

## ***“Let’s Talk Kingdom”***

*John 19:1-16*

*September 27, 2014*

**Intro:** *“Maggie, a girl of the streets... she was a blossom in a mud puddle...”* by Stephen Crane (published 1893)

**Timeless Truth:** Christ is the ***VICTOR vs. Victim*** here...

### **Preview:**

1. *PROBLEM*
2. *PLAN*
3. *PEOPLE*
4. *POWER*
5. *PURPOSE*

**T/S:** **Video...** “Gospel of John 19:1-16 (listen for “*king*”)

# **I. PROBLEM**

A. John 18...

B. Sin! (vv.1-3; 4-15; 16)

C. Passage = “Sin Hall of Fame” (John 19:1-16)

- vv.1-3
  - Set’s contextual example [19:1-3](#)
  - **1 Jesus flogged.**
  - **2 Jesus crowned.**
  - **3 JESUS ARRAYED IN ROYAL ROBE**
  - **2' Jesus hailed as "king."**
  - **1' Jesus struck**

## II. PLAN

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

- Genesis 1:1

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

- John 1:1

*“I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

- Genesis 3:15

A. Old Testament “types” of the SUFFERING Christ:

- **Abel** – first one to suffer for righteousness...
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- **Ark...**
- 
- **Job:** **Job** was a type of Christ in that he was a righteous sufferer.
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- **Isaac:** **Isaac** typified the Redeemer in that he is the only other human sacrifice that God commanded, and—though God stopped Abraham from going through with the sacrifice of Isaac—he is said to have died and been risen “figuratively” (Hebrews 11:19). Jesus, the true and greater son of Abraham, was sacrificed, raised and returned to His Father.
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- **Joseph:** **Joseph** was a type of Christ in that he suffered unjustly and then was exalted to save his brethren.
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- **Moses:**
- ...life threatened as a baby
- ...with the Passover lamb
- ...hits the Rock for life-giving water
- Jesus leads His people out of bondage to Satan, sin and death through His own “exodus” (Luke 9:31) in His death and resurrection.
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- **David & Goliath:** David was a type of Christ in that he entered into a battle of **representative warfare**. David had a number of men who were with him in his sufferings. Jesus had a band of “mighty men” who were with Him through the period of His humiliation and suffering.
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- **Elijah:** **Elijah** was a type of Christ is that he called the covenant people to repentance. He was rejected by all, and was, in a very real sense, a man of sorrows. His preaching of righteousness and calling the people to repentance led to his being despised by the King of Israel. Even though the King despised him, he was feared by the king. Jesus also was a preacher of righteousness, who called the covenant people to repentance.
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- **Nehemiah:** **Nehemiah** was a type of Christ in that he rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. When Nehemiah was in the process of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the enemies of God came and functionally said to him, “Come down.” He responded, “I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down” (Nehemiah 6:1-3). When Jesus was hanging on the cross, building the walls of the true Jerusalem, His enemies said, ” If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him” (Matt. 27:42). The greater Nehemiah responded by saying, “It is finished.” Through His death and resurrection, our

Lord Jesus Christ built the walls of protection around His Church.



➤ SEE ALSO: **Shadrach, Meishach, & Abedigo**

Ultimately, Christ died not because of any human intentions, schemes, or actions, but because of the will of His Father.

...He had been "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God"

([Acts 2:23](#)).

## III. PEOPLE

A. Powerful

- Worldly
- Worship-worthy

B. Pompous

C. Pious      **(Give out FROG/CROWN business cards)**

D. Poisonous

## IV. POWER

- A. John 8:32 & 36
- B. Matthew 28:18-20
- C. Acts 1:8

*"We have no king but Caesar"*

is a direct contradiction of the injunction of the Bible that God alone is Israel's king ([1 Sam. 8:7](#); [10:19](#)) and the kings that did reign (e.g., David) did so by divine appointment. By rejecting Jesus they have rejected God himself, as Jesus predicted...

*"He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" ([John 5:23](#)).*

## V. PURPOSE

- A. Love (John 3:16)
- B. Obedience unto death... on a cross... (Philippians 2:8)
- C. Joy (Hebrews 12:2)
- D. Purchase... you've been bought... (1 Corinthians 7:23)
- E. Atonement (Romans 3:21-26) NOTE: N.L.T. paraphrase

## **Romans 3:21-26**

**21**But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. **22**We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

**23**For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. **24**Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. **25**For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, **26**for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he declares sinners to be right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.

F. **Inspiration** (Philippians 4:13)

G. **Gospel Grace** (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

**17**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. **b** The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. **18**All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; **19**that is, in Christ God was reconciling **c** the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **20**Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21**For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Don't ever forget:

## ***Christ's CORRONATION comes on the CROSS!***

**QT:** (John MacArthur)

Pilate's dilemma, expressed in his question, "*Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?*" ([Matt. 27:22](#)) is the same one facing every person. There are only two alternatives: to stand with His rejecters and crucifiers and face eternal damnation ([Heb. 6:6](#)), or to acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior ([Rom. 10:9](#)) and be saved. Pilate's futile attempts to evade the issue reveal clearly that there is no middle ground for, as Jesus declared, "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters" ([Matt. 12:30](#)). In the end, pride and fear of man led to Pilate's downfall, and he sided with the crucifiers of Christ to the damnation of his soul. He stands in history as a monumentally tragic figure. Privileged to converse privately with the Savior, he found no value in the opportunity. It was likely the worst experience of his life.

He (Pilate) then took Jesus and scourged Him. By brutally punishing a man whom he had already declared innocent, Pilate plunged further down into the abyss of injustice.

Scourging was a hideously cruel form of punishment. The victim was stripped, bound to a post, and beaten by several torturers in turn.

Jewish law set the maximum number of blows at forty ([Deut. 25:3](#)), and in practice the Jews gave a maximum of thirty-nine (to avoid accidentally exceeding forty blows; cf. [2 Cor. 11:24](#)). The Romans,

however, were not bound by any such restrictions. The punishment would continue until the torturers were exhausted, the commanding officer decided to stop it, or, as was often the case, the victim died. The whip consisted of a short wooden handle to which several leather thongs, each with jagged pieces of bone or metal attached to the end, were fastened. As a result, the body could be so torn and lacerated that the muscles, bones, veins, or even internal organs were exposed. So horrible was this punishment that Roman citizens were exempt from it (cf. [Acts 22:25](#)). execution site ([Matt. 27:32](#)).

- MacArthur

## **COMMUNION**

*“do this is REMEMBRANCE of Me”*  
(read Isaiah 53!)

VIDEO: “Passion / I Give My Heart”

# Let's Pray!

MUSIC:

- *“Break Every Chain”*
- *“Amazing Grace”*
- *“Majesty”*

## **1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.**

**2** And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; **3** and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face.

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**4** Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." **5** Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!"

**6** So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him."

**7** The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

**8** Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid;

**9** and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. **10** So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

**11** Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me

*to you has the greater sin.”*

*12As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, “If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.”*

*13Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.*

*14Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold, your King!”*

*15So they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”*

*16So he then **handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.***

## **Christ’s Ministry in the Gospel of John:**

Prologue Ministry	1:1-18
Public Ministry	1:19 – 12:50
Private Ministry	ch.13 - 16
Priestly Ministry	ch.17
Passion Ministry	ch. 18-20
Proven Ministry	ch.21
Prolonged Ministry	ch.22

### **Immediate CONTEXT:**

Long before the Jewish leaders had Jesus arrested in the Garden, they had determined to kill Him ([John 11:47-54](#)). However, the Jewish council did not have the right to execute prisoners; so it was necessary to get the cooperation and approval of Rome. This meant a visit to the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate.

There were three stages in both the Jewish "trial" and the Roman "trial." After His arrest, Jesus was taken to the home of Annas and there interrogated informally ([John 18:12-14](#), [19-23](#)). Annas hoped to get information that would implicate Jesus as an enemy of the state. He wanted to prove that both His doctrine and His disciples were anti-Roman, for then He would be worthy of death.

Stage two of the Jewish trial took place before Caiaphas and whatever members of the Sanhedrin the high priest could assemble at that hour of the night ([Matt. 26:57-68](#); [Mark 14:53-65](#)). When Jesus confessed clearly that He was the Christ, the council found Him guilty of blasphemy and therefore, according to their law, worthy of death.

However, it was necessary for the council to meet early the next morning and give their verdict, since it was not considered legal to try capital cases at night. So, stage three of the Jewish trial took place as early as possible, and the leaders condemned Jesus to death ([Matt. 27:1](#); [Luke 22:66-71](#)).

The three stages of the Roman trial were: the first appearance before Pilate ([John 18:28-38](#)), the appearance before Herod ([Luke 23:6-12](#)), and the second appearance before Pilate ([John 18:39-19:16](#); and see [Matt. 27:15-26](#); [Mark 15:6-15](#); and [Luke 23:13-25](#)). As you can see, the Apostle John records only the interrogations by Annas and Pilate, and mentions Caiaphas only in passing. He focuses primarily on the Roman trial. By the time he wrote this Gospel, the Jewish nation had been scattered by Rome, Jerusalem had been destroyed, and Roman power was all that really mattered.

### - Bible Exposition Commentary

The theological emphasis on glory, victory, and sovereignty likewise appears in the literary structure of [18:28-19:16](#). In Jesus' meetings with Pilate, we witness one of the Gospel's final great misunderstandings. While one level of the story simply reports Jesus' interrogation and the harm done to him, another level permits us as readers to see a deeper truth at work. The structure of the story is inverted and so outside "stanzas" must be read in relation to each in order to see the symmetry or parallelism. Note the following:

#### **Stanza A, [18:28-32](#) (outside Pilate's chamber).**

It was early

Passover

Jewish leaders cannot put a man to death (lawfully)

The type of Jesus' death

A Jewish plea for Jesus' death

**Stanza B, [18:33-38a](#) (inside).**

Pilate does not speak on his own accord

Jesus' origins: not of this world

Jesus is passive: he is not of this world

**Stanza C, [18:38b-40](#) (outside)**

Pilate finds no crime in him

Pilate brings Jesus out: he *may* be set free

**Stanza D, [19:1-3](#) (inside).**

**1 Jesus flogged.**

**2 Jesus crowned.**

**3 JESUS ARRAYED IN ROYAL ROBE**

**2' Jesus hailed as "king."**

**1' Jesus struck**

**Stanza C', [19:4-8](#) (outside)**

Pilate finds no crime in Jesus

Pilate brings Jesus out: will he be set free?

