

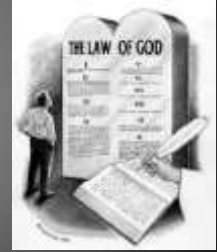
## Scriptural View of the Atonement



- When discussing the atonement, three dominant truths must be understood.
- The first dominant truth is the atonement is centered upon the nature of God Himself.
  - God is in perfect holiness.
  - His response to sin is not arbitrary, but is rooted entirely in His character.
  - The atonement comes from God and exists as an objective reality.
  - God hates sin and His wrath is poured out from heaven against all ungodliness.
  - Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

## Second Dominant Truth

- God's Law contains objective propositional truth and stands as a standard against which the sinner is evaluated.
  - The Law serves as an objective reality of God that can be known.
  - The Law is a transcript of God's moral and spiritual nature, teaching us a great deal about the character and nature of God.
  - Violations of the Law carry serious consequences, such as death. Hence the Law becomes a special piece for atonement because it relates to the legal status of each human.
  - The Law shows all men to be guilty.
  - Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
  - James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.



## Third Dominant Truth

- The human condition is totally depraved and lacks the ability to do any good in the sight of God.
  - We cannot help or save ourselves because of the condition that we are in.
  - Therefore, the atonement is God's solution to the human predicament.
  - Rom 3:9-18 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, (10) as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; (11) no one understands; no one seeks for God. (12) All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." (13) "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." (14) "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." (15) "Their feet are swift to shed blood; (16) in their paths are ruin and misery, (17) and the way of peace they have not known." (18) "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

## The Three Truths Together

- So placing these three dominant truths together, we conclude that atonement is necessary because God is holy and cannot nor will not accept sin.
- He revealed this truth to us through the Law that proves our guilt.
- In light of our guilt, God then provides atonement to cover such guilt so that we can be sinless in the presence of God.
- The reason all of those other views failed is because they did not contain these three biblical premises.
  - Likewise, those of our day who push a seeker sensitive gospel and attempt to leave out God's holiness, the Law, and the human condition are not preaching the gospel as it exists in the Bible.
  - After all, what is the gospel? It is the good news of the atonement! One cannot understand the atonement if they do not understand guilt and law.



## Second Dominant Truth

- Many doctrines of the Bible have a *textus classica*, where there is a great amount of detail that covers most of the elements to be found in the doctrine. For the atonement, it is Romans 3:19-31.
  - Rom 3:19-31 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20) For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. 21) But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it-- 22) the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24) and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25) whom God put 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. 27) Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28) For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29) Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30) since God is one--who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31) Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

## Textus Classica

- Verse 19 clearly states that the whole world becomes subject to God's judgment by the Law.
- Verse 20 demonstrates that only condemnation results from it since it reveals our sin or guilt.
- Verses 21-24 present the good news that men can be righteous regardless of their guilt under the law due to faith in Jesus Christ.
  - Even though all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, we can be justified freely by His grace through the redemption provided in Christ Jesus.
- Verse 25 uses much of the language we previously spoke of.
  - God presented Jesus as a propitiation (turns away wrath) and He in restraint passed over sin.
- Verse 26 then adds that Jesus' sacrifice demonstrates God's righteousness and leads to God declaring righteous those who have faith in Jesus – thus justification.
- Verse 27-31 then finishes it by concluding that no one can boast since our justification comes through Christ's work of atonement which is received by us in faith, which is apart from our keeping of the Law.
  - The last verse then concludes that in this state of justification through faith, we actually uphold the Law.
  - In summary then, the judgment due to us under the Law is atoned for by Jesus Christ, thus bringing redemption since He turned away wrath. His righteousness is then imputed to us making us justified before God

## The Old Testament Sacrificial System

- OT sacrificial system teaches us much about atonement.
  - Christ modeled the OT sacrifices after His plan of redemption (Hebrews 8:3-5).
- Things learned from OT.
  - Sacrifices did not change the sinner from the inside. It simply changed their situation before God.
  - Remember the 3 truths: God is holy, the Law makes us guilty, and humans are depraved.
  - God was appeased with the sacrifices, which provided reconciliation, thus changing their status before God.
  - The OT system showed substitution. Guiltless animals paid the blood price for our sin debt. This foreshadowed Jesus' death (Isaiah 53:5-6).



## The Old Testament Sacrificial System

- So when we deal with the atonement in the New Testament, we want to keep these Old Testament patterns in mind.
- Atonement is not what alters our character or imparts righteousness.
- Atonement simply takes care of our positional status before God.
- When we get to the subject of Soteriology, we will then explain how God does more than change our status, but He also changes our nature through the impartation of righteousness by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- Right now, we are speaking only of imputation of righteousness, not impartation.



