

1. Why would Jesus atone for our sins? God's great love for His children

"No treatment of the atonement can be properly oriented that does not trace its source to the free and Sovereign love of God." - John Murray - *"Redemption Accomplished and Applied"*

John 3:16 (ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8 (ESV) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2. Why was it necessary for Christ to atone for our sin? God's justice

YES, the atonement was necessary for two main reasons:

- God's holiness (Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8)
- Human's sinfulness

Isaiah 59:1-2 (ESV) ¹Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; ²but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Hebrews 2:10 (ESV) For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Hebrews 2:17 (ESV) Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

For God to redeem men and women from their sins, it was absolutely necessary for an atonement to be made that would perfectly satisfy the demands of God's holiness and justice.

3. The Old Testament Sacrificial System

In the Old Testament, we find four characteristics about sacrifices for atonement:

- i. The sacrifice had to be offered voluntarily.
- ii. The sacrifice had to be offered on behalf of the guilty party. (Leviticus 1:4; 4:4; 16:21)
- iii. The sacrifice had to be without defect. (Leviticus 22:21)
- iv. The sacrifice had to involve the loss of blood (or life) of the victim in exchange for the worshipper.

Hebrews 10:1-4 (ESV) ¹For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ²Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? ³But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

4. Atonement in the New Testament - The Cross!

Philippians 2:8 (ESV) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Hebrews 5:8-10 (ESV) ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

⁹ And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,

¹⁰ being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

5. The Language of Atonement

- Sacrificial and Ritual language

Ephesians 2:13 (ESV) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

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

- Redemption: Language of the Prison/Marketplace

Matthew 20:28 (ESV) even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

See Revelation 5:9

- Reconciliation: Language of Relationship

Romans 5:10 (ESV) For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

- Justification: Language of the Court

See Acts 13:39 and 1 Corinthians 6:11

- Substitutionary Atonement: Language of Replacement

1 Peter 2:24 (ESV) 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.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.