

The Atonement of Christ

Systematic Theology 06.06.12

Leviticus 16

Main Idea: The atonement of Christ accomplishes what all of humanity could never achieve.

THE ATONEMENT



Atonement: “to cover”

- Leviticus 16 - The Day of Atonement
- Bull - sin offering. Blood sprinkled on the “Mercy Seat” above the Ark of the Covenant (16:14)
- Ram 1 - burnt offering
- Ram 2 - scapegoat



“The emphasis of the New Testament, however, is that Christ died a substitutionary death on behalf of sinners.”

- Paul Enns

– *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1997), 232.

THEORIES OF THE ATONEMENT¹

Theory	Original Exponent	Main Idea	Weakness	Recent Exponents
Ransom to Satan	Origen (a.d. 184–254)	Ransom paid to Satan because people held captive by him.	God's holiness offended through sin; cross was judgment on Satan, not ransom to Satan.	No known current advocates.
Recapitulation	Irenaeus (a.d. 130–200)	Christ experienced all Adam did, including sin.	Contradicts Christ's sinlessness. (1 John 3:5)	None known.
Commercial (Satisfaction)	Anselm (1033–1109)	Sin robbed God of honor; Christ's death honored God enabling Him to forgive sinners.	Elevates God's honor above other attributes; ignores vicarious atonement	None known.
Moral Influence	Abelard (1079–1142)	Christ's death unnecessary to atone for sin; His death softens sinners hearts to cause them to repent.	Basis of Christ's death is God's love, not holiness. Atonement viewed as unnecessary.	Friedrich Schleiermacher Albrecht Ritschl Horace Bushnell
Example	Socinus (1539–1604)	Christ's death unnecessary to atone for sin; His death was example of obedience to inspire reform.	Views Christ only as a man; atonement viewed as unnecessary.	Thomas Altizer Unitarians
Governmental	Grotius (1583–1645)	Christ upheld government in God's law; His death was a token payment; enables God to set law aside and forgive people.	God is subject to change; His law is set aside; God forgives without payment for sin.	Daniel Whitby Samuel Clarke Richard Watson J. McLeod Campbell H.R. Mackintosh
Accident	A. Schweitzer (1875–1965)	Christ became enamored with a Messiah complex and was mistakenly crushed under it in the process.	Views Christ's death as a mistake; denies substitutionary atonement.	None known.

1) Substitution: stepping in & absorbing the penalty

- *Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

1) Substitution

1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

1) Substitution

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,

2) Redemption: act of purchase

“Bought is the Greek word *agorazo*, which pictures a slave being purchased in the ancient public slave market. Christ purchased believers out of the slave market of sin and set them free” - Paul Enns

- The Moody Handbook of Theology (Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1997), 233.

2) Redemption

1 Cor. 6:20 *for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

2) Redemption

1 Cor. 7:23 *You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.*

2) Redemption

Galatians 3:13a *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.*

2) Redemption

Revelation 5:9 *And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,*

3) Propitiation: righteous standards fulfilled

“Propitiation, meaning that the righteous demands of a holy God were fully satisfied.”

– *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1997), 233.

Romans 3:25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

4) Forgiveness: Legal basis

Colossians 2:13-14 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

**Forgiveness - “to send away”*

5) Justification: legal decision

“Justification is also a legal act in which God the Judge declares the believing sinner righteous.”

– *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1997), 234.

What do you think?

- In what ways should the Atonement affect our response when offended by others?
- How should the Atonement affect how we view the use of “our” time?

Roles of Christ

- 1) Prophet - Revelation about the Father
- 2) Priest - Intercessor to the Father
- 3) King - Father's rightful regent