**Stanza B', [19:9-11](#) (inside)**

Pilate's power is not his own

"Where are you from"

Jesus is passive: Pilate's authority is from above

**Stanza A', [19:12-16](#) (outside)**

It was late (the 6th hour)

Passover

The Jewish crowds call for death

Crucifixion

## The Jewish leaders obtain Jesus' death

Parallelism (or chiasm) like this has been recognized for a long time in the biblical text. As a storytelling vehicle, it structures development and form into the drama and in this case offers the significant number seven. One can even tag each stanza following Pilate's movements in and out of the palace (praetorium). In Stanza A he steps out, in B he is in, C: out, etc. Here in this interrogation sequence, the stanzas can be aligned in an inversion, and at once it becomes evident that parallel themes are treated (A and A'; B and B'; C and C'; D). But the most significant feature, the "climax" or turning point of the structure, is Jesus' coronation (D). The center stanza is itself an inversion, telling us that, ironically, Jesus is crowned and arrayed in a purple robe, and while these men meant it as harm, on a deeper level Jesus is actually being acknowledged as king. The same motif appears on the cross. Pilate refuses to change the title of the cross, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" ([19:19](#)). Why? Because these events are (truly) linked to Jesus' coronation.

**- NIV Application Commentary,**

But Jesus not only told Pilate of His origin; He also explained His ministry: to bear witness unto the truth. His was a spiritual kingdom of truth; and He won people to His cause, not through force, but through conviction and persuasion. He spoke the truth of God's Word, and all who were His people would respond to His call (see [John 8:47](#); [10:27](#)). Rome's weapon was the sword; but our Lord's weapon was the truth of God, the sword of the Spirit ([Eph. 6:17](#)).

**- Bible Exposition Commentary**

The truth is that humanly speaking the Romans played a part while the Jews were the instigators who bear the greatest blame for Christ's death. But the real responsibility does not rest solely with either of them; What put Him on the cross was God's own determination to punish His Son for all the sins of all who would ever be saved. John the Baptist hailed Him as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" ([John 1:29](#)). The writer of Hebrews said that He "has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" ([Heb. 9:26](#)). In his first epistle John wrote that "He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" ([1 John 2:2](#)) and "He appeared in order to take away sins" ([3:5](#)). Our sins put Him on the cross.

Jesus Christ was no victim. Neither the Romans nor the Jews had the power to take His life. For that matter, neither did all the sinners for whom He died. "No one has taken [My life] away from Me," He said, "but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father" ([John 10:18](#)). He told Pilate, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above" (see the discussion of [v. 11](#) below). His Jewish adversaries sought to kill Him, but were unsuccessful "because His hour had not yet come" ([7:30](#); [8:20](#)).

Ultimately, Christ died not because of any human intentions, schemes, or actions, but because of the will of His Father. In the same sermon in which he indicted Israel for killing Jesus, Peter nonetheless affirmed that He had been "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God" ([Acts 2:23](#)).

...Paul declared, "Those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are

read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him" ([Acts 13:27](#)). In his magnificent prophecy of Christ's death, Isaiah said, "It was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief" ([Isa. 53:10](#) ESV). Speaking of His death, Jesus said, "The Son of Man is going as it has been determined" ([Luke 22:22](#); cf. [Matt. 26:24](#)). "He [God] made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf," said Paul in [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).

But God's sovereign control of events does not relieve individuals of responsibility for their actions. This passage gives the account of the last phase of Christ's civil trial (John omits the Lord's hearing before Herod Antipas [[Luke 23:7-12](#)]). As was the case with the first phase of that trial ([18:28-38](#)), it was presided over by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea.

As he did throughout his gospel, John presented the majesty and dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ—even as He was beaten, unjustly sentenced to death, and led away to be crucified. The apostle did so by contrasting Him with the weak and vacillating Pilate, who lost his composure, his control over events, and was pressured into sentencing an innocent man to die. The story of Pilate's downfall reveals his failed proposals to dispose of the case, his fatal panic as events spiraled out of control, and produced his final pronouncement of the death sentence on the Lord Jesus Christ.

**"You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above" (see the discussion of [v. 11](#) below). His Jewish adversaries sought to kill Him, but were unsuccessful "because His hour had not yet come" ([7:30](#); [8:20](#)).**

**In another sermon Peter reminded the people that "the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that**

**His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled" ([Acts 3:18](#)). The early church prayed, "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur" ([Acts 4:27-28](#)). In an example of God's using the wrath of sinful men to praise Him ([Ps. 76:10](#)), Paul declared, "Those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him" ([Acts 13:27](#)). In his magnificent prophecy of Christ's death, Isaiah said, "It was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief" ([Isa. 53:10](#) ESV). Speaking of His death, Jesus said, "The Son of Man is going as it has been determined" ([Luke 22:22](#); cf. [Matt. 26:24](#)). "He [God] made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf," said Paul in [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).**

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**- MacArthur New Testament Commentary**

As you read John's account, you see Pilate seeking to find some "loophole" that would please both sides. He was afraid of the crowd, but then he grew more and more afraid of the prisoner! At least three times he announced that Jesus was not guilty of any crime ([Luke 23:14](#); [John 19:4](#); [Luke 23:22](#); [John 19:6](#)). Yet he refused to release Him!

- Bible Exposition Commentary

## John 19:1-16

### v.1-3:

John shows that Pilate has another motive: This preliminary flogging is his gambit to set Jesus free. [Luke 23:16](#) also hints that when the crowd calls for Barabbas, Pilate suggests that Jesus be punished and set free.

Roman law recognized three types of flogging: *fustigatio*, *flagellatio*, and *verberatio*, each representing ascending levels of severity, although it is uncertain if the Gospel's original readers would have understood these differences. The lowest form (*fustigatio*) was reserved for troublemakers who simply needed to be punished and warned. The third level (*verberatio*) was the most severe and served as a part of a capital sentence, generally as a preparation for crucifixion. No doubt when Jesus is prepared for crucifixion in [Mark 15:15](#), this severe beating is what Mark has in mind, and we should assume the same in [John 19:16](#) (although it is not mentioned it would be a part of crucifixion itself). In the present scene Pilate chooses to employ *fustigatio*, a beating ([19:1](#)), not only to teach Jesus to be more prudent in the future, but to satisfy the crowds who are demanding his death... - NIV

Quote:     *Pilate knew that many in that crowd had hailed Jesus as*

*their messianic King earlier in the week. He hoped to play them off against their leaders and force the latter to agree to Jesus' release.... Unfortunately Pilate underestimated both the chief priests' resolve and the crowd's fickleness.* - MacArthur

**"Not this Man, but Barabbas"** ([Matt. 27:20](#); [Mark 15:11](#)).

**Barabbas**, as John's footnote indicates, **was a robber**. He was no common, petty thief, however. Matthew calls him a "notorious prisoner" ([Matt. 27:16](#)), while Mark ([15:7](#)) and Luke ([23:19](#)) note that he was a murderer (cf. [Acts 3:14](#)) and an insurrectionist... Ironically the same Jewish leaders who had demanded that Pilate condemn Jesus as an insurrectionist now demanded the release of the notorious insurrectionist Barabbas.

Theatrically sarcastically, **Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!"** Jesus, bleeding from His scourging and the crown of thorns, His face bruised and swollen from being beaten by Pilate's soldiers, looked like anything but a king. Pilate hoped this beaten and pathetic figure would satiate their bloodlust and elicit sympathy from the multitude. His designation of Jesus as **the Man** instead of "your King" as in [verse 14](#) (cf. [v. 15](#); [18:39](#)) stressed to the Jews his view that Jesus posed no danger either to them or to Rome.

Once again, Pilate misjudged the depth of the Jewish leaders' contempt for Jesus. The sight of the Lord's bruised and bleeding body merely whetted their appetite. Like sharks sensing blood in the water, **when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!"**

#### **vv.4-6:**

Mark adds ([Mark 15:19](#)) that they also hit him with his reed scepter, spit on him, and bow down before him in mock worship.

When Pilate escorts Jesus outside ([19:4-5](#)), his clear intention is to display Jesus in cruel submission, bearing the marks of his punishment, and thereby obtain his release. John's famous "Here is the man" (*Ecce homo!* [Lat.]) records Pilate's words as he tries to evoke sympathy for Jesus' pathetic state Jesus is in sore condition; he no doubt is bleeding profusely and terribly bruised. Pilate also announces for the second time that Jesus is innocent ([19:4](#)), but Pilate's overture fails when his audience calls for Jesus' death ([19:6](#)). We can almost sense Pilate's anger. Rather than pitying Jesus, the leaders are calling for his crucifixion and in disgust Pilate calls back to them, saying as it were, "If you want a crucifixion, do it yourself; I find nothing to warrant it." Pilate is trying to avoid responsibility for the death of an innocent man (here Matthew adds that Pilate washes his hands, discharging any responsibility, [Matt. 27:24](#)).

NIV Application Commentary, The - NIV Application Commentary,  
The – John: From biblical text...to contemporary life.

#### **v.7:**

"We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God" ([John 19:7](#)).

The Jewish leaders had earlier played their "political card," telling Pilate that Jesus was a king. Now they have a religious accusation: If Pilate truly dis-charges his duties in the province he will uphold local law (when it is irrelevant to imperial interests) and thereby keep the peace. Jesus has broken *their law* and so must die. According to [Leviticus 24:16](#), "Anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death."

Was it illegal to claim to be the Son of God? This is hardly the case. The king of Israel enjoyed this title (see [Ps. 2, 45, 89](#), and [110](#)), and it appears for the Messiah in various writings of intertestamental Jewish literature (such as Qumran) But the language veils another worry: by "son" Jesus has said more, implying that he bears the authority of God himself. [John 5:18](#) is explicit: "For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." - NIV

***But Jesus gave him no answer. There are several possible reasons for the Lord's silence. It fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy concerning Him: "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth" (Isa. 53:7). Further, Jesus had already told Pilate that He was a king from another realm (18:36-37). Certainly Jesus' silence was judgmental, in the sense that Pilate had heard the truth and rejected it, and now would receive no further answer from Him. The Bible teaches that when men persist in rejecting God, He will reject them (cf. [Judg. 10:13](#); [2 Chron. 15:2](#); [24:20](#); [Ps. 81:11-12](#); [Hos. 4:17](#); [Matt. 15:14](#)).***

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary,

Because of two great facts, the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man, Atonement is made an absolute necessity if sinners are to be pardoned and brought to God. When we have the true conception of the holiness of God, we will have the true conception of sin, and when we have the correct view of sin, we will have an adequate view of the Atonement. The only reason that men are offended at the preaching of the Cross is because they have no adequate sense of sin and the holiness of our Lord. When a man refuses to face sin, he will find it easy to dispense with what the Bible teaches about the Atoning Death of Christ.

