

Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption)

“The blood of Christ hath such a divine power to save, that nothing but it can ever save the soul” – Charles Spurgeon

“Calminian” / 4 Point Calvinist / 5 Point Calvinist - Strict Calvinist / Hyper-Calvinist

Laying the Groundwork

- The issue that is raised in regard to Christ’s atonement is *who it was made for*
- There are three possibilities in whom Christ died:
 - Jesus’ death was not an actual atonement, but only some-thing that makes atonement possible. The atonement becomes actual when the sinner repents of his or her sin and believes on Jesus
 - = Jesus died for every person who ever lived
 - Jesus’ death was an actual atonement for the sins of God’s elect people with the result that these, and only these, are delivered from sin’s penalty
 - = Jesus died for the elect only and secured their salvation
 - Jesus’ death was an actual atonement for the sin of all people with the result that all people are saved
 - = Everyone is saved and going to heaven
- What did God the Father actually intend in sending his Son to die for us?
 - And did Jesus do it?
- Did Jesus’ death actually redeem every single individual who has ever lived?
 - Universalism
- Did his sacrifice make a true propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of His elect alone?
 - Actual Savior - Limited atonement = particular redemption
- Did Jesus’ death make it possible but not certain, depending on the will of man?
 - Potential savior for every individual
- Was Jesus’ death an “*actual atonement*” or a “*hypothetical atonement*”
 - **Hypothetical** – making it possible for all men to be saved **IF** they believe
 - **Actual** – making it a guarantee that His elect **WILL** be saved
- The Doctrine of Limited Atonement / Particular Redemption –
 - *Christ so died that he **infallibly secured** the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, who through Christ’s death not only may be saved, but are saved, must be saved and cannot by any possibility run the hazard of being anything but saved.*
 - Jesus’ death does not merely make salvation possible for everyone because he died for every single individual
 - Rather: His death actually accomplished the salvation of those for whom he died
 - **Question:** Can anything stop the blood of Christ? (freewill / Satan)?
 - Wherever His blood flows = salvation follows
 - Jesus died for the elect = all the elect will be saved
 - If Jesus died and shed His blood for every individual person who ever lived
 - It means everyone will be in heaven

- **Matthew 1:21** “You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”
 - But didn’t the majority of people reject Christ?
 - Is this hypothetical or actual?
 - Did Jesus die to give everyone the possibility to believe and be saved?
 - Or did He die to save his people?
- **Luke 1:68** “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.”
 - Is this real or is this just a possibility based upon what man decides to do?
 - Who are His people?
 - Those whom He foresees will choose Him, or those He has elected?
- **Ephesians 5:25** “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”
 - Notice the distinction being made here - If Christ loved the whole world equally and gave himself up for every single person
 - Then the parallel between the bride of the husband and the bride of Christ would fall apart.
 - This would mean that a husband should love and give himself up for other women than his wife
 - Just as Christ gave himself up not only for the church, his bride, but then also for those outside the Church as well
 - This would be contradictory to Scripture, which teaches that a man should have one wife
 - Christ only has one bride = the Church
 - So should each husband only have one wife
 - If Christ gave Himself for the Church and everyone else,
 - He would love them both the same
- **Rom 5:9** - ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified **by his blood**, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God
- **1 Timothy 1:15** - ¹⁵ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost
- **John 17:9** - ⁹ I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours
 - There are specific people who have been given to the Son by the Father
 - There is also a specific group of people He died for
 - Notice – “I am not praying for the world”
 - Why not if He died for them as well?
- **Romans 8:31-37** – ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
 - Who is “us” referring to?
- **V30** - ³⁰ And those whom he **predestined** he also **called**, and those whom he called he also **justified**, and those whom he justified he also **glorified**
 - = Gods elect ONLY

