24), the pain of abandonment from both friends (Mark 14.34; Matt 25.26) and from God the Father himself (Habakkuk 1.13; Matt 27.46), and the ultimate pain of bearing the wrath of God for sin (Rom 3.25-26; Heb 2.17; 1 Jn 2.2). None of us can understand any of this pain that he bore for us.

1John 4¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

4. THE FINALITY OF THE ATONEMENT

A. CHRIST'S WORK WAS FINISHED ON THE CROSS

Isa 53¹¹ Out 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.

Heb 9²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. (cf. John 19.30; Rom 8.1)

B. IMAGES OF THE ATONEMENT COMPLETED

1. Penal Substitution (as above; 1 Pet 2.24)
2. Redemption (1 John 5.19; Mark 10.45; Heb 9.12-14)
3. Reconciliation (2 Cor 5.18-20)
4. *Christus Victor* (Col 2.15; Heb 2.14-15)
5. *Christus Exemplus* (Phil 2.5-11; 1 Pet 2.18-25)

5. APPLICATION

A. HUMILITY

Not only could I not achieve forgiveness, or pay off my debts, my obedience could never be enough to achieve a God-approved righteousness. I was utterly hopeless.

B. FREEDOM

Because Christ's atoning work (his perfect righteousness and his debt-paying death), I am absolutely free from trying to justify myself or find my worth or identity in my performance as a believer.

C. DELIGHT

He took pain I could never imagine to give me joy I will never fully comprehend with an eternity to experience it. He took separation from God so I could know absolute fellowship with God.