In defining sin, the Westminster Confession says that “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.” This is perhaps the best known of man’s definitions of sin. The Bible says that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” ([Romans 14:23](#)), that is, whatever a man does or thinks which is not an act or a thought proceeding from faith in God and guided by God, is sin. The sin may be committed in ignorance, but it is no less a sin. Sin committed in ignorance may not receive as great a punishment as sin committed willfully and deliberately, nevertheless all sin is punishable and must be punished.

But the sin that is greater than all sins is the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit is come, “He will reprove the world of sin . . . Of Sin, because they believe not on Me” ([John 16:8-9](#)).

### **v.10-11:**

Pilate's conversation with Jesus about power ([19:10-11](#)) compares with the earlier conversation in [18:33-38](#). These are the only episodes where Jesus speaks; in each case Pilate begins with a question that only inspires his frustration and annoyance. Jesus and Pilate talk "past" each other, responding to ideas on utterly different planes. Such misunderstanding is characteristic of discourses and conversations throughout this Gospel. A mundane question discovers a spiritually profound answer but cannot comprehend it. Of course Pilate has the power to crucify Jesus ([19:10](#)), but (like truth) Jesus' retort explains the

nature of *true* power: It is derived from heaven ("from above"), and that is the origin of Jesus. The implication is telling. Jesus, who comes "from above," bears greater power; what power Pilate does enjoy is simply a privilege given (on one level) by Caesar, who ranks above him.

But even here Pilate no doubt misses the *double entendre*: The real power above both Caesar and Pilate is God, and so Pilate has no grounds for boasting. No one can take the Son's life away from him ([10:18](#)). *No one!* God has permitted Pilate to have this power over Jesus because it is a necessary aspect of what will happen in "the hour." Jesus must die. In the story Pilate has tried to use what power he enjoys to free Jesus, but it doesn't work. Pilate is *powerless* before God's plan in this hour.

The "greater sin" of [19:11b](#) is difficult. The most obvious candidate who "handed over" (Gk. *paradidomi*) Jesus to prosecution is Judas, the "betrayor" (which uses this same Gk. verb), but he has disappeared from the story since the arrest ([18:5](#)). In [18:30](#) the Jewish leadership corporately "hand over" Jesus and the responsibility may rest here. But Jesus seems to point to a person ("*the one* who handed me over to you," italics added), and the best solution is to see this in the high priest Caiaphas. He was the catalyst for Jesus' arrest and formulated a rationale for Jesus' death ([11:49-53](#)).

The first conversation ended with Pilate trying to release Jesus ([18:38](#)); now the same happens again. The nature of Jesus' answers increases Pilate's conviction that Jesus' innocence is compelling and he must be freed. The verb in [18:12](#) is imperfect, meaning ongoing action ("Pilate *kept trying* to free Jesus"), but it is fruitless. Suddenly something dramatic happens. The Jewish leaders know they have one more weapon, one more bit of leverage on this governor that will make him pliable, like putty in their hands. "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar." The last time these leaders "shouted," they had called for Jesus' crucifixion ([19:6](#)); now they shout again, using the same tone with Pilate, suggesting that he likewise will suffer.

"Friend of Caesar" was an official title (Lat., *amicus Caesaris*) bestowed on select persons such as senators who showed marked loyalty and service to the emperor. If Pilate is not a friend, he is an enemy of Caesar, and Emperor Tiberius had a firm reputation for eliminating his enemies swiftly. Suetonius tells of Roman leaders killed for simply removing statues of Augustus or for criticizing him (*Lives of the Caesars*, 3.58).

The irony of this situation is that these Jewish leaders, who come from a province seething with hatred for Rome, are here chastising the governor for not being sufficiently loyal. But Pilate has reason for worry. Jewish delegations were known to travel to the Roman Senate to complain about the work of governors, putting careers in danger. Pilate has seen this with some of his own friends.

Therefore Pilate's powerlessness is all the more apparent ([19:11](#)) and at once his resolve is broken. The fate of Jesus has returned to politics. If Jesus claims to be a king, no matter the truth ([18:38](#)), political exigencies demand he be killed.           **- Gary Burge**

Irritated by Jesus' silence **Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me?"** He was insulted at the Lord's apparent lack of respect for his dignity and power. **"Do You not know,"** he boasted, **"that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"** He may have had the right, but he did not have the courage to do either one. But as Leon Morris notes,

The question is illuminating. In the last resort it was Pilate alone who could say "Crucify" or "Release," and this frank recognition of it makes nonsense of all the shifts to which he resorted in the attempt to avoid making a decision. Ultimately he could not avoid responsibility and these words show that deep down he must have realized this. (*The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979], 796-97)

Pilate's arrogant boast was not true. Breaking His silence, **Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above"** (i.e., from God). Although he was a responsible moral agent and accountable for his actions, Pilate did not have ultimate control over events related to the Son of God. - **MacArthur New Testament Commentary**

**Quote:** D.A. Carson notes, "*Pilate remains responsible for his spineless, politically-motivated judicial decision; but he did not initiate the trial or engineer the betrayal that brought Jesus into court*"

Realizing that they had failed to convince Pilate of Jesus' guilt and afraid that the governor was going to set Him free, **the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."** Here is yet another corrupt, hypocritical irony, since the Jews' hatred of all Roman rule certainly indicated that they themselves were anything but friends of Caesar. This was the last straw for Pilate; the Jews' implied threat finally overwhelmed him. He could not risk having them report to the emperor that he had released a revolutionary especially one who made **himself out to be a king** in opposition to **Caesar**.

**Several of Pilate's foolish acts had already infuriated the Jews and caused turmoil in Palestine. Rome's eye was on him, and he dared not risk another upheaval. The emperor at that time, Tiberius, was noted for his suspicious nature and willingness to exact ruthless punishment on his subordinates. Pilate feared for his position, his possessions, even for his life. He felt that he had no choice now but to give in to the Jews' wishes and pronounce the sentence they demanded.**

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary

## **vv.13-16:**

The supreme moment to which all of redemptive history pointed had arrived, so John carefully, dramatically set the scene. It was **the day of preparation for the Passover**. The time was **about the sixth hour**; or late morning, approaching noon. This statement presents an apparent difficulty, because according to Mark's account, Jesus was crucified at the third hour (9:00 a.m.). But as Andreas Köstenberger writes, "Since people related the estimated time to the closest three-hour mark, any time between 9:00 a.m. and noon may have led one person to say an event occurred at the third (9:00 a.m.) or the sixth hour (12:00 noon)" (*John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004], 538). D. A. Carson cautions against "insisting on a degree of precision in both Mark and John which, in days before watches, could not have been achieved" (*John*, 605). - **MacArthur**

From this point, things proceed swiftly ([19:13-16](#)). Pilate returns to the porch outside with Jesus, where he occupies the governor's judgment seat (or tribune; Gk. *bema*; [Acts 25:6, 17](#); cf. [Rom. 14:10](#); [2 Cor. 5:10](#)) and prepares to render a decision ([John 19:16](#))... the important feature of the note is that as governor, Pilate is now positioned to speak with the voice of his office.

**The closing scene is filled with Pilate's sarcasm. "Here is your king" ([19:14b](#)) echoes "Here is the man" ([19:5](#)), and Pilate now offers to crucify this royal Jewish monarch. The audience of chief priests (the great "shepherds" of Israel) supplies an acid tone to the conclusion and lays the groundwork for their own blasphemy. "We have no**

**king but Caesar" is a direct contradiction of the injunction of the Bible that God alone is Israel's king ([1 Sam. 8:7](#); [10:19](#)) and the kings that did reign (e.g., David) did so by divine appointment. By rejecting Jesus they have rejected God himself, as Jesus predicted, "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" ([John 5:23](#)).**

The best way to interpret "preparation" (*paraskeue*) in 19:14 is *preparation for the Sabbath*, or Friday, as 19:31 implies. Note that [Mark 15:42](#) uses *paraskeue* in just this way as well: "It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath)." No evidence has shown the words "day of Preparation" as relating to any other day but a Sabbath. *Paraskeue* means "Friday" and John is telling us that this happened on Passover-Friday, that is, the Friday of Passover week.

When Jesus is "handed over" for crucifixion ([19:16a](#)), he is placed in the custody of the Roman garrison that ordinarily handled such matters Here [Mark 15:15b](#) introduces Jesus' full preparation for crucifixion (although John's only record of flogging takes place earlier, [John 19:1](#)). While Jesus had been given a remedial flogging by Pilate's men, now the soldiers inflict the *verberatio* (see comment on [19:1](#)). We can barely improve on the description of Blinzler:

The delinquent was stripped, bound to a post or a pillar, or sometimes simply thrown on the ground, and beaten by a number of torturers until the latter grew tired and the flesh of the delinquent hung in bleeding shreds. In the provinces this was the task of the soldiers. Three kinds of implements were customary. Rods were used on freemen; military punishments were inflicted with sticks, but for slaves scourges or whips were used, the leather thongs of these being often fitted with a spike or with several pieces of bone or lead joined to form a chain. The

scourging of Jesus was carried out with these last-named instruments. It is not surprising to hear that delinquents frequently collapsed and died under this procedure which only in exceptional cases was prescribed as a death sentence. Josephus records that he himself had some of his opponents in the Galilean Tarichae scourged until their entrails were visible. The case of Jesus bar Hanan, the prophet of woe, whom the procurator Albinus had scourged until his bones lay bare ... also makes one realize what the little word *phragellosas* [to scourge] in [Mark 15:15](#) means.

- NIV Application Commentary

**"Behold, your King!"** This was his way of mocking them, suggesting that this beaten, bloody, helpless man was all the king they deserved. Enraged, they **cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!"** Either in continued mockery, or perhaps seeking one final time to escape his dilemma, **Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"** In a chilling act of appalling hypocrisy **the chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."** Though said with blatant duplicity the irony was that there was truth in their statement; having rejected their messianic King, they were left with only Caesar as their king. In yet one more bitter irony those who had falsely accused Jesus of blasphemy committed an act of blasphemy of their own, since God alone was Israel's true King (cf. [Judg. 8:23](#); [1 Sam. 8:7](#); [Ps. 149:2](#); [Isa. 33:22](#)).

