

Calvinism Exposed (3)

Limited Atonement

2005032

Topic # 1798 (Calvinism)

Introduction:

- A. This part of Calvinism expresses the idea that Christ died only for the ones God had unconditionally chosen to save.
- B. God would not waste Christ's sacrifice on those whom he had determined not to save.
 - 1. Most bible students oppose this doctrine.
 - 2. But a spinoff of this doctrine has been accepted by many.
 - a) Salvation by faith "only"
 - b) the concept that God does not put sins to the account of a Christian are two of the conclusions derived from this part of Calvinism.

I. Calvinists claim:

- A. The atonement of Christ is limited only to certain **individuals**.¹
 - 1. *Historical or main line Calvinism has consistently maintained that Christ's redeeming work was definite in DESIGN and ACCOMPLISHMENT - that it was intended to render complete satisfaction for certain specified sinners and that it actually secured salvation for these individuals and no one else. It would have required no more obedience, nor any greater suffering for Christ to have secured salvation for every man, woman, and child who ever lived than it did for him to secure salvation for the elect only. But He came into the world to represent and save only those given to Him by the Father. ("Five Points of Calvinism" by Steele & Thomas, p. 39)*
- B. Another quote describing limited atonement:
 - 1. *"Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them ... In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith, which united them to Him. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, thereby guaranteeing their salvation." (David N. Steele, Curtis C. Thomas; The Five Points of Calvinism, Defined, Defended, Documented: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1975, p. 17)*
- C. The perfect righteousness of Christ is transferred to those chosen by God. This is where the doctrine of "once saved, always saved" comes from.
 - 1. *Christ, acting on behalf of His people, perfectly kept God's law and thereby worked out a perfect righteousness which is imputed or credited to them the moment they are brought to faith in Him. Through*

¹ From *Examining Popular Doctrines* p. 59-66 "Limited Atonement"

what He did, they are constituted righteous before God. They are also freed from all guilt and condemnation as the result of what Christ suffered for them. Through His substitutionary sacrifice He endured the penalty of their sins and thus removed their guilt forever. Consequently, when His people are joined to Him by faith, they are credited with perfect righteousness and are freed from all guilt and condemnation. They are saved, not because of what they themselves have done or will do, but solely on the ground of Christ's redeeming work.

II. Scriptures Used to Prove This Doctrine:

A. John 10:15:16

1. The Argument: Jesus died only for His sheep (which they take to mean the elect).
2. Answer:
 - a) In verse 16, Christ taught that there are "other sheep" not of this fold" that would come into the fold.
 - b) Calvinists deny that one can change from "sheep not of the fold" to "sheep of the fold."
3. There are numerous Bible examples of those who made that change.
 - a) Many **Corinthians** had changed 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
 - b) **Paul** changed 1 Timothy 1:13-14

B. Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25

1. Argument: Christ died only for those who are saved again, the elect.
2. Answer: He died to purchase the church; there is no doubt about that.
 - a) And the church is composed of the **saved**.
 - b) But the Bible truth that Calvinists overlook is that any man or woman can become a part of that church.
3. Hebrews 5:8,9 all who **obey** (not only those who are elected to salvation)
4. Acts 2:47 not all will be saved, but all do have the **right** to be saved by obedience (vs. 38-41)

C. Romans 9:13

1. Argument: The love of God in giving Jesus as a sacrifice was not a general kindness to all creation. "But it is a special and discriminating love, the favor which he bears to his own people, as distinct from others." (Five Points of Calvinism; Limited Atonement, John Gill)
2. Answer: "Special and discriminating love?"
3. That sounds a whole lot different from the Bible teaching that "there is no **partiality** with God." (Rom. 2:11)
4. This phraseology is used here to show a contrast between righteousness and unrighteousness.
 - a) Jesus came through the bloodline of Jacob, because he, for the most part, kept himself pure.
 - b) Esau proved unworthy of this by profaning himself and selling his birthright (Heb. 2:16).

- c) This passage shows that Jacob was chosen for this honor because his righteousness exceeded that of his brother, Esau.

III. Biblical Truth.

- A. **Christ died for all.** See 1 Tim. 2:4.
1. God is not a respecter of persons
 2. God loves everyone! See Acts 10:34-35.
 - a) See also 2 Pet. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:19; John 3:16; 12:32; 6:33, 51; 1:29; Titus 2:11-14
- B. **Jesus died as a ransom for all.** 1 Tim. 2:6 See also Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2; Rom. 5:18; 1 John 4:14; 1 Tim. 4:10

Conclusion

- A. God is no respecter of persons. Jesus died for ALL men. Anyone who obeys the gospel may be saved eternally (Rev. 22:17).
- B. Have you responded to the gospel call of salvation?
- C. I N V I T A T I O N