

GraceLife Church Presents . . .

Soteriology

The Purpose,
Accomplishment,
Plan, and Application of
Redemption

The Accomplishment of Redemption

The Atonement

“The atonement is the work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.”

Wayne Gruden, *Bible Doctrine*, 248.

The Extent of the Atonement

The Extent of the Atonement

Introduction

- ❖ When we ask about the extent of the atonement we are asking, “Who did Christ give himself up for? Who did he make propitiation for?”

The Extent of the Atonement

Introduction

- ❖ Last week I presented a number of reasons that Christ died only for the elect securing and ensuring their final salvation.
- ❖ All those for whom Christ died will be effectually drawn to Christ by the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The Father elected a group of people. He gave them to the Son, the Son accomplished redemption for them, and the Holy Spirit applies it to them in time.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

Introduction

- ❖ Interact with argument against Particular Redemption / Limited Atonement.
- ❖ Look at Scriptures that seem to argue against Particular Redemption / Limited Atonement

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“It is easy for the proponents of universal atonement to make offhand appeal to a few texts. But this method is not worthy of the serious student of Scripture. It is necessary for us to discover what redemption or atonement really means.”

John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 74.

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“One of the most disappointing aspects of discussing the extent of the atonement occurs when universalists appeal to texts containing the word ‘all’ and simply declare the unwarranted assumption that ‘all’ must always mean ‘all people without exception’.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 554.

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Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

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Rom 3:21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **2** even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

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“5. everything belonging, in kind, to the class designated by the noun, *every kind of, all sorts of,*”

BDAG, 784.

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Matt 2:3 When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

Matt 10:22 “You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

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John 18:19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. **20** Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret.

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- ❖ We use 'all' like this 'all' the time.

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Matt 4:23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. (πα̃σαν νόσον καὶ πα̃σαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ.)

Matt 23:27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

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“The determining factor of the proper sense of ‘all’ is not one’s *a priori* assumptions but rather the context of the particular passage in which the word occurs. When those passages are subject to the scrutiny of contextual exegesis, it becomes clear that none of them supports an unlimited atonement.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 555.

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- ❖ Berkof said that many of the Scriptures that have the words 'world' or 'all' in connection with the atonement prove to much and hence 'prove nothing at all.'
- ❖ In those cases we are asking 'Where should the atonement be limited?'

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- ❖ A number of Scriptures connect the death of Christ to the world or use the word 'all.'
- ❖ Proponents of universal redemption understand 'world' and 'all' to mean every person without exception.

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“In many cases, the ‘all’ in question should be taken to mean ‘all without distinction’ (all *kinds* of people), and not ‘all without exception’ (every person who has ever lived). There are two reasons for this.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 274.

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Introduction

- ❖ We want to take our understanding of all we have seen to this point and ask, “is there a way to understand these passages in a way that does justice to those texts *and* fits with what we saw last week?”
- ❖ This is the task of systematic theology.

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- ❖ Norman Geisler “All means all, all of the time.”
 - ❖ His understanding of all is ‘all without exception.’
 - ❖ Another way ‘all’ is used is ‘all without distinction.’

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

John 12:27–32

John 12:27 “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. **28** “Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” **29** So the crowd *of people* who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.” **30** Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes. **31** “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. **32** “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

John 12:27–32

- ❖ Arminianism: Jesus draws all men (without exception) ineffectually.
- ❖ Hypothetical Universalism: Jesus draws all men (without exception) potentially.
- ❖ Particular Redemption: Jesus draws all men (without distinction) effectually.

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John 12:27–32

- ❖ When Jesus said he would draw ‘all men’ to himself did he mean those who were already in hell suffering the wrath of God? Would he draw them to himself?
- ❖ As far as I know, everyone says ‘no.’ In other words, everyone limits ‘all’ by the context.

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John 12:27–32

John 12:20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; **21** these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and *began to ask him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”*

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John 12:27–32

John 1:29 The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

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John 12:27–32

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

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John 12:27–32

John 4:42 and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”

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John 12:27–32

John 6:33 “For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.”

John 6:51 “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

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John 12:27–32

John 17:6 “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

John 17:9 “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;

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John 12:27–32

- ❖ The gospel of John uses ‘world’ in a couple of different ways.
- ❖ Often, ‘world’ seems to refer to unbelievers over against believers.
- ❖ Other times ‘world’ refers to the world beyond the Jewish community.

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John 12:27–32

- ❖ John wants to communicate that Jesus is the Saviour, not just of the Jews but also for the Greeks and the whole world.