## The New Testament Teaching on Christ's Atonement

- The Major thrust of teaching on the atonement comes from the NT.
- We will begin with what Christ taught.
- He didn't come down to His will, but the Father's. The will of the Father was to save the world through Christ.
  - John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.
  - John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
- His atonement was to fulfill OT prophecy.
  - Luke 22:37 For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment."



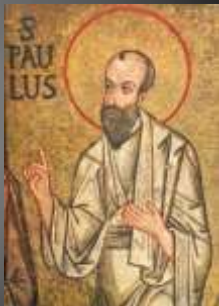
## The New Testament Teaching on Christ's Atonement

- Christ taught that His death was to serve as a ransom price.
  - Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- He taught that He is our substitute since He lays down His life for us.
  - John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
- John the Baptist revealed that Jesus is our sacrifice as the Lamb of God.
  - John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"



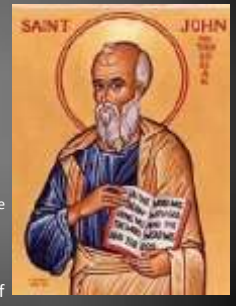
## The New Testament Teaching on Christ's Atonement

- Paul also taught much about the atonement.
- He shows that the Father is the one who provides atonement through the Son. So the Father has a relationship to the atonement.
  - 2Cor 5:19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
  - Rom 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
  - Rom 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
- In the classic text (Romans 3:19-31) Paul showed that the atonement had to do with God's wrath.



## The New Testament Teaching on Christ's Atonement

- Paul also pointed out that Christ is our sacrifice and substitution.
  - Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
  - Galatians 3:19 Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.
- John shows Christ as our propitiation.
  - 1John 4:10 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.
- It may seem repetitive (the verses and key terms), but it shows that these passages together form the doctrine of the atonement.



## Putting it All Together

- First and foremost, atonement in the Bible is a sacrifice.
  - This is the only way atonement was made in the Old Testament, and it is the only way in the New Testament.
  - Those who seek to deny that Christ's death was a sacrifice do not understand nor adhere to the Scriptures.
- The sacrifice was made to provide the saints redemption. Redemption could come by no other means.
  - Hebrews 10:5-18 demonstrates this by comparing what Christ did with what the priests in the Old Testament did concerning sacrifices.
  - Thus, atonement entails sacrifice.
  - Regarding the vocabulary terms, the broad term sacrifice incorporates Christ as our Passover, forgiveness, ransom, remission, and sanctification.



## Putting it All Together

- Second, the atonement is a propitiation.
  - It serves the purpose of turning away wrath.
- We have already seen that God pours out His wrath against sin.
  - Therefore the only way that any human can avoid the wrath of God is if it is turned away.
  - The only way God turns away wrath is through the atonement offered by Jesus Christ.
- The broad term propitiation incorporates the vocabulary terms of justification, redemption, and righteousness.
  - Romans 5:8-9 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9) Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.



## Putting it All Together

- Third, atonement is an act of substitution.
  - In fact, this sheds more light on propitiation.
  - It answers why Christ's death turns away wrath.
  - It turns away wrath because Christ took upon Himself the wrath of God.
- With God's wrath satisfied in Christ's death, it is substitutionary.
  - It is Christ's death for our life.
- The broad term substitution covers the vocabulary terms of expiation, guilt, imputation, justice, and penalty.
  - 1Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.



## Putting it All Together

- Finally, atonement in the Bible is that of reconciliation.
  - By Christ sacrificing Himself, He not only turned away wrath by substituting Himself in our place, but He also in the process reconciled us to God, thus giving us a newfound relationship with our almighty Creator.
  - 2Cor 5:17-18 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;



## Summing it Up

- We then conclude from these passages and the vocabulary terms derived from the Bible that the atonement is a **penal substitutionary atonement**.
- This conveys the Scriptural teaching regarding the atonement.
  - Denying the penal aspect of it removes the guilt and penalty derived from the Law, and ignores Scriptural teaching on expiation, sacrifice, and justice.
  - Denying the substitutionary aspect of it denies the clear teaching that our sins were placed upon Christ and ignores Scriptural teachings on imputation.
  - Finally, Christ's death was in fact an atonement, meaning it covers our sin and makes us righteous before God.
  - Denying atonement denies the Scriptural teaching on justification, reconciliation, redemption, forgiveness, remission, and sanctification. I
  - It is impossible to deny any one point of penal substitutionary atonement and still maintain a biblically acceptable view of the atonement.

## Conclusion

- We should be amazed at everything the death of Christ accomplished.
- Christ's death atoned, expiated, forgave, imputed, justified, passed over, propitiated, ransomed, reconciled, redeemed, remised, sanctified, and substituted for sinners so that while still remaining just, God took care of both our guilt and the penalty of it, thus replacing it with righteousness."
- When the totality of biblical data is accumulated, the only viable position is that of penal substitutionary atonement.