

Atonement

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Atonement is the taking away of SIN in order to win a gift such as forgiveness, healing, and freedom. Christ's death atoned for the sins of His people. Words often used to describe the work of Christ associated with His atonement:

- Substitutionary: Christ was our representative.
- Ransom: Christ was the payment to satisfy God's justice.
- Propitiation: to appease God's wrath.
- Redemption: to make free from slavery.
- Expiation: to take away guilt.
- Limited (Definite) The power of Christ's death was sufficient for all, but applied only to the elect.

Or, Universal: The power of Christ's death is applied to all, making salvation possible for all, but not securing it for all.

Discussion

1. Why does the gospel have to be so bloody? Could God have saved us in some other way?
2. Do you think the atonement is "divine child abuse"?
3. Which of the following atonement theories would you hold to?

Supplemental Reading

- Beginner: Grudem, Wayne A., *Christian Beliefs*, chap. 10
- Intermediate: Boice, James M. *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, chap. 13-15
- Advanced: Grudem, Wayne A., *Systematic Theology*, chap. 27

	Ransom to Satan Theory	Recapitulation Theory	Mystical Theory	Moral Example Theory	Moral Influence Theory	Satisfaction of Honor Theory	Governmental Theory	Penal Substitution Theory
Definition	Christ's death was a ransom paid to Satan to purchase captive man from Satan's claims.	Christ in His life recapitulated all the stages of human life, in so doing reversed the course initiated by Adam.	Christ took on a human, sinful nature but through the power of the Holy Spirit triumphed over it. A knowledge of this will mystically influence Man.	Christ's death provided an example of <i>faith and obedience</i> to inspire man to be obedient.	Christ's death demonstrated God's <i>love</i> , which causes man's heart to soften and repent.	Christ's death brought infinite honor to God. So God gave Christ a reward which He did not need and passed it on to man.	Christ's death shows that the breaking of God's law requires a penalty. God sets aside this requirement for those who are so moved by Christ's death that they repent and accept Christ. He does not actually pay our penalty.	Christ's death was a substitutionary sacrifice that satisfied the demands of God's justice upon sin, paying the penalty of man's sin, bringing forgiveness, imputing righteousness, and reconciling man to God.
Proponents	Origen (250)	Irenaeus (200)	Schleiermacher (1830)	Socinians (1605)	Abelard (1142)	Anselm (1109)	Grotius (1645)	Calvin (1520)
Followers	Eastern Orthodox, Word-Faith movement, C.S. Lewis		Mystical Christians	Liberal Christians	Some liberal and "emergent" Christian movements	Roman Catholics	Wesleyan, Methodist, Church of Nazarene	So. Baptist, Presb., Reformed, Anglican,
Scripture	Mat 20:28; Mar 10:45; 1 Cor 6:20	Rom 5:15-21; Heb 2:10	Heb 2:10, 14-18; 4:14-16	1 Pet 2:21; 1 Joh 2:6	Rom 5:8; 2 Cor 5:17-29; Phil 2:5-11; Col 3:24	John 10:18	Psalms 2, 5; Isa 42:21	John 11:50-52; Rom 5:8-9; Tit 2:14; 1 Pet 3:18
Object	Satan	Satan	Man	Man	Man	God and Man	God and Man	God
Man's Condition	Man is in bondage to Satan.	Man is in bondage to Satan.	Man lacks God-consciousness.	Man already spiritually alive.	Man is sick and needs help.	Man dishonored God.	Man is a violator of Law.	Man totally depraved.
Meaning of Christ's death	Victory over Satan	Recapitulation of all the stage of human life.	Triumph over His own sinful nature	Example of truth faith and obedience	God's love toward man.	Brought infinite honor to God.	Our substitute for the penalty of sin and showed God's attitude to sin. Differs from P. S. theory in that Governmental substitution was symbolic and the penalty paid inexact.	Christ is our substitute who bore the exact penalty of Man's sin.
Benefit to Man	Freedom from Satan	Reversing mankind from disobedience to obedience	Mystical subconscious influence	Inspiration to a faithful & obedient life	Man moved to accept God's forgiveness by seeing His love.	Honor, not needed by Christ, is applied to sinners for salvation.	Makes legal God's desire to forgive those who accept Christ as their substitute.	By repenting, man can accept Christ's substitution as payment for sin.

