



20 Beliefs Every Christian Should Know

Lesson 10 – The Atonement of Christ

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:21

“He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Overview

When people talk about the cross of Christ, they often think about *how* He died. But infinitely more important is *why* He died. In the Old Testament, there were animal sacrifices that Israel was commanded to make. Those sacrifices were established to help them to understand the nature of sacrifice and prepare them for the Messiah’s substitutionary sacrifice for sin. The aspect of the work of Christ, and particularly His death, that secures the restoration of fellowship between individual believers and God is called the atonement of Christ. When we talk about the atonement of Christ, we must understand it is a penal substitutionary atonement. In this lesson we will study the penal substitutionary atonement of Christ so that we might understand *why* Jesus died.

Sacrifices in the Old Testament

1. Genesis 3:21. What did God make coverings out of? _____
2. Genesis 22:2, 11–13. What did God provide for Abraham? _____
3. Exodus 12:5–7, 13. What did God require in order to pass over the Israelites and not kill their firstborn? _____

4. Leviticus 1:3–4. What did God require to be accepted before Him? _____
 - a. What did the sacrifice do for the person’s sins? _____
 - b. Atonement in the Old Testament means: _____
5. Leviticus 16:29–30. What day did God establish to cleanse Israel from sin? _____

6. Leviticus 16:34. How long did the sacrifice atone for sins? _____
7. Leviticus 17:11. What makes atonement for the people? _____
8. Hebrews 10:3. What was the purpose of the OT sacrifices? _____

“The Levitical system was not designed by God to remove or forgive sins. It was preparatory for the coming of the Messiah in that it made the people expectant.”
—*MacArthur Study Bible*, pg. 1655.

The Necessity of the Atonement

1. 2 Peter 2:4. What does this verse tell us about God’s obligation to save sinners? _____

2. Romans 6:23. What do we deserve because of our sin? _____
3. Hebrews 10:4. What could the OT sacrifices not do? _____
4. Hebrews 9:22. What is necessary for forgiveness? _____
5. Ephesians 5:6. What abides upon mankind because of his sin? _____

The Cause of the Atonement

1. Romans 5:8. What does Christ’s death demonstrate? _____
2. Romans 3:25–26. What does the atonement demonstrate? _____
3. Hebrews 2:9. What does Christ death display for us? _____

The Atonement Applied

1. John 1:29. What did John say about Jesus? _____

2. Hebrews 10:12–14. What did Jesus do to forgive sins? _____
3. Hebrews 7:26–27. How often did the OT priests need to offer sacrifices? _____
 - a. How many times did Christ need to die to forgive all sin? _____
4. Hebrews 10:17. What will God do with the sins of His children? _____
5. 1 John 2:2. What did Christ satisfy as the “propitiation” for our sin? _____
6. 1 John 1:7. What does the blood of Christ do for believers? _____
7. John 10:14–15. Who did Christ lay His life down for? _____
8. Acts 20:28. Who did Christ purchase with His blood? _____
9. Ephesians 5:25. Who did Christ give Himself up for? _____

“Those whom God planned to save are the same people for whom Christ also came to die, and to those same people the Holy Spirit will certainly apply the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work, even awakening their faith and calling them to trust in Him.”

—Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 594-95.

Penal Substitutionary Atonement

Christ’s death was “penal” in that He bore the penalty for us when He died. His death was also a “substitution” in that He was the substitute for us when He died.

1. Isaiah 53:5. What words describe the penal aspect of the atonement? _____

2. 2 Corinthians 5:21. What does this verse declare about Christ’s death? _____

“Therefore, there should be no doubt that the servant’s sacrifice was vicarious and substitutionary (penal substitution—bearing the penalty for sin). His was the one true and satisfactory sacrifice to God.”

—“*Isaiah 52:13–53:12: The suffering servant’s sacrifice.*”, *Biblical Doctrines*, eds. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, pg. 314.

Application

1. In what ways does this lesson enable you to appreciate Christ’s death more?

2. Since Christ paid for your sins “once and for all,” do you trust Him?

3. Realizing Christ gave His life to free you from sin, what areas can you more fully realize this to be true?