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary

All options exhausted, Pilate acknowledged defeat and **handed Jesus over to them to be crucified**. John is not saying that the Jews took physical custody of Jesus; Roman soldiers would perform the actual crucifixion. Rather, the sense is that Pilate "delivered Jesus to their [the Jews'] will" ([Luke 23:25](#)). - **MacArthur New Testament Commentary**

**The kingship of Jesus.** The other major theme that threads itself through chapters 18-19 has to do with the kingship of Jesus. From the wounded man in the garden (Malchus, meaning "my king") to Jesus' sustained discussion with Pilate, the word "king" occurs over a dozen times. Even on the cross, Pilate insists that Jesus be labeled "King of the Jews"... If the kingship of Jesus was being submerged in the politics of Jerusalem, can this happen today? If political operators and renowned theologians exploited God's Son then, how might it happen again?

**Jesus the king.** Earlier in this chapter I outlined the literary structure of Jesus' conversation with Pilate in order to show that John's construction of the story is designed to focus on a central turning point located at [19:1-3](#). While the word "king" appears throughout the seven inverted sections, this central section could be deemed the "coronation" of Jesus, as ironically, Jesus is now given his robe and crown. Note how the lines "mirror" one another.

**1** Then Pilate took Jesus and *had him flogged*.

**2** The soldiers twisted together a *crown* of thorns and put it on his head

**3** They *clothed him in a purple robe*;

2' went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!"

1' And they *struck him* in the face.

This structure is a clue to us to look deeply at what is really going on within the narrative. John's Passion story is like a symphony, which seems to pursue one theme: the sorrow of Jesus' departure, his rejection by many, the dismay of the disciples, the betrayal of Judas, the denials of Peter, Jesus' immanent death—each of these are a part of the "hour" that beats its way through virtually every chapter of the Gospel. Particularly for readers who know the Synoptic version, this theme has all the makings of a tragedy.

But then there is a counterpoint, a secondary theme that works its way to the surface and makes itself known confidently but unobtrusively, a theme that could be missed if you were not watching for it. This is not the tragedy we think; this is not a moment for panic; there is something hopeful happening, something we didn't see at first glance: This scene, this hour does not belong to Pilate or Caiaphas, *it belongs to Jesus*. Jesus is in control of the situation. [John 18:4](#) reminds us at the outset that nothing will take Jesus by surprise. He asks the questions, he takes the lead, he steps forward and presents his captors with queries that make them stumble. It isn't just the guards who fall to the ground in Gethsemane ([18:6](#)), but Annas and Pilate discover themselves plunging head-over-heel, made captive to questions they cannot answer.

John's story reads like a medieval drama, where the true king of a tortured land, whose rightful rule has been temporarily overthrown, moves among the masses and is known only to a select few. He wears no crown, but the leather and wool of the commoner. But we who watch the play know that the usurpers are doomed. Even if the true king is captured and threatened with destruction, there will be some intervention

(Merlin?!) that will reverse these events and win the day. Jesus is the true king, the hidden king, whose victory is about to be cheered.

A simple exercise brings the counterpoint to light. Take a pencil and circle every reference to "king" (or kingdom, kingship) in the story and watch what happens. Jesus is Israel's king, despite what his enemies are doing to him; Jesus is the *true* king, despite their refusal to recognize him. Perhaps when we see this, we see the greatest "misunderstanding" of the gospel. The spiritual irony John enjoys most is when people only apprehend the surface of Jesus' identity or message. A woman at a well thinks he may show her a river; a rabbi on a Jerusalem night thinks he offers a return to the womb. But John delights in accounts of men and women betraying their ignorance, but also by their words disclosing the truths that even *they* do not see. Of course in [9:40](#) the Pharisees are not blind—but then again, yes, they are. Of course in [6:15](#)

Jesus is not a king, hailed by an unruly mob—but then again, yes, he is. Of course Jesus must be crucified as a pretender to the throne—but then again, yes, the throne is his!

John's theological message is that despite the darkness of the hour, this is in fact *the hour of glory*. - NIV Application Commentary,

**Secondary issues.** (1) When Jesus refers to Pilate's power in [19:11](#), is he acknowledging the divine authority of the state? Interpreters have frequently made this suggestion and it has had lasting implications for how the church has viewed the power of government. (2) When Jesus describes his kingdom as "not of this world," is he giving us guidelines for how God's people, the church, ought to consider life in the secular world? Does this imply that Jesus' followers should be apolitical, disengaged? As Peter should not fight in the garden, so too should we not fight in Congress or Parliament? - **NIV Application Commentary**

# The Atonement of Christ

At the very heart of the Christian system lies the all-important doctrine of the Atonement. The Apostle Paul, himself an advocate of “sound doctrine,” in a condensed statement of what the Christian Church believes, said,

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that *Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures ([I Cor. 15:3, 4](#)).

Though the Gospel according to Paul included a sinless and a bodily-resurrected Christ, he gives first place to the fundamental fact that “Christ died for our sins.” In spite of the fact that some religious leaders object vigorously to the Doctrine of the Atonement, that the Death of Jesus Christ was sacrificial and necessary for man’s redemption, we proceed on a sound biblical basis to pursue this great subject.

The word “atonement” in the Authorized Version of the Bible is an Old Testament term. It appears only once in the New Testament ([Romans 5:11](#)) where it is translated “reconciliation” in the Revised Version. It is not entirely fanciful to suggest the idea of *at-one-ment* because the word atonement is used to refer to the atoning death of Christ through which the sinner is reconciled to God, restored to His favor.

To atone for means to make amends. In the Bible atonement is associated with man’s sin. God commanded Israel to set aside one day each year, the tenth day of the seventh month, which He called “the day of atonement” ([Leviticus 16:29-30; 23:27-28](#)). The people were to bring a sin offering, an innocent animal sacrifice “whose blood was brought in to make atonement” ([Leviticus 16:27](#)). God had said, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and

I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” ([Leviticus 17:11](#)) “. . . and without shedding of blood is no remission” ([Hebrews 9:22](#)).

In this study we will give thought to the biblical teaching how the death of Christ and the shedding of His blood atones for man’s sin.

Upon entering into a consideration of this majestic theme, it may be well to remind ourselves that the Death of Jesus Christ on the Cross at Calvary is a historical fact. Some books of fiction about the Death of Christ have come into my hands. They have a tendency to leave the mind in the dangerous state of dreamy unreality and poetic imagination. But “sound doctrine” deals with facts and not fiction. In the New Testament alone, we find almost two hundred references to Christ’s Death. Though many theologians have differed on the meaning of the Cross, the fact of our Lord’s Death has been accepted in the history of the Church. Some theologians are frank to accept the fact of Christ’s Death, and just as frank to say that they have no rationale, no theory, no doctrine of the Atonement.

We believe that men are regenerated, redeemed, reconciled to God, justified, forgiven, adopted, not by the Doctrine of the Atonement, but by the Atonement itself, by the sacrificial and substitutional death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot hope to treat thoroughly so great a subject in this brief study, but simply to state the basic elements of the Atonement so that believers may have a firm foundation for their faith.

## The Erroneous Theories of the Atonement

All of the great Doctrines of the Bible have been challenged by the enemies of Historic Christianity. A distinguished University Professor wrote a book entitled, *The Human Life of Jesus*, in which he flatly denies what the Bible teaches about the Atonement. He writes, “I venture to suggest, in disagreement with the interpretation commonly followed, that Jesus could not have meant that sin, however grave, is pardoned in those who believe in

Him.” He continues by stating that Jesus looked upon His crucifixion as merely “a dramatic symbol of sacrifice,” and that “the idea of vicarious repentance had not figured in His teaching.” He admits that “the kingdom of heaven is to be bought at a price, but each of us must pay the price himself.” These ideas are merely human and have no Scriptural support whatever.

Another religious leader, famous for his outspoken repudiation of the Historic Christian view of the Atonement, writes, “A father who had to be reconciled to his children, whose wrath had to be appeased or whose forgiveness could be purchased, is not the Father of Jesus Christ. . . . Certain widely used hymns still perpetuate the theory that God pardons sinners because Christ purchased that pardon by His obedience and suffering. But a forgiveness that is paid for is not forgiveness.”

To the natural man such a view is accepted as reasonable. But having his understanding darkened, the natural man does not comprehend God’s view of the Atonement. These erroneous theories on the subject now under consideration are simply a restatement of older ideas.

The most widely believed of the erroneous theories of the Atonement is “*the moral influence theory*” which was popularized by Henry van Dyke and others. It looks upon the Death of Christ as a dramatic display designed to impress men with a sense of God’s love, and to produce in men a moral impression. It rules out the biblical idea of vicarious sufferings and substitution, and looks upon the Atonement as a mere influence which persuades men to do right. Christ’s work on the Cross is explained to be that of a martyr for a righteous cause, and it is held up as the finest example of self-sacrifice. Christ is merely our example and not our Saviour since His death was not an expiation. There is no need of a sacrifice for sin since the loving God Who dwells in Heaven will not be severe with His creatures here below. The moral influence theory holds that God is the Father of all men, and that He does not hold man accountable for sin.

Let us beware of such a distorted view of Atonement which shuts out the biblical Doctrine of Regeneration and Redemption as well as other characteristic doctrines of Christianity. No amount of feeling caused by

thinking upon the sufferings of Christ can enable a guilty sinner to forsake sin and return to God. A debt must be paid for sin, and Christ has paid that debt on the Cross of Calvary.

Dr. Loraine Boettner has said that “the advocates of the moral influence theory are never tired of ridiculing the idea that God must be propitiated. They give no hint of the Scripture doctrine of the subjective effects of sin on the human heart by which it is alienated from God and unable to respond to any appeal of right motives however powerful. They see no impassable gulf between the holy God and sinful man, and consequently, they see no reason why satisfaction should be made to divine justice.”

Another popular theory of the Atonement is known as “*the governmental theory*.” It was developed by a famous jurist named Hugo Grotius shortly after the turn of the seventeenth century. The governmental theory is approached purely from a legal aspect, and the famous jurist’s legal approach appealed to many. The essence of this theory is that God’s law and government must be upheld. It acknowledges that man is a sinner, but that the loving God who dwells above does not wish to punish sinners, though He cannot allow the dignity and high standard of His law to suffer.

Now there is an element of truth in this theory, namely, that the law is holy, and sin shall not be allowed to go unpunished, and that an “orderly government of the universe can continue only as men do have respect for law.” But according to Grotius, the only reason that Christ died was to show the antagonism of God’s law to sin, and that the punishment which Christ suffered was merely to impress others with the importance of keeping the law. In the final analysis, Christ was punished for sin merely to keep up appearances, to maintain the standard of the law and an orderly government.

