

On-Mission Class #6

Christ Proclamation Church; Sunday, February 25, 2018; Steve Thiel

I. Welcome

- Tonight's Goal
 1. Overview the Doctrine of the Atonement – "*Christian Beliefs*" chapter 10.
 2. Overview the Christian Practice of Prayer – "*Spiritual Disciplines*" chapter 4.
 3. Group Discussion and Prayer – Table Small Groups
- Tonight's Plan – Combination of Lecture and Small Group Interaction

II. Overview of the Doctrine of the Atonement

A. Definition of Atonement

- The atonement is the work Christ did in His life and through His death to earn our salvation – so it includes His active obedience (living a life without sin) and His passive obedience (dying on a cross for our sins).

B. The Cause of the Atonement

- 2 things serve as the cause of the atonement – the love of God and the justice of God.
- The love of God – John 3:16 – "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*"
- The love of God – Romans 5:8 – "*But God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"
- The justice of God – Romans 3:23-26 – "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*"

C. The Necessity of the Atonement

- The atonement was NOT a necessity on God's part – in the sense that He could have chosen NOT to save anyone – and that would have been totally just (righteous).
- But once God chose to save people from their sins – the atonement is essential [Why?] because of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man.
- Glorious picture of these 2 things together in Isaiah 6:1-8 – the holiness of God and the sinfulness of Isaiah and the need for atonement and the removal of sin.

D. The Nature of the Atonement

- There are 2 components to the nature of the atonement: (#1) Christ's obedience for us (active obedience) in which He obeyed the requirements of the law perfectly and was perfectly obedient to the will of God the Father and (#2) Christ's suffering on our behalf (passive obedience) in which He took the penalty for our sins.
- The penalty was inflicted on Christ by God the Father.
- Not eternal suffering but a complete payment – Jesus declared, "*It is finished!*" – it is very helpful to consider the details of Good Friday and the reality that it went black as night at high noon until 3pm. During that time, Jesus endured the wrath of God on our behalf.
- "*Penal Substitution*" – Christ's death was "*penal*" in that He bore a penalty when He died. His death was also a "*substitution*" in that He was a substitute for us when He died.

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E. The Result of the Atonement

- The forgiveness of our sin and the hope of eternal life!
- The joy of being reconciled back to the Father and enjoying His presence forever!
- The salvation of our souls and the escape from the wrath of God to come!

F. The Extent of the Atonement

- There are 2 major views on the atonement – particular atonement vs. universal atonement.
- Particular atonement – Christ died for the sins of those who believe in Him.
- General atonement – Christ died for the sins of every man, women, and child of all time.
- PA – would say that if Christ’s death actually paid for the sins of every person who ever lived, then there is no penalty left for anyone to pay, and it necessarily follows that all people will be saved, without exception. For God could not condemn a person to eternal punishment if their sins had already been paid for – that would be demanding double payment would therefore be unjust.
- UA – would respond by saying that this compromises the free offer of the gospel.

Passages Supporting Particular Atonement

- John 10:11 – Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”
- John 10:15 – Jesus says, “I lay down My life for the sheep.”
- John 6:37-40 – Jesus says, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”
- John 17:9 – Jesus says, “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:20-21 – Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 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.
- Galatians 3:13 – Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”

Passages Supporting General Atonement

- John 1:29 – John the Baptist says, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
- John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
- 2 Cor. 5:18-19 – Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them.
- 1 John 2:2 – My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world.
- 1 Timothy 2:6 – This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

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Some Points of Agreements

1. Not everyone will be saved.
2. A free offer of the gospel can rightly be made and offered to every person.
3. All agree that Christ's death in itself, because He is the infinite Son of God, is sufficient to pay the penalty of sin for as many people or as few of people as come to faith in Christ. Meaning, there is no question about the sufficiency of Christ's perfect obedience or His sacrificial death on the cross.

III. Overview of the Christian Practice of Prayer

A. Jesus Modeled Prayer

- Luke 5:12-16 → Jesus cleanses a leper / Jesus withdrew to desolate places to pray
 - What is the immediate context in Jesus went off to pray?
 - What strikes you about the situation that he would "often" slip away to pray?
 - What does this tell you about His view on prayer?
 - How is this immediately applicable to your prayer life?
- Luke 6:6-16 → Pharisees enraged / Jesus prays all night before calling the 12
- Luke 9:18-20 → Jesus praying alone / "*Who do people say that I am?*"
- Luke 9:28-36 → Jesus praying with his 3 disciples / Mount of Transfiguration
- Luke 11:1-13 → Jesus praying in a certain place / Taught disciples The Lord's prayer
- Luke 22:39-53 → Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

B. Jesus Commanded Prayer

- Luke 10:2 → Pray for laborers in the harvest
- Luke 11:1-4 → Teaches us The Lord's Prayer
- Luke 11:5-13 → Ask and it will be given to you / Father loves to give good gifts
- Luke 18:1-8 → Parable of the Persistent Widow
- Luke 18:9-14 → The Pharisee and the Tax Collector – Heart orientation in prayer

C. Helpful Passages on Prayer

- John 15:7-11 → Asking that God would transform your character – Bear much fruit!
- Philippians 4:6-7 → Do not be anxious about anything – But in everything pray!
- Colossians 4:2-4 → Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 → Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:1 → Pray that the word of the Lord would spread rapidly!

D. Different Ways to Pray

- Sharing and Prayer
- Popcorn Prayer – topic introduced and then everyone prays for that topic before transitioning to a new topic of prayer – prayers are short and sweet
- Praying through Scripture – I highly suggest praying through the Psalms
- A-C-T-S Acronym of Prayer – Adoration – Confession – Thanksgiving – Supplication

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IV. Discussion Questions and Prayer Suggestions

A. What is the Atonement? – Discussion Questions

- Why was it necessary for Jesus to come and live a perfect life on earth?
- Why was it necessary that Jesus die? Could He have saved us some other way?
- How does your understanding of the atonement humble you? How does it encourage you?

B. Prayer – Discussion Questions

- When is the best time for you to pray? How would you like to grow in planning to pray?
- Do you struggle with being distracted in prayer? What are some practical things that you could do in order to keep yourself focused during your prayer time?
- How do you think reading the Bible before praying might help you in your prayer time?
- Do you feel like you have the right orientation towards prayer? How has Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6 and the recent sermon been helpful in appreciating the privilege of prayer?

C. Practicing Prayer – Suggestions

- Share 1 prayer request each and pray for the person on your right.
- Try popcorn prayer – where nobody shares any requests – you simply start by having a person introduce a topic in prayer, then people contribute to that topic in prayer – when there is a pause, another person introduces another topic in prayer – prayers are short!
- Pray through Psalm 23 or Psalm 103.
- Pray through A-C-T-S – adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication!

V. Closing Comments

- Next Meeting – Sunday, March 25th – 6:00pm to 8:00pm
- Assigned Reading – “*The Soul Winner*”– Charles Spurgeon
 - Who is excited and plans on reading this book?
 - Would you like to take two months instead of one to go through this book?
 - Thoughts?