- ³² *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for **us all**, how will he not also with him graciously give **us** all things?*
 - Who did the Son give Himself up for? Answer - “us all”
 - Who are they? - the elect
- ³³ *Who shall bring any charge against **God’s elect**? It is God who justifies.*
 - Who are those that are justified and declared righteous?
 - = The elect
 - Can this be referring to the rest of the world as well? No
- ³⁴ *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is **interceding for us**.*
 - Who did Christ die for?
 - Us = The elect
 - Who does Christ then intercede for?
 - Us = The elect
 - If Christ died for every single person who ever lived:
 - Wouldn’t He then have to intercede for them as well?
 - Yes, because His blood would have cleansed them as well
 - Christ intercedes ONLY for those whom His blood was shed
 - If a person’s free will is needed in order for intercession to occur
 - It means the blood of Christ is not enough!
- ³⁵ *Who shall separate **us** from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*
 - What type of love is being referred to here? = saving love
 - Does God demonstrate this type of love to ALL humanity
 - No, only to the elect
 - God has a special kind of love for those whom He has chosen
- ³⁶ *As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”* ³⁷ *No, in all these things **we** are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*
 - Again, does God love everyone with a saving love? No, only the elect
- ³⁸ *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ *nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate **us** from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Does God love all people equally? What do you do with these verses?

- **Psalm 5:5** – *The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers*
- **Hebrews 12:6** - *For the Lord disciplines **the one he loves** and chastises every son whom he receives.*
- **Prov 8:17** - *I love those who love me, and those who search for me find me*

Arminian / Roman Catholic position of “Universal Atonement”

- An illustration of the Arminian position can be found in the case of an American who was sentenced to be hanged.
- Before the time of his execution, President Andrew Jackson granted him a pardon.
- But the man refused and appealed to the Supreme Court
- The Court said the president may grant a pardon, but that a pardon may never be *forced* on a person, and may be rejected.
- Similarly, the Arminian says, God may offer man a pardon on the basis of Christ’s death, but a condemned sinner may reject that pardon.

- **Like with all the other Doctrines of Grace:**
 - The Arminian has placed the individual as the final determiner of the outcome
 - You, not God, decides who will be redeemed
 - You are able to resist and thwart God’s plan of redemption (since they claim He died for every single individual)
 - Christ’s blood is not enough for salvation
 - Your autonomous freewill can stop the efficacious effect of the redemptive blood of Christ.
 - The result:
 - Jesus is a “*potential*” savior and not an “*actual*” savior
 - He can only save if the person cooperates
 - Salvation is not infallibly secured
 - Jesus death makes salvation possible but not certain

- The Arminian says: “Christ died for *all*”
 - Ask them what they mean by “**all**”
 - Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men?
 - They say, “No, certainly not.”
 - We ask them the next question —
 - Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any person in particular?
 - They answer “No, Christ has died that any man may be saved **if...**”

- **Arminian Proof Texts**
 - **1 Jn 2:2** - ² *He is the propitiation (satisfaction – appeasement) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
 - Who is John referring to here when he says “the whole world?”
 - Every single individual who will ever live?
 - = Universalism
 - Every single individual who will ever live, but then the choice is up to man?
 - = The blood of Jesus is not enough without their consent
 - All nations, not just the Jews?
 - = Particular redemption
 - = God alone is sovereign over salvation

- **John 3:16** - ¹⁶ *For God so loved **the world**, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life*
 - Who is John referring to here when he says “the world?”
 - Every single individual who will ever live?
 - = everyone goes to heaven?
 - Every single individual who will ever live, but then the choice is up to man?
 - = The cross was not enough
 - = Man can prevent the power of Christ’s blood to save
 - All nations, not just the Jews (the bronze serpent)?
 - = Particular redemption
 - = God alone is sovereign over salvation
 - But doesn’t “whoever” mean all people are capable of being saved?
 - “Whoever believes” – general call – all men are responsible and required to believe
 - Those who actually respond are God’s elect – special call
- **John 1:29** - ²⁹ *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of **the world**!”*
 - Who is John referring to here when he says “the world?”
 - Every single individual who will ever live?
 - = No need to evangelize...we are all saved?
 - Every single individual who will ever live, but then the choice is up to man?
 - = More is needed than just the death of Christ
 - = God needs man’s synergistic cooperation as well
 - All nations, not just the Jews (the world)?
 - = Particular redemption
 - = God alone is sovereign over salvation
- **The World** – all mankind without “*distinction*” / not “*exception*”
 - Everyone without *distinction* (of ethnicity)
 - Not everyone without *exception* (individually)
 - **Genesis 12:3** - *I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all **the families** of the earth shall be blessed.*
 - **John 12:32** - ³² *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all people** to myself.”*
 - **Rev 5:9** – (people before the throne of the Lamb) *for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*
 - **Notice:** it is the blood that saves – faith comes because of the blood