The weakness of the governmental theory is in the fact that sinners are not made to see and feel how awful sin is in God’s sight, and that Christ, in His Death, had the sinner’s guilt imputed unto Him. God is represented as punishing an innocent and just person merely to make an impression upon others. This theory would have us believe that “the cross is but a symbol, designed to teach, by way of example, God’s hatred for sin.” This makes the

sufferings of our Lord to have a general and impersonal relation to sinners, and that all which Christ purchased was a pardon which is offered indifferently to all men. But the governmental theory is disproved and discredited by the plain teaching of both the Old and New Testaments.

## The Explanation of the Atonement

In attempting an explanation of the Atonement, it is important that we know something of what motivated the death of Christ. The idea that our Lord died a helpless martyr is nowhere taught in the Bible. Those who have no understanding or appreciation of Jesus Christ's work for us, lack understanding also on the subject of the nature and effect of sin in all men. Many Scriptures teach clearly that the Atonement of Christ is an expiation of human sin, so that sin is that which made the Atonement necessary. Christ became incarnate in order that He should die for human sin. Whether or not the Son of God would have become Incarnate if man had not sinned, we do not know, nor do we intend to speculate. It is sufficient for us to know that it was sin which made the Cross a must in the experience of the Son of God.

Notwithstanding the false teaching of Christian Science, the existence of sin in the world is an undeniable fact. The Bible reveals and emphasizes sin's true nature and penalty. Ever since the transgression of Adam, the whole human race has groaned under the awful weight and bitter penalty of sin. The experiences of daily life testify that there is something wrong with man. Now God is not to be blamed for the terrible evil in the world. He simply made man a free agent, and man has abused his privileges.

When Griffith Roberts was Dean of Bangor, he said, "It was better for Adam that his hands were free to take the forbidden fruit, than that he should have been compelled to go about all the days of his life with his hands tied behind his back." Freedom is one of God's great blessings to man, and sin entered into the world when man abused his privilege of freedom.

The problem of evil has engaged the attention of thinking people for a long time. With every war, famine, epidemic of disease, great loss of life, has come the question, "If there is a God of love and mercy, why does He allow

so much human suffering?” Let us have no hard thoughts about God in connection with the problem of sin and its accompanying sorrow and suffering. In Holy Scripture Satan is shown to be the cause of evil and its continuance in the earth. The warfare against evil is not with flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, against the spirit hosts of wickedness in the spirit world ([Ephesians 6:12](#)). The morals and moral judgments of us humans show that man is under the control of an evil power.

All sin is the result of Satan’s evil plan and purpose to get men to live and act independently of God. The Devil sinned from the beginning ([I John 3:8](#)), and since he is the god of this world ([II Corinthians 4:3-4](#)), he has held the world system in control. All who disobey God are said to be the children of disobedience in whom Satan works ([Ephesians 2:2](#)). Satan is the greatest hindrance in the church, attacking the servant of the Lord ([I Thessalonians 2:17-18](#)), and limiting the effectiveness of the Word of God ([Mark 4:15](#)). Believers are warned to resist the Devil ([James 4:7](#)), and to exercise great care and caution lest they fall into reproach and the snare of the evil one ([I Timothy 3:6](#)). The Devil controlled Cain when he murdered his brother Abel ([I John 3:12](#)); he tempted David to sin in numbering the children of Israel ([I Chronicles 21:1](#)); he fired the passion of Judas Iscariot when he betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver ([John 13:2, 27](#)); he blinded the mind of Peter to the necessity of the atoning Death of Christ ([Matthew 16:22-23](#)); he sought to shake Paul’s faith by inflicting bodily suffering upon the great Apostle ([II Corinthians 12:17](#)). These are but a few examples which show the immense burden of sin and suffering caused by the Devil.

The question of sin and its awful effects compels our thinking if we are to possess an adequate understanding of the Atonement. God has decreed from the beginning that death must follow sin, not only physical death which is the separation of the soul from the body, but also spiritual death, or the eternal separation of the whole man from God ([Genes 2:16-17](#); cf. [Romans 6:23](#)). Since all men have sinned ([Romans 3:23, 5:12](#)), it follows that all must die because the righteousness of God demands that sin’s penalty be paid. Sin is offensive to the holiness of God, so much so, that it excites His holy wrath. Where there is sin, the wrath of God can never be turned away. Several passages of Scripture tell us of God’s wrath:

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the *wrath of God* abideth on him ([John 3:36](#)). For the *wrath of God* is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness ([Rom.1:18](#)).

. . . because of these things cometh the *wrath of God* upon the children of disobedience ([Ephesians 5:6](#)).

The wrath of God is nothing like the uncontrolled passion in men, but rather His holy and just indignation against sin.

Because of two great facts, the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man, Atonement is made an absolute necessity if sinners are to be pardoned and brought to God. When we have the true conception of the holiness of God, we will have the true conception of sin, and when we have the correct view of sin, we will have an adequate view of the Atonement. The only reason that men are offended at the preaching of the Cross is because they have no adequate sense of sin and the holiness of our Lord. When a man refuses to face sin, he will find it easy to dispense with what the Bible teaches about the Atoning Death of Christ.

In defining sin, the Westminster Confession says that “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.” This is perhaps the best known of man’s definitions of sin. The Bible says that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” ([Romans 14:23](#)), that is, whatever a man does or thinks which is not an act or a thought proceeding from faith in God and guided by God, is sin. The sin may be committed in ignorance, but it is no less a sin. Sin committed in ignorance may not receive as great a punishment as sin committed willfully and deliberately, nevertheless all sin is punishable and must be punished.

We learn from the Bible that a man may sin in several ways. Let us look at some of them: A man may sin in his thoughts, for “the thought of foolishness is sin” ([Proverbs 24:9](#)).

An high look and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin

(Proverbs 21:4).

A man's desires, known only to God and himself, may be sinful, for Jesus said, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:28).

When a man has been taught to do good, and he refuses to obey, he sins, for "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). But the sin that is greater than all sins is the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit is come, "He will reprove the world of sin . . . Of Sin, because they believe not on Me" (John 16:8-9).

The love and mercy of God are infinite and matchless, still the penalty for sin must be paid. Thus it was, in the eternal past, before the foundation of the world, that God determined and planned that atonement should be provided for His fallen creatures who would be deceived by Satan. If no plan of atonement had been proposed and perpetuated by the Godhead, all would be hopeless for mankind. And so, in the counsels of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, it was decreed that One should come and offer Himself as a Divine Substitute in the sinner's place. This necessitated the Substitute taking upon Himself a human body. The eternal Son of God was that Substitute. And so "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). "God was manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (II Corinthians 5:19).

While the work of Atonement, which includes the bearing of sin, is the work of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (I John 3:16; 4:10; Hebrews 9:14), nevertheless it was the Son who left Heaven's glory, and "took upon Himself the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" (Philippians 2:5-8). There is no explanation of the Atonement apart from the fact that the eternal Son of God, without spot or blemish, Who knew no sin and did not sin, was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (II Corinthians 5:21). As His Blood was shed upon the Cross, a merciful and loving God was able to cleanse and pardon guilty sinners, because the Divine Substitute took upon

Himself the penalty for sin. God hates and punishes sin, but He loves the sinner, and in order to redeem those whom He loved, “the LORD laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all” ([Isaiah 53:6](#)). There is no satisfactory explanation of the Atonement apart from the fact that Christ came into this world in order that He should die in the sinner’s place. He said,

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many ([Matthew 20:28](#)).

He foretold His death and fully explained its object. It was an essential part of the Divine plan to justify condemned sinners. Christ was “delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” ([Acts 2:23](#)). Indeed this is the heart of the New Testament.

## The Extent of the Atonement

The provision of the Atonement for sin is for all men everywhere. The doctrine of Election has been misunderstood by some to mean that Christ died for a few elect people who had been given to Him by the Father and who were therefore chosen in eternity past to be His people. It is quite true that the Atonement, having been planned and worked out by God Himself, is His own personal property, and that He is absolutely sovereign in the use He chooses to make of it. Furthermore, we recognize that through the Atonement the way is now open for God to forgive and redeem as many as He chooses to call to Himself. It is His divine prerogative to save few, many, or all of the human race as He deems best. God alone is the Savior of men, and we acknowledge also from the Scripture, and from what we have seen in the world, that He does not save all. But, as relates to the extent of the Atonement, it is incorrect to say that Christ died only for those whom God saw fit to save.

I will go on record as one who affirms belief in the absolute sovereignty of God, and that nothing does or can occur except by His will. But belief in the sovereignty of God does not suggest that God acts arbitrarily without good reasons, reasons so good and so weighty, that He could in no case act

otherwise than He does. Any view of divine sovereignty that implies arbitrariness on the part of the divine will, is not only contrary to Scripture but is revolting to reason. In His sovereignty God claims the right to dispose of His creatures as He will, but it is unthinkable and unscriptural, to say the least, that divine sovereignty arbitrarily condemns some men and in hard despotism sends them into the lake of fire.

I believe also in God's foreknowledge, that is, that future events are foreknown to God, and that history will follow that foreknown course of future events. Since God's foreknowledge is perfect, He knows the destiny of every person from eternity. But this does not in any wise rule out the biblical truth of free agency in man. Foreknowledge is not merely an arbitrary God saying: "I know what I will do." To be sure He does know what He will do, but in the matter of an individual's acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ as Saviour, it is only fair to add that God knows what that individual will do.

Calvin used the truth of God's perfect foreknowledge to set forth the mistaken idea of limited Atonement. He said that "God would have been inconsistent in sending Christ to die for those He positively foreknow would be lost." After Calvin's death, other men wrote on his ideas. One writer, in attempting to illustrate the above quotation from Calvin says, "Even a man does not expect what he knows will not be accomplished. If he knows, for instance, that out of a group of thirty persons who might be invited to a banquet a certain twenty will accept and ten will not, then, even though he may still make his invitation broad enough to include the thirty, he expects only the twenty, and his work of preparation is done only on their behalf. They do not deceive themselves who, admitting God's foreknowledge, say that Christ died for all men, for what is that but to attribute folly to Him whose ways are perfect? To represent God as earnestly striving to do what He knows He will not do is to represent Him as acting foolishly."

