

Daily Bible Study

“Atonement (Katallage) ~ Exchange”

Selected Scripture

May 30 – June 5, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – This week as we prepare to come to the Lord’s Table we return to our mini-series concerning The Lord’s Supper. We are going to focus on the doctrine of “The Atonement” what Charles Spurgeon referred to as “*the brain and spinal cord of Christianity*”. The great doctrine of Atonement is something we should know, understand, hear, cherish and proclaim often. It is something so precious we could never exhaust it of its glories. There is no possible way we could exhaust the immense truths of The Atonement in one week or one sermon but we do want to see some general basics of this great doctrine. The word “atonement” in the Greek language is the word **katallage** which means “exchange, or adjustment of a difference, reconciliation, restoration to favor”. It is used a total of four times in Scripture but the principle it teaches is found throughout many passages and texts. We have all heard of someone who had to “atone” for a mistake or something they did. But that is a very surface understanding of what deep truths are expressed in this word “atonement” especially when we speak of the “**atoning death**” of Jesus Christ. A short Biblical definition would be to say that “atonement” is a reconciliation of alienated parties or the restoration of a broken relationship. When “atonement” is made there is a blotting out of offenses and satisfaction for wrongs done is achieved. To summarize it would be to say that “atonement” is a reconciliation of alienated parties or the restoration of a broken relationship. When “atonement” is made there is a blotting out of offenses and satisfaction for wrongs done is achieved. This is the central truth of what Jesus accomplished on the cross for those who would believe in Him by faith. We will study it in more detail as the week progresses. Read how Paul the Apostle speaks of this act in **Romans 5:8-11 & 2 Corinthians 5:18-19**.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Meditate on this awesome truth that reconciliation with God Almighty is possible through Jesus Christ. Thank Him today.

TUESDAY – Let’s look at why “atonement” is needed. What is the broken relationship that must be restored and what wrongs need to be satisfied in order for that to happen? In order to fully understand, marvel, and enjoy this blessed doctrine we need to realize that every man sins and therefore needs to make atonement with a Holy God. The problem lies in the fact that we as fallen, sinful men have no power in and of ourselves to make reconciliation. The truth is that we have offended our creator who by His very nature hates sin (**Jeremiah 44:4, Habakkuk 1:13**). That same Holy God must also punish sin (**Psalms**

5:4-6, Romans 1:18, 2:5-9). Mankind, apart from God's intervention would be left to die eternally and suffer just punishment for the violation of His Holy Law. Man cannot be accepted, and does not have fellowship with God unless "atonement" is made. We need help from an external source; we need what Martin Luther called "*an alien righteousness*" which we ourselves do not possess. Luther meant we need righteousness that is "outside" of us. Oh, how desperate is man's condition apart from God's grace. But it gets worse for us. To complicate matters, we understand by Scripture that there is sinfulness in the "best" of our intentions and actions as sinful humans (**Isaiah 53:6a, 64:6, Jeremiah 17:9**). Meditate today on your condition apart from God's grace.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Ask God to help you to see how hopeless and sinful you are apart from Him and an "alien righteousness" that only He can give.

WEDNESDAY – To complicate matters for us as sinful humans, we understand by Scripture that there is sinfulness in the "best" of our intentions and actions. We cannot get away from the fact we are inherently sinful in heart (**Jeremiah 17:9, Matthew 15:16-20**). We hear often, "he has a good heart"—no he doesn't and neither do you. Furthermore, anything we do in the hope of making amends with God can only increase our guilt and worsen the situation. As R.C. Sproul has stated, "There is no way to establish one's own righteousness before God; it simply cannot be done". This is where man lives; as an enemy of God (**James 4:4**), separated from Him by our sin. My friends, this is why it is so important we give out the true message of the gospel to the lost. No man is saved who hasn't realized that he needs to be saved. A gospel presentation that does not call men to recognize and repent from their sin is not the gospel message that Christ and the Scripture proclaims. I can't overemphasize this point! Read **Proverbs 15:8, Job 15:14-16, Isaiah 64:6, Romans 10:2-3**.

*The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Dear God, help me to truly understand that as You say in Scripture, "In my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (**Romans 7:18**). Thanks, that You offer forgiveness through Jesus Christ and His work on the cross.*

THURSDAY – The Gospel is good news and in its message we begin to see the greatest news possible now to those who are so helplessly and hopelessly lost in their sin. Scripture teaches us that God Himself in grace and mercy provides the atonement necessary for sin. This is the profound story of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. In **Old Testament** times God set up the sacrificial system which required the shedding of blood of animals (**Leviticus 17:11**). These blood sacrifices were provided as "types" of the greater and better sacrifice that was to come in the person of Jesus Christ. When by faith the people offered the sacrifices in obedience to God they found forgiveness. It was not the blood of animal's that forgives but rather the blood of the "*antitype*" Jesus Christ the "*lamb of God*"