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John 12:27–32

“Although some have claimed that the biblical texts that speak of Christ’s death for ‘all people’ or ‘the world’ speak against particular redemption, a careful examination of these passages in their contexts shows otherwise.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 274.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

John 12:27–32

“Firstly, in the first century context, the idea that the gospel could extend beyond Jews to ‘unclean’ Gentiles was utterly revolutionary – see for example Peter’s reaction to being asked by Cornelius in Acts 10, or the reaction of Jesus’ disciples to his conversation with a Samaritan woman in John 4. When Jesus said, ‘I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself’ (John 12:32), he almost certainly meant by ‘all’ that Greeks would be included, for only then can Jesus’ words in verses 23–32 be understood as a reply (v. 23) to the Greeks’ request (v. 21).”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 274.

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John 12:27–32

“If we think this an anticlimax relative to the idea that he meant everyone in the world, it only serves to demonstrate our distance from issues that dominated the mindset of the early Christians: for them there were few truths more earth-shattering than the inclusion of non-Jews in the people of God.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 274.

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John 12:27–32

Acts 11:17 “Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as *He gave* to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” **18** When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance *that leads* to life.”

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John 12:27–32

Acts 11:19 So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. **20** But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and *began* speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. **21** And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

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John 12:27–32

“The second reason for questioning the ‘all without exception’ reading is that in many cases it would lead to universalism. For example, Romans 5:18 says that the result of Christ’s work was justification that brings life for *all men*’ (italics added). Many who baulk at particular redemption nevertheless adopt (rightly) a limited reading of the word ‘all’ in these texts.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 275.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

Titus 2:11–14

- ❖ **Titus 2:11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, **13** looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, **14** who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

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Titus 2:11–14

“Paul says that ‘the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.’ This is most unlikely to refer to all people without exception, since the following verses speak of the consequences of this appearing in terms that evidently apply only to Christians. Moreover, the ‘all without distinction’ reading makes a lot of sense in view of the preceding verses (2–10), which refer to different *types* of people in the church – older men, older women, young men, young women, slaves.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 274–75.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

Titus 2:11–14

“There is some debate about exactly how this verse should be translated. Some think that the ‘all’ modifies not ‘appearing’ (as in the NIV cited above) but ‘salvation.’ Thus the NRSV reads ‘the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.’ In this case, the ‘all without exception’ reading is even more problematic, for it would turn this verse into a statement of universalism.”

Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions*, 275, n. 76.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

Titus 2:11–14

- ❖ The results of this grace that brings salvation to ‘all’ men in verse 11 is restricted in verses 12–15 to ‘us.’
- ❖ ‘Us’ refers to ‘all.’
- ❖ Cf. Titus 3:4–7.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

1 John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; **2** and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ At first glance this text seems to say that Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He made propitiation for the sins of all without exception.
- ❖ The reason we read it this way is that we forget what propitiation actually is.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ Q: What is propitiation?
 - ❖ A: A sacrifice that appeases wrath and thus makes God propitious (favorable) towards those for whom it was made.

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1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ Neither side wants to say that God is propitiated towards the whole world.
- ❖ Arminianism and hypothetical universalism say God is potentially propitiated and that propitiation is dependant upon faith.
 - ❖ Christ made propitiation for all but he is not the advocate for all.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ We want to ask, “Is it possible to keep the biblical understanding of propitiation and reconcile it with ‘not for ours only but also for those of the whole world’?”
- ❖ We either must understand ‘propitiation’ differently or we must understand ‘all’ to mean something other than ‘all without exception.’

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ We have already seen that all doesn't always mean 'all without exception.'
- ❖ John wrote First John to believers in Asia Minor. I understand verse 2 to mean, not our only (believers in Asia Minor) but also for those of the whole world (i.e. there are others beyond Asia Minor to whom we must bring the gospel).

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 John 2:1–2

John 11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, **50** nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.” **51** Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, **52** and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

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1 John 2:1–2

- ❖ We have to make a choice on this passage.
 - ❖ Should we alter the lexical definition of propitiation, or should we understand the contrast to be not ‘believers vs. the whole world without exception’ but ‘believers in Asia Minor vs. the whole world without distinction’?
 - ❖ If we insist on the world without exception and change the definition of propitiation, we need to go back and reconcile all the passages we looked at to argue for particular redemption.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

Hebrews 2:9

Heb 2:9 But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

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Hebrews 2:9

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. **11** For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one *Father*; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 saying,

“I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN,
IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.”

13 And again,

“I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM.”

And again,

“BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.”

14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. **16** For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. **17** Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

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Hebrews 2:9

- ❖ First, Heb 2:10 proclaims the efficacy of the atonement in bringing many son to glory.
- ❖ Second, those for whom he suffered are Christ's 'brothers.'
- ❖ Third, they are 'children whom God has given me' (John 17:2; cf. 6:37, 39, 10:29, 17:6, 9, 20, 24.).
- ❖ Fourth, they are 'offspring of Abraham' not 'offspring of Adam.'