But did the writer use a sound illustration? I don't think so! When God invites all men to be saved, the preparation is the same whether few, many, or all accept. The Atonement was just as necessary for one sinner as it was for

one million sinners. If only ten percent of the human race accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour, He did not die in vain. There could be no waste. The *number* who receive or reject Christ has nothing to do with the preparation of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Belief in God's foreknowledge in no wise demands belief in His arbitrary condemnation of certain of His creatures. Such is an extreme view on limited atonement.

Another view that sets forth a way of salvation through Christ is *Universalism*. An extreme view on unlimited atonement is offered by Universalism, which holds that Christ died for all men and that eventually all men will be saved, if not in this life, then through a future probation. This view has made a strong and successful appeal to the feelings of many, and it is a belief almost as old as Christianity. Universalism says, "We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness." In other words, Universalism teaches the universal fatherhood of God, and the final harmony of all souls with God.

One variety of Universalism holds that this has been made possible through the Death of Christ, and their followers quote [I Corinthians 15:22](#) for their proof text ". . . For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But they misinterpret the text. The entire fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians has to do with the resurrection of the body, and it is by the power of the living Christ that the bodies of all men will be raised, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting condemnation. And if the Universalist insists upon using the statement, "in Christ shall all be made alive," to mean spiritual life, then he has no right to insist that all will receive spiritual life apart from being "in Christ." If a man is not "in Christ," he must be "in Adam," and only those who are "in Christ" are in the place of life. This leaves all outside who are anti-Christ and who, because of pride, selfishness, lust and indifference have refused to accept Christ.

Or, let us look at the verse from another viewpoint. The whole context is addressed to believers, and all believers who fall asleep in Christ are in Adam

from the standpoint of the physical, or else they would not have died. After one becomes a Christian he does not escape physical death which God pronounced upon Adam when he sinned and fell. In the body we are in the man Adam by whom comes death, but by being in Christ by grace, we are assured of the resurrection from that death. In the first case it is by necessity of nature--it is heredity, in the other it is by our own free choice--it is personal.

That there is a sound biblical view on the extent of the Atonement between these two extreme views seems very clear. The teaching of Scripture regarding the satisfaction and propitiation made through the Death of the Son of God means that He died for all. The provision of the Atonement is for all.

He (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world* ([I John 2: 2](#)).

The message of the Gospel is that Christ died for all.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for *all* . . . ([I Timothy 2:5-6](#)).

The Atonement is unlimited in scope, available for all. The love of God displayed in Christ on the Cross at Calvary reached out to the whole world, and when God gave His only begotten Son, it was "*that whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)). God's desire is to save all men.

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our saviour; Who will have *all* men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth ([I Timothy 2:3-4](#)).

Since God's will and wish is that all men be saved, He has made ample provision for the salvation of all.

The Lord . . . is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance ([II Peter 3:9](#)).

A well-known passage in [Ezekiel 18:32](#) says,

For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Here the Lord pleads with men to turn to Him for life. We know that many did not turn, His pleading having gone unheeded. What mockery this language of God would be if they could not turn!

That the Atonement is universal in its offer and provision is clear from the following Scriptures,

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all* men ([Titus 2:11](#)).

Again we must accept this statement on its face value and concede that the grace of God has brought salvation within the reach of all men. The Apostle John sounds the same note when he says,

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world ([I John 4:14](#)).

The writer to the Hebrews says,

We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death *for every man* ([Hebrews 2:9](#)).

Scriptures could be multiplied that show the universality of the provision of the Atonement, but these will suffice to make it clear “that He (Christ) died for *all*” ([II Corinthians 5:15](#)).

The opportunity of being born again, of beginning again in this life, is given

to all men, for when Christ died as our substitute, universal Atonement was provided. The risen Christ said to His disciples,

Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every creature* ([Mark 16:15](#)).

The Gospel call to the entire world is a sincere one. Our Lord had a wider outlook than Judaism. It is true that He was sent especially to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, nevertheless He most certainly taught His disciples that they were to be witnesses unto Him “both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” ([Acts 1:8](#)), and He was not sending them on a fool’s errand.

The Atonement is *sufficient* for all men, but it is *efficient* only for those who believe! The effectiveness of the Atonement in any one’s life is conditioned by faith. When one refuses to believe, his unbelief does not suggest a non-existence of the provision of salvation. God provided for the salvation of all men entirely apart from, and independent of, faith. Christ died for all men whether all men believe it or not. There is universal provision in the universal offer, and the fault is man’s if it be not universal in point of effect.

## The Effects of the Atonement

We are to look now at some of the effects of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as it regards God, and then as it regards man.

### SATISFACTION

As it regards God, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ effected *satisfaction*. Before the sinner could enter into God’s holy presence, God had to be satisfied, not arbitrarily, but because His holiness and righteousness demands satisfaction where sin enters in. The doctrine of the vicarious death of Jesus

Christ as satisfying the law and justice of God, in the place of guilty and condemned sinners, cannot be overlooked. When one begins to compare the value of the sufferings and death of the Son of God as it pertains to God, and then as it pertains to those who are saved by it, he feels almost at a loss to do so. Yet it is almost unthinkable that the Atonement could mean as much to the sinner as it does to God. The satisfaction that the sinner receives from Christ's death is meager compared with the satisfaction received by the Father.

The moral law which God gave in the beginning expressed fully the very nature of His being. One look at the law which is holy, just, and good ([Romans 7:12](#)) showed man what the nature of God was like. When man violated the holy law of God, he sinned, thereby contradicting that nature. As a holy God, He hates sin, else He would not be holy. As a just God, He not only rewards righteousness, but punishes sin. The death of Christ provided the adequate punishment for sin which was necessary to satisfy the law and justice of God. Since all sin is primarily against God, He alone needed to be satisfied with the work of the Cross. And He was.

“How could the vicarious suffering and death of Christ make full satisfaction to the Justice of God?” We welcomed this question from a thinking young man. In a commercial or pecuniary debt, it is not so important *who pays*, but *what is paid*. If the debt is a matter of dollars and cents, it matters little, or not at all, who pays it. But Christ in His sufferings and death was not paying a commercial debt. He was paying a penal debt. No finite, fallen creature, an offender against God could ever pay in time or eternity the obligation which he owes. The truth abides that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,” and since all have sinned, no sin-laden human being could pay the price for a fellow-being to the satisfaction of God. When a sinner bears his own penalty, he is lost forever. On the other hand, when a sinner accepts Jesus Christ as His Sin-Bearer, he is saved forever. Take note: God was behind the Atonement.

The penalty for sin must be paid by one who is holy if the justice of God is to be satisfied. In any study of the Atonement, the sinlessly perfect and holy character of Jesus Christ is a truth of the first magnitude. The secret of God's satisfaction lies in the character of the One Who paid the debt for sinners.

God was satisfied with the work of the Cross because the One Who died at Calvary was His own beloved Son, described in the following Scriptures as the One Who “did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” ([I Peter 2:22](#)), who was “without sin,” inherited or personal ([Hebrews 4:15](#)), and Who is “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” ([Hebrews 7:26](#)). Paul testified that He “knew no sin” ([II Corinthians 5:21](#)), while John declared that “in Him is no sin” ([I John 3:5](#)). Jesus was tempted, but in His essential nature He was God, and God cannot sin. Therefore, as the perfect God-Man, the blood He shed has abiding efficacy, and it satisfies the righteous demands of the holiness and justice of God. Indeed God is satisfied!

## PROPTIATION

The value of Christ’s death as a vindication of God’s righteousness is indicated by the word *propitiation*. **Here we enter** upon an intricate aspect of the doctrine of the Atonement. The word “propitiation” appears in the English Bible three times. The Apostle John uses it twice in his First Epistle. Speaking of Jesus Christ, he writes,

He is the *propitiation* for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world ([I John 2:2](#)).

And again,

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the *propitiation* for our sins ([I John 4:10](#)).

The Greek word here is “*hilasmos*,” and means “that which propitiates.” It signifies expiation. [Numbers 5:8](#) speaks of “the ram of atonement” (propitiation), and again in [Psalm 130:4](#), “There is forgiveness (propitiation) with Thee.” Here is the sole ground upon which God shows mercy to guilty sinners. Christ alone, through the shedding of His Blood in His sacrificial and substitutionary Death on the Cross, is the Propitiation, that which expiates or propitiates. He extinguishes the guilt of the sinner by suffering the penalty for sin. Notice that it does not say that His death was the propitiation, but that He himself is the Propitiation. It is the Person of our Lord which gives efficacy

to His atoning work.

In [Romans 3:25](#) the Apostle Paul speaks of Christ: Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

Here the Greek word is not “*hilasmos*,” meaning “that which propitiates,” but “*hilasterion*,” which means, “the place of propitiation.” The word “*hilasterion*” is used in [Hebrews 9:5](#), where we read: “And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat (*hilasterion*, or the place of propitiation).”

“Propitiation” means “mercy seat” in [Hebrews 9:5](#), and we must go back to the Old Testament to see what the mercy seat was typically to the Israelite. The mercy seat was the golden lid or the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest sprinkled the sacrificial blood of an innocent victim to atone for the broken Law. The tables of stone on which were written the holy Law were kept in the Ark. The sprinkled blood covered the broken Law and made possible a meeting place between God and the sinner ([Exodus 25:21-22](#); [Leviticus 16:2, 13-14](#)). The mercy seat was made of pure gold ([Exodus 25:17](#)), and covered the whole Ark.

Jesus Christ, the pure Son of God, is the sinner’s Mercy Seat, and His Blood covers all our sin. According to Scripture, therefore, the mercy seat in the Tabernacle was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord fulfilled the type and symbol perfectly. After His death and burial He arose from the grave, ascended into Heaven, and on the ground of His shed Blood made possible a meeting place where the sinner could come to God.

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own Blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us ([Hebrews 9:12](#)).

Christ Himself is the Mercy Seat sprinkled with His own precious Blood.

In our Lord's propitiatory work there is no thought of God placating Himself or of appeasing His own anger. God's feeling toward mankind has never changed. There never was a time in man's history when God did not love him. God always has desired to bless man with salvation and its accompanying peace and joy, but the sin of man placed an obstacle in God's way, separating the sinner from Himself. It is true that God hates sin and will always hate sin. The Death of Jesus Christ did in no wise change God's view of sin.