- **2 Corinthians 5:14-15** - ¹⁴ *For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵ and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but **for him who for their sake died and was raised.**
 - Who is being referred to as “all?”
 - Every single person who ever lived?
 - = Universalism
 - Every person, but then the person has to choose Christ
 - = Jesus did the best He could but failed to save all
 - All nations
 - = A perfect savior who accomplished exactly what He decreed from the foundation of the world*
- **An Objection to Modern Day Evangelism**
 - The statement “*Believe in Jesus because He died for you,*” which has become so common in today’s evangelism, simply cannot be found anywhere in Scripture
 - This is what confuses so many Christians today regarding the doctrine of Limited Atonement
 - “*Believe in Jesus because He died for you*” has become a cliché phrase in modern evangelism
 - Here is the problem: No Apostle ever said this in Scripture
 - The gospel is not so much an *offer* as it is a *command* to turn away from sin and come to Jesus
 - We have gotten into the habit of treating the gospel as an offer only
 - It is a command / requirement
 - It is a command for sinners to repent and believe
 - The proper method of evangelizing is to say:
 - “Christ died for sin.”
 - “He gave himself for sinners just like you and me.”
 - “If you want to be saved, believe on him.”
 - Our responsibility is to believe, and those who believe are those in whom Christ shed His blood = the elect
 - They key is to preach this responsibility of the unbeliever
 - **Acts 17:30** – *God commands all men everywhere to repent.*
 - The nature of how the atonement works was never the basis by which the Apostles shared the gospel.
 - No Apostle ever said – “*Believe in Jesus because He died for you*”
 - Rather: they always preached to the responsibility of the hearer
 - The basis of the atonement was never the prerequisite for a person to believe

Follow the Blood – the blood precedes faith

Romans 5:9 – *Since, therefore, we have now been **justified by his blood**, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God*

Revelation 5:9 - *for you were slain, and **by your blood** you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation*

The Blood = God's grace (Eternal Covenant of Redemption)

- **Ephesians 1:4** – *even as **he chose us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him*
- **2 Thessalonians 2:13** – *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, **because God chose you as the first fruits to be saved**, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth*
- **Titus 1:1-2** – *Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of **God's elect** and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, ² **in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began***
- **1 Peter 1:20** - *He was **foreknown before the foundation of the world** but was made manifest in the last times **for the sake of you***
- **Ephesians 2:8** - *For **by grace** you have been saved*

Faith – the gift God gives to those He died for, which is how one receives salvation

- **Ephesians 2:8** - *For by grace you have been saved **through faith**. And this is **not your own doing**; it is the **gift of God***
- **1 Thessalonians 3:1-2** - *Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may **speed ahead** and be **honored, as happened among you**, ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. **For not all have faith***
- **Philippians 1:29** – *For it has been **granted to you** that for the sake of Christ you should not only **believe** in him but also **suffer** for his sake*
- **2 Tim 2:25-26** – ²⁵ *correcting his opponents with gentleness. **God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth**, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*
- **John 6:37** - *All that the **Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out*
- **John 17:9** - *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for **those whom you have given me, for they are yours***
- **Matthew 11:25-27** - ²⁵ *At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have **hidden these things** from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and **no one knows the Son** except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son **and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.***

- Yes, it is true, faith is not considered a work
 - **Romans 4:5** - *And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness*
- But - in order for faith not to be considered a work:
 - It must be a gift, given to us by God, that He works within our hearts
 - It cannot be a mixture of being both a gift and our free will choice
 - Otherwise – our choice is the determining factor in salvation
 - The believer made a choice that the unbeliever did not make
 - A person is then saved based upon something they did

Reformed View of Salvation

- Blood / Grace - Faith
- God's action alone saves a person by applying the blood through the gift of faith

Arminian View of Salvation

- Faith - Blood / Grace
- Human action (faith + free will) is the final factor that saves a person by choosing to receive the blood

“The blood of Christ hath such a divine power to save, that nothing but it can ever save the soul”
– **Charles Spurgeon**