whose death on the cross atoned for the sins committed of all who by faith come to God for cleansing. Those, who by the eternal covenant were set apart by God to be His people find forgiveness of their sin by faith alone in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus who dies as the substitute on their behalf. All sins; past, present and future have been atoned for on behalf of those who by obedient faith have repented and trusted Jesus. The **New Testament** makes it clear that the blood of Jesus Christ was shed as a sacrifice (**Romans 5:9, Ephesians 1:7**). Christ redeemed (bought back) His people by a ransom. That is to say His death was the ransom price that freed us from sin with its guilt and enslavement (**Galatians 4:4-5, Colossians 1:14**). God reconciled us who believe to Himself by satisfying His hostility and wrath for our sin in Christ's death (**Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19**). The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross propitiated (satisfied) God's wrath toward us who believe in that God expiated (atoned for, made amends) our sins and removed them from His sight forever (**Romans 3:25-26, Hebrews 2:17, 1 John 2:2, 4:10**). The cross of Jesus provides this atonement because in His suffering Jesus assumed our position as our substitute as He endured the judgment of God for our sin. He became a "curse for us" (**Galatians 3:13**). The damning record of our sins was nailed by God to His cross (**Colossians 2:14**). This is the wonderful work of God in making atonement and restoring us to favor in Christ, by His death for us. The cross of Jesus Christ was a transaction between The Son and The Father where wrath for sin was dealt with by the perfect sacrifice who satisfied God's Holy wrath for sin in "His own body" as Peter states. The Scriptures make it clear that people in both the **Old** and **New Testament** times as well as today, were and are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, The Messiah, and The Anointed one of and from God the Father. People were never saved except by faith in the promised one come from God. I.E. –Simeon (**Luke 2:25-33**), Abraham (**John 8:56, Hebrews 11:13**), David, (**Romans 4:3-8**), The Prophets (**1 Peter 1:10-12**). Read **Romans 3:25-26, 4:3-8, Hebrews 9:11-15**.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Thank You God for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ which makes atonement possible and sure for us who would believe. Ask God to help you to understand, cherish, and by faith trust in this blessed work of atonement made possible through Jesus.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Finally, we find the cross of Jesus provides this atonement because in His suffering Jesus assumed our position as our substitute as He endured the judgment of God for our sin. He became a "curse for us" (**Galatians 3:13**). The damning record of our sins was nailed by God to His cross (**Colossians 2:14**). This is the wonderful work of God in making atonement and restoring us to favor in Christ and through His death for us. Now let's briefly touch on some **false theories of the Atonement: Abelardian/Moral Influence View**—Jesus nailed to the cross is God saying "I love you" to get us to shape up. It becomes a moral cleanup campaign. God loves me so much;

therefore I have got to stop being such a jerk. This is illustrated so vividly in the “t-shirt” slogan which says, “I asked God how much He loved me and He spread out His arms and said ‘this much’”. My dear friends, yes the love of God was shown in full measure at the Cross, but that love alone would not get anyone to heaven if His Divine, Holy wrath for sin which keeps man from His presence had not been satisfied in the suffering of our Lord Jesus. This talk of love, love, love that forgets the Divine fury of Calvary minimizes what took place there in “The Atonement”. This erroneous view assumes the problem is that we as humans just don’t know how much God loves us. It becomes a drive for education—if I just knew, I would be a better person. This ignores that there is a problem WITHIN God. Man can’t fix it whether he can see God’s love or not. This mentality has lead to Christ less, and cross less preaching that is so popular today and that says it is NOT sin that offends God that is the biggest issue rather our biggest problem is that we are so obsessed with our problems we are not able to recognize God’s great love for us. Governmental View/Grotius & Finney—The cross is God showing how seriously He takes the breaking of His law. Primarily a law giver and this is a demonstration of how stern He is. “You have seen Me kill My son so now clean up your act”. God publicly shows His displeasure with sin by punishing his Son. These may have some truth in them but the sad part is they offer no good news, no real remedy for the sin problem, but there is good news; Christ Jesus can save because in the Atonement what He saves us from no one or nothing else can accomplish. Only God (Jesus) fulfilling the law perfectly in our place, bearing the curse of the law and sin on the cross through His death, and coming out of the grave the third day is capable of triumphing over death, Satan, sin, and hell. Jesus bore the curse and He made “Atonement”. So we prepare to come to The Table where we see a visible picture of “The Gospel, The Atonement” and the question for you is this: Was your sin paid for at the cross? Have you felt the horrific weight of your sin and turned in obedient, repentant faith to Jesus for the forgiveness of your sin? Maybe it should be asked this way—Are you feeling the weight of your sin and are you (present tense) turning to Jesus by faith in Him alone and trusting His Righteousness and not your own? Do you stand humbly broken before God? We don’t deserve anything but judgment from God. It is by His free electing grace that we can stand forgiven before Him. If we understood this to the fullest, we would be a much different people. “*Christ has for sin atonement made—what a wonderful Savior! We are redeemed the price is paid—what a wonderful Savior! What a wonderful Savior is Jesus my Jesus, what a wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord!*”

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me to more deeply understand and to more passionately embrace and proclaim this incredible truth. May I forever cling to the cross of Jesus as my only means of salvation.