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Hebrews 2:9

“Therefore, the universalistic language of Hebrews 2:9 must be conditioned by the several particularistic comments in the immediate context and must thus be understood to emphasize the corporate solidarity between the One and the many for whom he interceded.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 556.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 2:3–4

1 Tim 2:3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **5** For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 2:3–4

“If God desires all people to be saved, and Christ has given himself a ransom for all, how can we deny a universal atonement?”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 557.

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Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 2:3–4

- ❖ Note the choices:
 - ❖ (1) Christ died a ransom for all which leads to universalism.
 - ❖ (2) Christ died a ransom for all but that ransom doesn't actually redeem all.
 - ❖ (3) Christ died a ransom for all kinds of people (some of whom are mentioned in the preceding context, contra the Jewish exclusivism which Paul is warning Timothy against).

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1 Timothy 2:3–4

1 Tim 1:3 As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, **4** nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith.

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1 Timothy 2:3–4

1 Tim 1:6 For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, ⁷ wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

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1 Timothy 2:3–4

- ❖ 1 Tim 1:12–17: God chose me and put me in the ministry although I was formerly sinful and unbelieving.
- ❖ 1 Tim 1:18–20: Fight the good fight Timothy, because some have gone astray.

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1 Timothy 2:3–4

Tim 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, **2** for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. **3** This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

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1 Timothy 2:3–4

1 Tim 2:7 For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 2:3–4

“Even I. Howard Marshall, who held to an unlimited atonement, wrote, “This universalistic thrust is most probably a corrective response to an exclusive elitist understanding of salvation connected with the false teaching. . . The content shows that the inclusion of Gentiles alongside Jews in salvation is the primary issue here.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 557, n. 7.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 4:10

1 Tim 4:9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. **10** For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 4:10

- ❖ The antecedent of ‘Savior’ not Christ and the atonement but ‘the living God.’
- ❖ God’s nature as Saviour is expressed . . .
 - ❖ (1) in common grace to all men
 - ❖ (2) in saving grace to those who believe

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 4:10

“Here ‘Savior’ cannot be restricted in meaning to ‘one who forgives sin and gives eternal life,’ because these things are not given to those who do not believe. ‘Savior’ must have a more general sense here—namely, ‘one who rescues from distress, one who delivers.’”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 277.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

1 Timothy 4:10

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The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

Col 1:19 For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, **20** and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

- ❖ ‘All’ is grammatically neuter and refers to ‘all things.’
- ❖ If Christ died to reconcile all things to himself, the universalist argues, there must be some sense in which he died for a broader purpose than just to save the elect.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

- ❖ There is a sense in which Christ's death does have temporal benefits beyond just the salvation of the elect.
- ❖ We have to ask ourselves, "Why were 'all things' at enmity with God"?
 - ❖ Because of man's sin. Creation did not sin but it was cursed when man sinned.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

- ❖ Christ's reconciliation of the elect is the means through which God is going to undo the curse upon creation.
- ❖ Creation will enter "into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom 8:20) because of the redemption and reconciliation of the elect.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

- ❖ To argue backwards from the results of reconciliation (the reconciliation of all things) to the extent of the atonement is confusing the results of the atonement with the atonement itself.
- ❖ Christ died to make atonement for the sins of his people and that atonement has implications for the entire created order, but it does not follow that the atonement itself was for the entire created order.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

- ❖ Nobody denies the cosmic implications of the atonement.
- ❖ With Colossians 1:20 we need to remember the question we are asking.
 - ❖ We are not asking, “Are there benefits beyond salvation in the atonement?”
 - ❖ We are asking, “For whom did Christ make atonement?”

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

Colossians 1:20

“The consequences of the atonement should not be conflated with the atonement itself.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 557.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

2 Peter 2:1

2 Pet 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

2 Peter 2:1

Deut 32:6 “Do you thus repay the LORD,
O foolish and unwise people?
Is not He your Father who has bought you?
He has made you and established you.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

2 Peter 2:1

“The language of ‘denying the Master who bought them’ serves to identify the false teachers of Peter’s day with the false prophets of Israel.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 564.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

2 Peter 2:1

- ❖ Peter is using what George Smeaton called ‘the judgment of charity.’
- ❖ These people profess to be ‘bought’ by the Master and yet they deny him.

The Extent of the Atonement

Objections Against Particular Redemption

2 Peter 2:1

- ❖ If we understand this text to say that the Master bought them but they end up in eternal destruction what are we to do with all the texts that speak of the eternal security of all those for whom Christ died?

The Atonement

Conclusion

- ❖ God designed salvation to glorify himself.
- ❖ What the Son accomplished for us and for our salvation (the atonement) will be the ground of our praise for all eternity!