The Death of Christ was a purely legal operation. The Judge took upon Himself the penalty so that the judgment seat becomes the mercy seat. The prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner" ([Luke 18:13](#)), is literally, "God be *propitious* to me a sinner." This passage is sometimes misunderstood and misused. This man stood on Old Testament ground before the Death of Christ, and he was actually asking God to offer that one Sacrifice for sin which would put that sin away and thus provide a ground upon which a holy and righteous God could bless him with salvation. Remember, he was not asking God to be generous or lenient with him. He was merely asking God to be propitious, and in making such a request he was justified.

Now we can see plainly that such a prayer need not be uttered today. God has been propitious in Christ. The eternal Son became our Mercy Seat, and to ask God to do what He already has done would be rejecting the Death of Christ. God cannot be lenient with sin, and sinners need not beg mercy from God. God was merciful when He provided for man the Saviour, and man is saved when he believes in and receives the Lord Jesus Christ. God has paid the penalty for sin, and on that basis His mercy is extended to you today.

For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee ([Psalm 86:5](#)).

. . . With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption ([Psalm 130:7](#)).

**SUBSTITUTION**

In its effect toward mankind, the Death of Christ is looked upon as a *substitution*. Though we have never found the words *substitute* or *substitution* in the Bible, the idea of substitution is clearly seen in the work of Christ upon the Cross. The word *substitution* does not represent all that our Lord accomplished in His Death, but it does indicate that Jesus Christ, as the sinner's Substitute, bore the awful judgments of God against sin.

We often hear the work of the Cross referred to as the *vicarious* sufferings and death of the Saviour. The word *vicar* refers to an agent or deputy who has been authorized to act in the place of another. Fallen man stands before God owing an obligation which he cannot pay in time or eternity. He needs an authorized substitute to stand in his place and represent him. The Lord Jesus Christ is that Substitute so that we are benefited by His death in a unique way. The death of the sinless One was substituted for the death of sinners. Stephen died as a martyr for the truth, but in no way does his death benefit us.

The substitutionary aspect of the Atonement was clearly anticipated in the Old Testament. When God chose the harmless, gentle lamb as the principal animal for the sacrifice, He was teaching His people that they were forgiven and spared only because another who was innocent took their place and died in their stead. Furthermore, every sacrificial offering in Old Testament times was an execution of the sentence of the Law upon a substitute for the guilty one, and every such offering pointed forward to the substitutionary death of Christ. We see the type in the case of Abraham and Isaac ([Genesis 22:1-13](#)). It was a test of Abraham's faith. God had told him to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Abraham did as he was told, bound Isaac on the altar and made ready to slay him. God spoke to him and stayed his action. Then Abraham saw in a thicket nearby a ram, which God Himself had provided. Then we are told that "Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of Isaac" ([Genesis 22:13](#)).

Notice the words "in the stead of." The substitute sacrifice that saved Isaac from death is a beautiful foreshadowment of Christ being substituted in death in the stead of the sinner. It illustrates the substitutional element in the redemptive work of Christ. The prophet Isaiah wrote,

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all ([Isaiah 53:4-6](#)).

The New Testament abounds in passages which show that the Lord Jesus Christ took the place of guilty sinners in His death. The following statements which were uttered by our Lord teach us that He anticipated dying as the sinner's substitute. He said,

The Son of man came . . . to give His life a ransom *for* many ([Matthew 20:28](#)).

. . . I lay down my life *for* the sheep ([John 10:15](#)).

. . . The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give *for* the life of the world ([John 6:51](#)).

This is my body which is given *for* you . . . This cup is the new testament in my Blood, which is shed *for* you ([Luke 22:19-20](#)).

In almost all of his writings, the Apostle Paul taught that Christ's Death was substitutional. He wrote,

God . . . hath made Him to be sin *for* us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him ([II Corinthians 5:21](#)).

Jesus Christ . . . gave Himself *for* our sins . . . ([Galatians 1:3-4](#)).

. . . The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself *for* me ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse *for* us . . . ([Galatians 3:13](#)).

. . . Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself *for* us . . . ( [Ephesians 5:2](#)).

. . . Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself *for* it ([Ephesians 5:25](#)).

The Apostle Peter said that He (Jesus) “bare our sins in His own body on the tree” ([I Peter 2:24](#)); and that “Christ also hath once suffered *for* sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” ([I Peter 3:18](#)). The legitimate use of these and numerous other passages imply an actual *substitution*.

## RECONCILIATION

The Death of our Lord Jesus Christ effected *reconciliation*. The word “reconciliation” can be defined as “that effect of the Death of Christ upon the believing sinner which, through divine power, works in him a thorough change toward God from enmity and aversion to love and trust.” There was never a need for reconciliation before the fall of man, but when the disaster occurred in the Garden of Eden, discord crept in where harmony should have reigned. Man lost his heavenly citizenship and was made to be an alien. Adam’s sin had separated him and his God ([Isaiah 59:2](#)), and what was true of Adam, has in essence become true of all his posterity, so that man needed to be reconciled to God. Keep in mind the fact that the need for reconciliation is on the sinner’s part. Man became an enemy of God; God never became the enemy of man. Man ceased loving God; God never ceased loving man. Now reconciliation can never result until the existing enmity is removed, and since there is no enmity in the heart of God it must be removed from the heart of man. How is such an act accomplished?

Here we are to see the love of God at work. While God loathes man’s sin, His great heart of love yearns for the sinner and moves toward him in an

endeavor to effect a reconciliation. Right here we can see a marked difference between human and Divine love. Human love is expressed in [Romans 5:7](#) where we read, “For a good man some would even dare to die.” Human love scarcely ever takes action unless it finds something in its object to compel it to do so. But the love of God is distinct and different from any other kind of love, for “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” ([Romans 5:8](#)), so that, “*when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of His Son*” ([Romans 5:10](#)).

At the Cross man proved to be the enemy of God by his fiendish exhibition of human hatred against God’s Holy Son. Yet it was in that very act that Divine love was moving toward its object, for there “God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself . . .*” ([II Corinthians 5:19](#)). When Christ died, God’s attitude toward sin had been dealt with to His satisfaction so that man can be reconciled to Him. When Jesus put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He brought to an end the estrangement between God and man. You say, “There are still many enemies of God.” You speak the truth. But God has done His part. Now man must repent and turn to God. To refuse to do so is to reject that reconciliation which was made in Christ. God in Christ comes to man, pleads with him to return, offers to forgive him and to put away all his sins if he will but trust Him. And when the sinner receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he too will say with Paul,

. . . We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (reconciliation) ([Romans 5:11](#)).

Have you received the reconciling work of Christ which He effected by His Death?

In [Colossians 1:20](#) and 21, we read:           And having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to *reconcile* all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He *reconciled*.

In these verses we see a two-fold aspect of reconciliation. Verse 20 tells us

that God will reconcile “all things” to Himself, whether those “things” are in earth or in heaven. We are reminded that the whole creation has been affected by sin. God had said, “cursed is the ground” ([Genesis 3:17](#)), and “we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” ([Romans 8:22](#)). *The reconciliation* of “all things” in [Colossians 1:20](#) is the removal of the curse from the earth and the heavens. The cursed earth is the cause of the suffering, sorrow, catastrophes and death which come every day to the peoples of the earth. Indeed the earth needs to be purified. Yes, and the heavens also! Sin began in Heaven, when Lucifer, the son of the morning, rebelled and sought to exalt himself above the throne of God ([Isaiah 14:12-15](#)). Reconciliation to God of all things in earth and Heaven has been provided for in the shed Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ ([Hebrews 9:22](#)).

But verse twenty-one of Colossians, chapter one speaks of the reconciliation of all believers to God, “And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He *reconciled*.” The reconciliation of “all things” in verse twenty-one is future. Here we see the glorious work of Christ in behalf of sinners which becomes effective the moment one believes. The believer rejoices that he has been brought back into favor with God and fully restored. We who are Christians were alienated from God and enemies in our minds. We chose our own way which was opposed to God’s, but now through the payment of the penalty by Christ, we have been reconciled to God, “in the body of His flesh through death” ([Colossians 1:22](#)). And because we are reconciled to God, *personal relations* have been settled. In a former lesson in this series on Justification we saw how *judicial relations* between God and man are settled. Here we learn that reconciliation turns the heart of the criminal toward the Judge in love.

Another aspect of the ministry of reconciliation is taught in Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians. Let us read the following verses with care,

For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and, hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in His Flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that He might *reconcile* both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity

thereby ([Ephesians 2:14-16](#)).

It seems quite clear that the “enmity” spoken of here is not between a holy God and sinful man, but between Jew and Gentile. Under the law it was entirely out of order for a Jew even to eat with a Gentile. The enmity between the two is common knowledge, and it can easily be traced in history. Actually “the middle wall of partition” was the Law by which the Jew was bound.

When Peter came to the house of Cornelius, he expressed the Jewish view on this matter ([Acts 10:28](#)), and afterward his brethren took him to task for eating with Gentiles ([Acts 11:2-3](#)). In the temple of old there was a wall, separating the court of the Gentiles from the court of the Israelites, and upon which was written, “Let no Gentile, let no man of the nations, go beyond this wall on pain of death.” In Herod’s temple the dividing line was a stone wall about five feet high, and this wall became the “enmity,” the cause of bitter feeling between the Jew and the Gentile. But early in our Lord’s public ministry He spoke to the woman of Samaria, and this in turn resulted in the evangelization of a Gentile city ([John 4:1-39](#)). He went into Galilee to bring light to the Gentiles who were in darkness ([Matthew 4:12-16](#)), and thus fulfilled the prophecy according to Isaiah ([Isaiah 9:2](#)). When He cleansed the temple ([Mark 11:15-17](#)), the Lord Jesus quoted [Isaiah 56:7](#) when God said, “Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for *all people*.”

Then He went to the Cross, and, once for all, broke down the wall in His Death when He died for both Jew and Gentile. He did not attempt to improve upon either, but He made possible any number of either becoming “one new man,” reconciling them to each other, and then reconciling both to God “in one body.” How wonderful it all is! Redeemed Jews and Gentiles united through faith in our Lord’s Blood now make one new man. How far reaching are the effects of His Atonement!

## REDEMPTION

In our consideration of the effects of our Lord’s Death upon the Cross, no single term in itself as mentioned above could represent His entire saving work. That work is far too extensive to be contemplated in any single phase of it. The theme is so vast that a few ideas could never indicate its fullness.

And yet, perhaps no word has been used more to represent the saving work of Christ than the word *redemption*. But we must guard against confining ourselves to this or any other single term lest we restrict the work of the Cross.

