

Dear Church (Part 2)
The Beautiful Inclusion (Eph. 1:9-14)
Pastor Jeff Borden
May 07, 2017

Sermon Notes

“God has revealed to us the mystery of his will—bringing everything together under the authority of Christ, everything in heaven and on earth. And we are now united with Christ, included with him because we have believed—he has identified us as his own and marked us with the Holy Spirit, a guarantee of our redemption, we who are God’s possession.”

Atonement, at its core, references God’s act of “reconciling the world to himself,” specifically through the cross of Christ (2 Cor. 5:19).



*How I **understand** God’s plan to reconcile the world to Himself,
directly affects how **I live out** my being reconciled to Him.*



Atonement models are not so much theories as they are methods of understanding what God’s reconciling work means for us. What are the major “theories” or models to help us understand God’s great mystery of reconciliation or atonement?

1. **Recapitulation** (the oldest of the metaphors)—first formally identified by apostolic leaders such as Irenaeus through Athanasius.

2. **Ransom or Liberation** (the classical atonement metaphor)—also known as *Christus Victor*.

3. **Moral Influence** (a favorite model of Augustine who also favored the Ransom model)

4. **Satisfaction** (first recognized in the work of Anselm, 11th century, and served as the precursor to the substitution models favored by Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, and others)

5. **Penal Substitution** (developed by the Reformed tradition—post 16th century)

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HomeGroup and Personal Study Questions

- Have you ever studied deeply any of the major teachings and/or books of the Bible? Why or why not? If you have, what book(s) or subjects did you study? What were your methods? What, if any, was your major discovery? Did it have any lasting impact on your spiritual development?
- What do you know/understand about the doctrine of atonement? Do you personally find any value in understanding the nature of atonement? Why or why not? In the teaching today was there anything you learned new or found helpful? Was there anything you disagreed with? Please share your thoughts and reasoning in detail.
- Still considering methods and models for describing the atonement of Christ, is there a particular model that you have been more inclined to follow or be shaped by? What is it? Can you describe how it has influenced your spiritual development?
- In verse, Ephesians 1:11, the apostle informs us that we are "in Christ" (NIV). The implication of this statement is clarified in other translations to state we are "united with Christ" or "included in Christ." What do you think this means, to be "in Christ" or "united with Christ?" How does unity and inclusion with Christ affect your transformation of a person who was once separated from God to a person who is now reconciled to God (atoned for)?
- The apostle also informs us that God accomplishes all things according to his counsel and his will or "He makes everything work out according to his plan" (NLT). Can you describe what this means to you? Do believe that everything that happens is in accordance with God's will? Explain the reasoning behind your answers.
- In Ephesians 1:13 teaches that God has "sealed" his people with the Holy Spirit. How does this promise impact you personally? How can a person be sure they have been sealed or given the Holy Spirit? What does this seal of the Holy Spirit do for your Christian faith? Can you provide specific examples of the Holy Spirit at work in you?
- What is your favorite part of the text from our teaching today (Eph. 1:9-14)? Why is this important to you? How will it affect you in the days to come?