



**Atonement**  
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**The Crossing Church**  
**Las Vegas, Nevada**

### **OPENING**

This week we are taking a detour from Quest 52 briefly in order to discuss atonement which means the payment for wrongdoing. Some people take revenge on those who hurt them through physical means, but Jesus atoned for our sin by sacrificing Himself on the Cross in our place. He buried our past under His blood so that we could be reconciled with His Father and have eternal life with Him. The metaphor of baptism is to demonstrate to others that we have been buried with Christ and raised up with Him – our spiritual way of saying we have accepted Jesus as our Savior and submitted our lives to God.

### **SCRIPTURE<sup>1</sup>**

**Hebrews 2:17** For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make *atonement* for the sins of the people.

**Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life *in Christ Jesus* our Lord.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** God made him who had no sin to *be sin* for us, so that *in him* we might become the *righteousness* of God.

**John 3:16** For God *so loved* the world that he *gave* his one and only Son, that whoever *believes in* him shall not perish but have *eternal life*.

**Romans 6:3-4** Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his *death*? We were therefore *buried* with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was *raised* from the dead through the glory of the Father, *we too may live a new life*.

**Acts 2:38** Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the *forgiveness of your sins*. And you will receive the *gift of the Holy Spirit*."

### **OBSERVATION**

When we are pulled over for speeding, we may well get a ticket that requires us to atone for violating the law. Or we may have to go to traffic school if we have really been foolhardy, but in either case, we don't have to until we speed again. For the Jewish people of the Old Testament, if they sinned they couldn't just pay a fine, they would have to sacrifice an animal to atone for

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<sup>1</sup> The NIV translation unless otherwise indicated.

their sin – something had to die to “cover over” a violation of Jewish law. Way back in the 1400’s B. C., God instructed Moses to begin the Exodus from Egypt by having the people slay a perfect lamb or goat – one without any blemishes and having no bones broken – and brush the blood over the doors of their houses. When the Angel of Death came over the land and killed the first-born son and animal in the household so Pharaoh would let His people go, the houses with blood over the doors would be spared. This began the ritual of annual Passover celebrations for Jews that continued through the centuries to remind them of God’s grace to them. Christ has many names, but one is **Lamb of God** referring to His role as the Passover Lamb who died for our sins on the Cross. He was perfect with no blemishes on His incarnate body, no broken bones because He was already dead when the thieves on either side of Him had theirs broken, and His blood covers all of us who accept Him as our Savior.

**QUESTION: What scriptures can you find to describe the Passover requirements? What additional comparisons can you find between the Passover lamb and Jesus?**

**QUESTION: What other prophecies from the Old Testament do you see fulfilled in the New Testament?**

The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, when the High Priest would go into the Holy of Holies in the temple where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, and sacrifice a young bull for himself and his family. Then he would take two goats and slay one for a sin offering for the people and the other, the scapegoat, stood for a confession for sins of the people over the prior year. They were transferred onto the goat and it died to atone for them. Jesus took all of our sins that were transferred onto Him at the Cross and once and for all, our sins were atoned for. He became the scapegoat and sin offering for all time.

**QUESTION: If you believe that Jesus paid for all of your sins, which ones are you still carrying like an anchor around your neck?**

## **APPLICATION**

Paul is telling us that Jesus, on the Cross, became our sexual sin, our adultery, our lust, our greed, our lies, our pride, our envy, our anger, and our hatred. In exchange, we become His righteousness. All we have to do is accept His invitation to believe in Him and to come and live in His Kingdom. It is a choice to let Jesus cover our sins and one we each individually have to make. Whoever believes in and trusts Him “will not perish but have eternal life.”

**QUESTION: What alternative to God’s Kingdom are you pursuing in this life? On what basis are you making that decision?**

So, how is baptism the symbolism of Christ’s atonement for our sin? **1) What is baptism?** We are united in the death of Jesus as we are “buried” under water and die to our old lives, and then raised up with Him into a brand new life: Death – burial – resurrection. **2) Why be baptized?** When we surrender our lives to Jesus, we are given His Holy Spirit who lives within us and begins changing us. Plus, Jesus asks us to be baptized. **3) When should we be baptized?** New Testament folks were immediately baptized. Today we dedicate our babies because they aren’t of an age to understand what it means to believe and trust in Jesus. When they can understand what it means and make their own choice about their commitment to Him, then baptism is appropriate.

**QUESTION: What are your thoughts about baptism for yourself? For your children or grandchildren?**

**QUESTION: If you have been baptized, what changes have you experienced since then?**

**PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, when we read the Passover story which began in the Book of Exodus, and understand that God used it to point to the role His Son, Jesus, would fulfill 14 centuries later, how can we not see the consistency in Your Scriptures? Awaken in us the desire to read our Bibles every day and find for ourselves how inerrant it is. Also, encourage us to follow Jesus in baptism as we demonstrate to those around us that we have given our lives to Him. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**QUESTIONS**

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