

Week 8:

What is the Atonement?

In Preparation for Small Group Discussion:

1. Listen to the message given at Kettlebrook on March 28, 2010 either live or on the web at: <http://www.kettlebrook.org/resources/index.htm> or via podcast on iTunes.
2. Read chapter 10 (pages 72-75) in Wayne Grudem's *Christian Beliefs*.
3. Prepare your responses to the questions presented here in this study.

From Sunday:

What was the main point of the message?

How will this practically change your life?

From Your Perspective:

Describe a time in your life when you wish that you would have been able to have someone else switch places with you... or when you wish you could have had a stunt double?

From the Skeptic:

Below are some comments that people have made regarding the Atonement of Jesus. Underline comments that reflect thoughts you have had about the concept of Christ's atoning sacrifice at some point in your life.

- Why did Jesus have to die anyway? Why couldn't God just forgive us directly?
- In light of the crucifixion story, the Christian God sounds like the vengeful gods of primitive times who needed to be appeased by human sacrifices.
- Why can't God just accept everyone or at least those who are truly sorry for their wrongdoings?
- Why call Jesus the Savior? If he couldn't even save himself from the hands of his executioners, then how can he save me?
- Why do Christians always speak of "being saved"? I am doing just fine: nice job, family & home. Why would I need saving? From what? From whom?
- *"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul!"* - "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley
(create your own here)
- _____
_____."

Why did you underline the comments you did?

From the Bible:

Read Romans 3: 20-26---Here Paul describes the essence of the Atonement of Christ. Some writers have called v. 21-26 the most important paragraph in the entire Bible!

What is the purpose of God's law? (v.20)

The word righteousness is repeated in these verses. What does it mean & why is it important to us?

What is the only source of true righteousness? (v.21-22) Does that surprise you? Why or why not?

How can we receive this righteousness from God? (v.22)

In v. 23, who among us is guilty of sin?

The phrase “sacrifice of atonement” in v. 25 means that Jesus absorbed God’s just wrath for our sins so that God can now look upon us with favor.
How does v. 25 reveal God’s perfect justice for sin?

How does v. 25 reveal God’s perfect love for sinners?

From the Book:

How does Grudem sum up the concept of the atonement? (see p.72)

What did the death of Jesus accomplish for those who put their faith in Him? (see p.73)

In the last paragraph on p. 75, Grudem gives four ways in which Jesus saved people from their sins. Complete these below:

- a. Jesus _____ the _____ we deserved to pay for our sins.
- b. Jesus _____ the _____ we deserved to bear.
- c. Jesus _____ the _____ our _____ caused between God & us.
- d. Jesus _____ us from the _____ caused by sin.

Moving Forward:

If Christ bore all the guilt for our sins, all the wrath of God against sin and all the penalty of death we deserved, then will God ever turn his wrath against you as a believer?

Explain. (see Rom 8: 31-39)

How is this helpful as you live and grow in your relationship with God?

Why is the gospel the “good news”?

Who will you tell about this great Savior & the salvation he offers? When will you set up the meeting for lunch or coffee?

Digging Deeper:

Read and meditate on Isa 52:13 - 53:12 and see how all that Jesus accomplished on the cross was foretold 700 years before Jesus was born! Go slowly through each verse.

Think about Jesus and what he did for you so that you might live with in the fullness of life forever!

Read Romans chapters 1-8. These are not easy chapters but provide the believer with a deep understanding of our sin and God’s response. Make note of your questions and ask your group leader, one of the elders or pastors to help you understand and apply these truths.

Another message that you may want to check out:

- http://www.universityreformedchurch.org/teaching/sermons.html?sermon_id=40

Some books that you may want to explore include:

- *The Cross of Christ* by John R.W. Stott (ISBN: 0-8308-3320-X)
- *The Holiness of God* by R.C. Sproul (ISBN: 0-8423-1493-8)
- *Death by Love: Letters from the Cross* by Mark Driscoll & Gerry Breshears (ISBN: 1433501295)
- *The Death of Christ. Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament* by James Denney (ISBN: 1-1168-0152-3)
- *In my Place Condemned He Stood* by J.I. Packer and Mark Dever (ISBN: 1433502003)
- *The Message of Romans* by John R.W. Stott (ISBN: 0-8308-1246-6)