

3. Limited Atonement

T.U.L.I.P.; Calvin's doctrinal system as it relates to the spiritual condition of man.

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Total Hereditary Depravity
Unconditional Election
Limited Atonement
Irresistible Grace
Perseverance of the Saints

I. WHAT IS LIMITED ATONEMENT?

A. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

1. Limited – “restricted, confined within boundaries.
2. Atonement – “reconciliation, Christ’s work in redemption.”

B. WHAT CALVINISTS SAY:

1. “We believe that God has an elect people whom he has chosen unto eternal salvation. We believe that the atonement of Christ was for that chosen number and no one else.” (Eddie Garrett, Primitive Baptist, The Christian Baptist, March 1972)
2. “He came into the world to represent and save only those given to him by the Father. Thus Christ’s saving work was limited in that it was designed to save some and not others.” (David Steele, Calvinism Defined, Documented and Defended, pg 39)
3. **Limited Atonement** – Predestination is meant. From before the world, certain ones are appointed to salvation and certain ones are appointed for damnation. Also called “particular redemption” or “definite atonement” meaning that, Christ’s death actually takes away the penalty of sins committed by those upon whom God has chosen to have mercy. (As opposed to Christ’s death making redemption merely a possibility that we can perform). It is “limited” then, to taking away the sins of the elect.
John 10:15 “I lay down my life for the sheep.”
Acts 20:28 “shepherd the church of God that He obtained with the blood of His own Son.”
Eph. 5:25 “love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” – **Wikipedia**
4. **Limited Atonement** is a doctrine offered in answer to the question, “for whose sins did Christ atone?” The Bible teaches that Christ died for those whom God gave him to save (**John 17:9**). **Christ died, indeed, for many people, but not all** (**Matthew 26:28**). Specifically, Christ died for the invisible Church – the sum total of all those who would ever rightly bear the name “Christian” (**Eph. 5:25**). ... **Christ’s death was not a death of potential atonement for all people**. Believing that Jesus’ death was a potential, symbolic atonement for anyone who might possibly, in the future, accept him trivializes Christ’s act of atonement. Christ died to atone for specific sins of specific sinners. Christ died to make holy the church. **He did not atone for all men**, because obviously all men are not saved. ... - **CRTA**

II. LET’S DEAL WITH SOME OF THE PROOF-TEXTS.

A. **Isa. 53:4-6; Titus 2:14; 1 Cor. 5:7.**

1. “Our” and “Us” not “them.” Speaks in terms of the redeemed only.
2. Includes the redeemed with hope that all would be.

B. **Isa. 53:12; Matt. 20:28; 26:28**

1. “Many” not “all.”
2. All would be many.

C. **John. 10:11-15**

1. “Sheep” not “goats”
2. What does being sheep depend on, predestination or action? (**Matt. 25:31f**).

D. **Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-27.**

1. These passages are supposed to prove that only those in the church have access to the blood of Christ.
2. The church was purchased by the blood in the sense that those who are redeemed by the blood are added to the church (**Acts 2:47**) The church is made up of the saved (**Eph. 5:23**).

III. LIMITED ATONEMENT REFUTED.

A. **2 Tim. 1:3-6.** GOD DESIRES THAT ALL BE SAVED. JESUS IS RANSOM FOR ALL.

B. **John 3:14-17.**

1. God’s desire is to judge or condemn no one.
2. Eternal life is dependent our belief, not his arbitrary selection of a few.

C. THE BIBLE SAYS CHRIST DIED FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

1. He is the savior of all men (**1 Tim 4:10**).
2. He tasted of death for everyone (**Heb 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:14-15**)
- 3 **Luke 2:10.** How much joy to those who are chosen to go to hell?

D. THE BIBLE SAYS CHRIST DIED FOR SINNERS.

1. While we in sin – enemies of God (**Rom 5:6-10**)
2. What was the purpose of Christ? (**1 Tim 1:15; Luke 19:10**)
3. Which sinners? What must they do (**2 Pet. 3:9**).

E. THE BIBLE SAYS JESUS DIED EVEN FOR THOSE WHO ARE WEAK IN FAITH. (**Rom 14:15; 1 Cor 8:11**)

F. THE BIBLE SAYS GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS (**Acts 10:34-35**).

1. He judges according to what a man does (**Rom 2:4-11; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17**).
2. To regard one over the other on the basis of something other than deeds is odious to him (**Deut. 10:17; 16:19; 2 Chron. 19:7; Job 34:19; Matt. 22:16; Gal. 2:6**).

G. THE NAIL IN THE COFFIN (**1 John 2:1-2**).

“... not for ours only, but also for the whole world.”

CONCLUSION: THE CONSEQUENCES OF LIMITED ATONEMENT.

- A. IT LIMITS CHRIST'S LOVE (**2 Cor. 5:14**).
- B. IT LIMITS GOD'S GRACE (**Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 2:9**).
- C. IT DENIES GOD'S WILL TO SAVE ALL MEN (**2 Pet. 3:9**).
- D. IT REDUCES THE GREAT COMMISSION TO AN ABSURDITY (**Mk. 16:15-16**).
- E. IT IS ERROR THAT WILL CONDEMN SOULS TO HELL (**2 John 9**)