Redemption means to buy back something that had been temporarily forfeited. Dr. L. S. Chafer says,

Redemption is an act of God by which He himself pays as a ransom the price of human sin which the outraged holiness and government of God requires. Redemption undertakes the solution of the problem of sin, as reconciliation undertakes the solution of the problem of the sinner, and propitiation undertakes the problem of an offended God. All are infinitely important and all are requisite to the analysis of the whole doctrine of Christ's *finished work*, a work finished to the point of divine perfection. Though parts of one complete whole, these great themes should never be treated as synonyms.

The biblical idea of redemption means to redeem a thing that is rightfully one's own, but for a time is in the possession of another whose price must be legally met. Like every phase of the great doctrine of salvation, redemption is entirely the work of God Himself. When any man is redeemed, God Himself does it.

The biblical idea of redemption is not confined to the teaching of the New Testament but is found throughout the whole Word of God. Someone once said that the whole Bible *is redempto-centric*. We will have little difficulty in tracing the doctrine of redemption in the Bible if we keep in mind that the terms *ransom* and *redemption* are practically the same in meaning. Wherever you have redemption it is implied that a ransom price has been paid.

The Old Testament doctrine of redemption expresses the thought of setting free by payment of a ransom price. The thing redeemed might be a person or an inheritance. If a man became burdened with debt, and after mortgaging his entire property he still could not satisfy the claims of his creditors, he might mortgage himself, his own strength and ability. Actually he would become a kind of slave to his creditor. But, says God,

After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him ([Leviticus 25:48](#)).

Notice that the redemption must be accomplished by a relative, the next of kin, which idea has led to the meaning of the title *Kinsman-Redeemer*. Boaz became Ruth's kinsman-redeemer ([Ruth 4:4-6](#)), a beautiful type of our Lord Jesus Christ Who came from Heaven to earth that He might be a perfect Kinsman-Redeemer for us. Not only must the kinsman be the next of kin, but he must be able also to pay the price of redemption. Whatever the price, it must be paid by the redeemer ([Leviticus 25:27](#)). Christ alone could pay the price of the sinner's redemption, and this He did. "Christ hath redeemed us" ([Galatians 3:13](#)) with His own "precious Blood" ([I Peter 1:18-19](#)).

In the New Testament, three different Greek words are used to translate redemption, and without an understanding of these words the distinctions which they teach are lost to the reader of the English text:

(1) *Agorazo*, which means to purchase in the market.

(2) *Exagorazo*, which means to purchase out of the market.

(3) *Lutroo*, which means to loosen and set free.

The scene is that of a slave market, and the sinner is pictured as being in slavery, a bond-slave to sin, or as Paul says "sold under sin" ([Romans 7:14](#)). He is dominated by Satan ([Ephesians 2:2](#)), condemned ([John 3:18](#)), sentenced to die, for "the wages of sin is death" ([Romans 6:23](#)). The Son of God became our Kinsman-Redeemer when "He also Himself likewise took part of the same (flesh and blood)" ([Hebrews 2:14](#)), took the place of the sinner-slave, was made a curse for us, and shed His Blood as the ransom-price of our redemption ([Matthew 20:28](#)). When He made the purchase in the market, He paid for every sinner-slave who was in bondage to sin, so that redemption was provided for all. (See [I Corinthians 6:20; 7:23](#); and [II Peter 2:1](#)). This is *agorazo*, the purchasing in the market.

But redemption is more than merely paying the price. After our Kinsman-

Redeemer paid for us in the market, then He took us out of the market. He has taken us out of the market so that we shall never again be for sale or exposed to the lot of a slave. Of course He takes out of the market only those who will go with Him, and when the sinner is willing to trust his Redeemer Who paid the ransom price, he is assured of deliverance from the hopelessly enslaved condition of bondage to sin. This goes beyond *agorazo*, the mere payment of the requisite price in the slave market. It takes us out of the market. This is *exagorazo*, the purchasing out of the market. It is used at least four times in the New Testament, twice with reference to the redemption of Jewish believers from the curse of the broken Law ([Galatians 3:13; 4:4-5](#)).

The third Greek word used to translate redemption is *Lutroo*, and it indicates that the redeemed one is “loosened” or “set free.” This word directs our thinking to the actual liberation. The disciples, on the way to Emmaus, said, “We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed (*lutroo*) Israel” ([Luke 24:21](#)), referring, of course, to the deliverance of the Jews from Roman tyranny. The corresponding noun appears in the following two passages where the same subject is in view. Zacharias said, “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed (wrought redemption for) His People” ([Luke 1:68](#)). Anna “Spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” ([Luke 2:38](#)). This is redemption in its fullest meaning, for Jesus Christ did not pay the ransom in order that the sinner’s bondage should be merely transferred from one master to another. It is as Dr. L. S. Chafer has said, “He has purchased with the object in view that the ransomed one may be free. Christ will not hold unwilling slaves in bondage.”

And yet redemption does include a sort of new slavery, for the believer is redeemed, not only “*out of*” the market of sin, but “*unto*” God. Our redemption song is,

. . . Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us *to God* by Thy Blood . . .  
([Revelation 5:9](#)).

Notice that we are redeemed “to God.” Now we know that this can mean the future redemption of the body and its ascension into God’s presence. But can it not refer also to the believer’s present separation unto the Lord? Do we not,

in a voluntary sense, become bond slaves of Jesus Christ? The Apostle Paul referred to himself as “a servant (bondman) of Jesus Christ . . . separated unto the gospel of God” ([Romans 1:1](#)). Paul was redeemed, not only from his former manner of life, a slave unto sin, but he was redeemed unto God, voluntarily becoming Jesus Christ’s bondman.

This truth is typically set forth in the Old Testament. The seventh year in Israel’s national life was a year of release for the poor and of the Hebrew servant. Read [Exodus 21:1-6](#) and [Deuteronomy 15:16-17](#). If a slave served his master for six years God said that “in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing” ([Exodus 21:2](#)). But he was not forced to go. If the slave loved his new master, he could voluntarily remain as a slave. The voluntary relationship was sealed by the master piercing the slave’s ear through with an aul. Now the Christian has been set free by the Redeemer, but he has the choice to yield himself to the One who has redeemed him. Our Lord Jesus is the perfect example of a voluntary servant, the description of which is found in [Psalm 40](#),

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened . . . Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God . . . ([Psalm 40:6-8](#)).

This Old Testament portion is quoted in [Hebrews 10:7](#), and it speaks of our Lord as the yielded Servant Who is in every respect the perfect fulfillment of the type. As the yielded Servant, “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” ([Philippians 2:8](#)), that He might redeem us from sin’s awful slavery and death. Now His desire is that we voluntarily yield ourselves to Him.

In the believer’s redemption there is a three-fold experience, *one* of which is already past, the second being in the present, the *third* being yet future.

(1) Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself to redeem us from the *penalty* of sin.

. . . we have redemption through His Blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ([Ephesians 1:7](#)). (See also [Colossians](#)

1:14.)

Notice the words “we *have* redemption.” This is not something that we are seeking after, nor that which we hope to receive, but it is our present possession--“we *have* redemption.” Because all who were under the law failed to keep God’s Law, they were under its curse,

For as many as are the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them ([Galatians 3:10](#)).

If any man hoped to be redeemed by the Law, he must be a doer of *all* that the Law involves, for “He is debtor to the whole law” ([Galatians 5:3](#)).

Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all ([James 2:10](#)).

Now we have not kept the whole Law, and we know it. But our blessed Redeemer fulfilled its every righteous demand, and then suffered and died upon the Cross bearing our curse, for it is written, “Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree” ([Deuteronomy 21:33](#), [Galatians 3:13](#)). All who seek shelter under His shed Blood are redeemed from the guilt and penalty of sin. Every believer is “justified (declared righteous) freely by His grace through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus” ([Romans 3:24](#)). We may not always feel saved, but “we have redemption.” Some would tell us that we are fallen from grace, but “we have redemption.” The Devil would lead us to believe a lie, but “we have redemption.” The redemption that is in Christ Jesus has settled the sin question, so that we have been delivered from the wrath and righteous judgment of a holy God. Redemption from sin’s penalty is the believer’s present possession.

(2) Look now at the *second* aspect of redemption. The work of the Cross consists of far more than deliverance from the *penalty* of sin, for it is set forth clearly in the Scriptures that the Death of our Lord makes possible also deliverance from the *power* of sin as well. The Apostle Paul wrote,

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might *redeem us* from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).

We stress repeatedly the fact that salvation is not of works, for no works of ours could avail for our redemption. In other words, we are not redeemed by our being good or trying to do good, but redemption by the Blood of Jesus Christ does provide for the Christian's deliverance from the power of sin. We cannot be content to know that we have been delivered from Hell. Christ died to deliver us from things that are unholy. We are saved unto good works ([Ephesians 2:10](#)). This is the practical aspect of our redemption, deliverance from the power of evil in this life.

Two verses of Scripture come to mind, both from the pen of the Apostle Paul, and both introduced by the words, "This is a faithful saying." The first says that it is a faithful saying, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" ([I Timothy 1:15](#)). The second tells us that it is a faithful saying, "that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works" ([Titus 3:8](#)). We have been redeemed from sin's penalty; we are being delivered daily from sin's power. May we ever walk close to "Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood" ([Revelation 1:5](#)).

(3) The *third* aspect of redemption looks ahead into the future, extending to the deliverance of the body as well as the soul and spirit. Both body and soul are under the sentence of death, and both need to be redeemed. Writing to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul said,

. . . after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the *redemption* of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory ([Ephesians 1:13, 14](#)).

This passage informs us that God has a purchased possession yet to be

redeemed, so that we are “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” ([Romans 8:23](#)). For that day we are waiting, watching for the coming of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Who shall change our vile body (or, the body of our humiliation), that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself ([Philippians 3:20, 21](#)).

In our present physical weakness and infirmity we are looking ahead to the redemption of our bodies, when “we shall be changed” ([I Corinthians 15:52](#)), and “ye shall be like Him” ([I John 3:2](#)). Oh, glorious redemption! Oh, wonderful Redeemer! - (**Article shared by [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)**)

## ***Christ Took Our Punishment***

### **2 Corinthians 5:17-21**

**17**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.<sup>b</sup> The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. **18**All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; **19**that is, in Christ God was reconciling<sup>c</sup> the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **20**Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21**For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### **Romans 3:21-30**

*21*But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. *22*We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

*23*For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. *24*Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. *25*For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, *26*for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he declares sinners to be right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.

*27*Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. *28*So we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law.

*29*After all, is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Of course he is. *30*There is only one God, and he makes people right with himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles.