

**Discipleship:
An
Introduction to
Systematic Theology and
Apologetics**

Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation

The Heights Church January 6, 2019

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement* (Review)

- **Article 2 of the Remonstrance:** That, accordingly, Jesus Christ the Savior of the **world**, died for **all men** and for **every man**, so that **he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins**; yet that **no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer**, according to the word of the Gospel of John 3:16, “For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” And in 1 John 2:2: “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.”

* *The atonement is the work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.*

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement

“...if we believe that Christ died for all men in the same way, then the benefits of the cross cannot include the mercy by which we are brought to faith, because then all men would be brought to faith, but they aren’t. But if the mercy by which we are brought to faith (irresistible grace) is not part of what Christ purchased on the cross, then we are left to obtain our deliverance from deadness and blindness and rebellion another way. We are left to make our way into the safety of Christ another way, since he did not obtain this entrance (new birth, faith, repentance) for us when he died.”

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement (Review)

- The divide between Arminians and Calvinists is over:
 1. The extent of the atonement (Who did Jesus die for?) - **Synod of Dort**
 2. The nature of the atonement (What did Jesus achieve on the cross for those for whom he died?) - **The more important question.**
- If Jesus died for every human in the **same way for every person**, then the atonement did not decisively secure the salvation of anyone because not everyone believes. It only made everyone savable if someone chose to believe *which was impossible for them to do because of moral inability* (Total Depravity).

Limited Atonement - The New Covenant (Review)

- The *New Covenant* (Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 11) teaches that the conditions of the *Old Covenant* would be secured by God's sovereign initiative. It cannot be broken by the recipients.
- What had been promised in the OT becomes a reality in the NT.
- The promises of the New Covenant are blood bought. The promises to create and keep a people for God are what Jesus died for. So there is a definite atonement for a definite group of people that is secured by Jesus' shed blood.

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement (review)

- Therefore, if Jesus died only for the elect, then his death did not need to produce the same effect for everyone so that the cross could actually purchase irresistible grace, the new birth, faith, repentance and so on for everyone of the elect.
- Under the Old Covenant salvation was mainly for those of Jewish descent and achieved by each person fulfilling the Law.
- Under the New Covenant salvation is for the elect who encompass a “cross-section” of every “tribe and tongue” on earth.

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement (review)

- Jesus has fulfilled the Law. The elect receive salvation by faith in Christ through a monergistic* act of God as opposed to the Roman Catholic and Arminian concept of a synergistic** act of God and the individual believer.

Monergism is the view within Christian theology which holds that God alone works through the Holy Spirit to bring about the salvation of an individual through spiritual regeneration, despite the individual's enmity toward God.

** **synergism** is the position of those who hold that salvation involves some form of cooperation between divine grace and human freedom.

* the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something.

Limited Atonement – Jesus died for the Church (review)

- Therefore, the great problem with the Arminian view of the Atonement* identified by John Owen remains:
 - If Jesus atoned for every sin of every person and unbelief is a sin that sends people to hell, then either:
 1. Jesus didn't atone for unbelief for everyone (unbelievers go to hell) **or**
 2. God is unjust to send an unbeliever to hell (because Jesus atoned for unbelief)
 - Alternately, if Jesus atoned for every sin of every person, and God wants every person to be saved, then God doesn't always accomplish what he desires because he either:
 1. values human autonomy above his sovereignty or
 2. God is not sovereign over salvation

* *The atonement is the **work** Christ did in his **life** and **death** to **earn** our salvation.*

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement

1. The death of Christ was necessary to vindicate the righteousness of God in justifying the elect by faith because it would be unrighteous to acquit sinners as though their sin/unbelief was not a grievous insult to the glory of God.

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it- the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his **grace** as a **gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Limited Atonement

This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 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. 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. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, (Romans 3:21 -29)

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2. The Atonement actually purchased the gracious, loving, merciful, monergistic regeneration of the elect resulting in their justification and glorification.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4 – 7)

Limited Atonement* – Jesus lays down his life for the sheep

- **14** I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, **15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:14 – 16)
- **26** but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. **27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. **28** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. **29** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:26 – 29)
- The sheep are not everyone. They are a specific group that Christ died for. They believe in Jesus because they are sheep (given to Jesus by the father). They have been called and every sheep will have eternal life.

* *The atonement is the **work** Christ did in his **life** and **death** to **earn** our salvation.*

Limited Atonement – Jesus lays down his life for the sheep

50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." **51** He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, **52** and not for the nation only, but also to **gather into one** the **children of God** who are scattered abroad. (John 11:50 – 52)

- The gathering of the children of God in John 11:52 is the same idea as the “bringing” in John 10:16. Jesus did not die to create the possibility of salvation but rather to make it happen.
- In Revelation 5:9 John again shows a specific group of people is ransomed by Jesus’ shed blood covering all the people groups on earth as opposed to ransoming all people.

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for **you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,**

Limited Atonement – Jesus lays down his life for the sheep

6 "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. **7** Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. **8** For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. **9** I am praying for them. **I am not praying for the world** but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours...**19** And for their sake **I consecrate myself**, that they also may be sanctified in truth. (John 17:6 – 9, 19)

- Jesus consecrates himself refers to his death for the sheep/elect.

Limited Atonement – Jesus lays down his life for the sheep

...Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not **consecrate** -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have **consecrated** it, far above our poor power to add or detract... (Lincoln's Gettysburg address November 19, 1863)

Consecrate: make or declare sacred; dedicate formally to a religious or divine purpose.