

FOR WHOM DID JESUS DIE?

(Most Asked Questions #5)

Matthew 1:21/Rev. 5:9

Today there are building projects going on all over the world, and especially in Asia. Yet, the greatest building project of all is the invisible one, where Christ is building His Church. It is the great work!

The Bible tells us that God is sovereign, that He reigns with absolute power, that He knows all things because He has a plan that includes everything. Nothing is left to chance. It is certain.

Our salvation is assured because it is the Lord's doing from beginning to end. Our salvation includes: God's unconditional election, a definite atonement, irresistible grace, total depravity, and perseverance of the saints.

Jonah was right, "salvation comes from the Lord." (Jonah 2:9) Jesus' death purchased men and women for God.

THREE CONSIDERATIONS THAT HELP US TO UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS.

What did Jesus accomplish by His death? We will see that there was nothing general about His saving work. His atonement was specific, and certain.

I. Jesus' Substitutionary Death Provided A Definite Atonement.

Just as the Passover lambs provided protection only for those within the household...not for all.

- A. The word "atonement" is the work of God in Christ on the cross whereby He canceled the debt of our sin, appeased His holy wrath against us, and won for us all the benefits of salvation.
 1. Atonement can be thought of as "at-one-ment" with God.
 2. The cross was necessary to provide justice and not violate God's holiness in sweeping sin away without punishment. (Romans 3:25)
- B. Often Jesus' death is said to provide a "limited atonement." The two words do not seem to go together. The word "limited" is the problem. A better way to describe the work Jesus accomplished is to use the words "particular" or "definite" atonement.
- C. However, when we use the word "limited" it speaks to the intent and extent of the atonement.
 1. Everyone must agree that the extent was limited...for all are not saved. (Universalism)
 2. The intent of the atonement was to provide salvation for those "chosen by God before the creation of the world." (Eph 1:4) Such ones are His sheep. (John 10:12,15,26,29)
 3. Yet, it can be said that Jesus is the Savior of the non-elect "in some sense." The lost do

receive benefit from the cross, short of salvation. (Matt 5:45 & 1 Tim 4:10)

D. His atonement was a narrow bridge that makes it all the way over the river! Not a wide one...

II. The Bible Never Calls Upon People To Repent On The Grounds That Christ Died

For Them. Words are very important at this point. (Isa. 53:8) “he was stricken for...my people”

A. None of the sermons recorded in the New Testament have the phrase, “Christ died for you.”

This may sound strange to us, as we have heard this phrase repeatedly. But it is sloppy in expressing the need of people to repent and believe the Gospel.

B. Are we to offer the Gospel to all? Yes!!! We must for God commands it. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Remember, the Gospel is not so much an offer, but a command: “repent and believe...”

As we offer the treasure of the Gospel God will call out His elect people...

C. So how do we speak biblically when presenting the Gospel to others?

“You need Him and He offers Himself to all and those who receive Him as Savior and Lord are promised the benefits of the cross!”

What is universal in this is the invitation to faith and the promise of benefits. (forgiveness, eternal life, heaven, and fellowship with our Lord)

D. Revelation 5:9 tells not that “all men were purchased...but men from all groups of people were...”

III. The Passages That Seem To Teach A General Atonement, Do Not Do So.

A. Some texts seem to teach that God “wills” or desires all to be saved. (2 Peter 3:9)

This verse is not talking about salvation, it displays God’s gracious attitude, His love for man.

B. Other passages state that Jesus’ work was for the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

“Propitiation” is the real removal of wrath. John used “world” in contrast to Jewish-only.

Here, John tells that Jesus’ work is universal in scope...for all the world. (Gentiles too!)

C. Words like “all” and “every” must be defined by the context. “all the world...registered...taxed”

D. How does John 3:16 fit in with this? “All those believing in Him do have eternal life.”

LESSONS FOR OUR LIVES:
