

The Purpose of the Atonement

by S. Lewis Johnson

The Atonement is the product of God's love, which produced a change in the relationship between God and sinners, and gave sinners the gift of eternal life.

Duration: 1:00:07

Scripture: John 17:1

Topics: "Atonement"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that humans do not have control over the universe in which they live. The author of the Bible acknowledges this and states that not all things are yet under human control. However, there is hope for mankind to regain their dominion over creation through the representative man, Jesus Christ. Jesus, who was made lower than the angels, suffered death for the atonement of all mankind. The speaker highlights the significance of Jesus' death and the resulting impact it has had on humanity. The sermon also includes a personal anecdote about Dr. Chafer, a theologian, who sought rest and solace in the Bible during a rainy vacation in Maine.

Transcript

Look up to Thee with thanksgiving and gratitude for Jesus Christ who has loved us and given himself for us. And we pray that as we study together again that Thou wilt be our teacher through the Spirit. We remember the texts of Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments which state that all of Thy children are taught of Thee.

And we pray that we may be subject to the ministry tonight and that Thou wilt teach us and instruct us, and may our knowledge of divine things increase. We earnestly commit each one present to Thee, Lord, and pray that the teaching ministry may prepare us for the life that Thou hast for us. We thank Thee for Jesus Christ and his death for us and his resurrection and ascension and his present session at the right hand of our God.

We rejoice in him and we rejoice in his ministry, and we commit this hour to Thee with thanksgiving for the Scriptures. For Jesus' sake, amen. We have come a long and occasionally winding way in our study of the Atonement and the Suffering Savior this year.

We have also had a few detours in which we have turned aside to consider certain aspects of the Suffering Savior and the use of the Old Testament that elucidate certain features of our Lord's ministry of

suffering for us. What we have been trying to stress has been the nature of the Atonement, and we have tried to stress in all of our teaching that it is penal, that is, our Lord died under divine punishment for human sin. It is penal.

We have tried to stress that it is a satisfaction, that is, our Lord's blood shed upon the cross is a satisfaction of the claims of divine holiness and justice against us. And we feel that these two things are extremely important in the teaching of the Atonement. And then we have tried to stress that this penal satisfaction is accomplished by means of the substitution of our Lord for us.

So these three aspects of the Atonement make up its most significant features, make up its nature. It is penal, it is a satisfaction, and it is a substitution. Now, I do not think that we have a true doctrine of the Atonement unless we have each of these three features.

It is possible to speak of substitution and not really speak of New Testament or Old Testament Atonement. And, of course, it is possible to speak of satisfaction and not have the fullness of the New Testament doctrine of Atonement before oneself. We need all three of these elements.

Our Lord offered a satisfaction, but when he did, he suffered the punishment that was due others. And he did it by means of becoming their substitute. So it is penal, it is a satisfaction, and it is accomplished by means of substitution.

We also looked at the historical answers to the question of the nature of the Atonement. We talked, you may remember a long time ago, about the classic theory of the Atonement, that is, that theory in which the work of Atonement terminates upon Satan. And then we talked about the moral influence theory of the Atonement.

We did not say anything about the exemplary theory of the Atonement because it is very closely related to the moral influence theory. That is, that Jesus Christ died to influence men toward the obedience of God, that he did not die under punishment. He did not die in order to satisfy the claims of divine holiness.

He died simply to give us an illustration of obedience, an illustration of love, and in order thereby to move us to responsive love to God. That is the common liberal theory of the Atonement, which is preached in most of our liberal churches. If it's not that, it's the exemplary theory in which our Lord died simply as an example with the same end in mind.

And then we talked about the anselmic satisfaction theory of the Atonement and tried to point out a few of the weaknesses. It is not penal, and therefore it is not sufficient for the New Testament theory. So we have seen our Lord as the suffering Savior, and we have seen him making Atonement, finally crying out, it is finished.

We have two topics left in our study. One that we want to finish tonight, and then the next one, which will take us several of our nights together. The first one is the purpose of the Atonement, in which I try to gather together all of the aims that God had in the Atonement, insofar as we can in one hour.

And then we want to consider the extent of the Atonement and try to answer the question, did Jesus Christ die for all without exception, or did he die for all without distinction? Now, we have considered the purpose of the Atonement with reference to the sinner, primarily. So it's inevitable that there be a little bit of repetition. I hope there's not much tonight.

But we have considered one aspect of the purpose of the Atonement, that purpose that pertains to us and to our salvation. I'll try to spell out a little more detail, a little more in detail tonight. But we have not considered the purpose of the Atonement with reference to God, nor have we considered the Atonement with reference to Jesus Christ.

So we want to stress these things tonight as we deal with the subject of the purpose of the Atonement. And I want to draw it all together and see how the Atonement has affected God, how it has affected Jesus Christ, and how it has affected the sinner. So the purpose of the Atonement.

And I want you to take your New Testaments and turn with me to a passage in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, the second one, and listen as I read a few of the important verses of that fifth chapter, beginning with the thirteenth verse of, the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians, reading to the end of the chapter or the twenty-first verse. 2 Corinthians 5, 14 through 21. Here the Apostle writes, For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then, and I'm going to translate this as the Greek text has it, then all died.

That's very important. It gives us a good insight into the significance of substitution. If one died for all, then all died.

And that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh. Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, or that is, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Now notice this next clause.

It is very important. Not imputing their trespasses unto them. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we beg you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The thing I want you to notice about the 21st verse is that it is God who made him to be sin for us.

First then, the effect of the atonement with reference to God. Now we must make a couple of careful distinctions, and that is the purpose of this section of our study. Atonement and the love of God.

Did the atonement cause God to love sinners? I think, and I know this is true in the theological world, I think many Christians feel that the result of the atonement is that God's attitude toward sinners has been changed, and thus we can say that the atonement caused God to love sinners. The answer to the question, of course, is not yes, but no. No, it is the love of God that produced atonement.

The atonement did not cause God to love sinners. The atonement was something that God brought to pass because he loved sinners. And that is evident from our text here in verse 21 of 2 Corinthians chapter 5, for he hath made him to be sin who knew no sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God

in him.

Or as Paul puts it over in Romans chapter 3 in verse 24 and 25, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood. In other words, the atonement is the product of God. The atonement is not the work of Jesus Christ whereby he prevails upon God to turn from enmity toward the sinner to enmity, but the atonement is something given by God because he loved men.

So we sum it up by saying Jesus Christ did not come in order that God might love men. He came because God loved men. Now this is something I think that we must retain in our thinking at all times.

God, Jesus Christ, did not come in order that he might do a work whereby God is enabled to love men. Now he did accomplish a work whereby God is enabled to manifest his love to men, to carry out his love for men, and save men. But it is the love of God that brought Jesus Christ to make the atonement.

So Christ did not come in order that God might love men. He came because God loved men. Well, what then can we say second in our outline, or be, about atonement and the holiness of God? What change was wrought when Jesus Christ came, if any change was wrought? Well, the only change that was wrought in God was a change in the relation of God to the objects of his atoning love.

There was no change in the inner being of God when Jesus Christ came. The Bible says that God is unchangeable in his nature. He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ of the New, and it can be predicated of both of these persons.

I change not. And so it is not biblical to say that God was changed within his essential being. But there did come about a change in the relationship that he had to the objects of his atoning love.

He was propitiated, as Romans puts it. He was satisfied. Jesus Christ came and offered the sacrifice which satisfied the claims of holiness and righteousness and justice, and thereby God is free to manifest, to carry out, to execute the love that he has for men in the salvation of sinners.

So there is no change in his inner being. It is a change of relationship. So the work of the atonement had as its purpose the accomplishment of a change in the relationship of God to sinners.

That is the way the atonement affects God the Father, and I think we can say God. Now, the second thing that we want to talk about is the effect of the atonement with reference to Jesus Christ. Here the atonement secured a manifold reward for the mediator, who is the quickening spirit and source of all of our blessings.

I want you to turn with me now to John chapter 17, and let me read verses 1 through 5 of this great high priestly prayer which our Lord prayed just before his death. John 17, verses 1 through 5. These words spoke Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee.

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth.

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Isn't it interesting that not even Jesus Christ chooses his own work? We are inclined to think that one of the things that we do as believers is to choose the way in which we are going to serve God. Not even Jesus Christ chooses his work.

He finishes the work which thou gavest me to do. And he continues, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. There are two glorifications here, and the first thing that we can say with respect to the effect of the atonement concerning Jesus Christ is it led to his glorification.

But there are two glorifications. There is, first of all, the glory of the cross in verse 1. These things spoke Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee.

Evidently what our Lord means is glorify me by the cross and the ascension that I may glorify the Father in my activity in heaven of saving men. So he asks for the accomplishment of the glorification of the Father, of the Son, in the work of the cross. I think that what he is asking for is the power, the enablement to accomplish the atonement, and in that accomplishment of the atonement he is going to glorify God the Father.

He will glorify God the Father in the manifestation of the virtues and attributes of God, and he also will glorify the Father in that through the death and resurrection, for John seems to use that term glorify in that broad sense, he will come to the right hand of the Father and then he will, by carrying out the program the Father has put into his hands, give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. Over in Acts chapter 5 and verse 31 we have a passage which I think is somewhat parallel to this. You needn't turn there.

I will turn and read it for you. Peter is speaking and he says, The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

And I think also we may have something that pertains to this in Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 2 in that well-known text where the author of the epistle gives these words. He says, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So here we have the glory of the Lamb that was slain, who is exalted to the right hand of the Father to become a prince and a savior.

He who has been given the elect is now engaging in his activity of giving life to them, the elect whom the Father has given to him. In the midst of this statement of his glorification, and I want to talk about the second glory in just a moment, there is this third verse in which we have something of a definition or a description at least of what eternal life is. Many people think of eternal life as simply life forever.

Of course, eternal life is life forever. But when the Bible speaks about the gift of eternal life to those that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not simply speaking about eternal existence, because of course the unsaved shall have eternal existence. The life that is eternal life is life in the knowledge of God the Father.

This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. So eternal life is the knowledge of the triune God. It's a qualitatively different kind of life, not simply a longer life.

It is that, but it is a qualitatively different kind of life. It's the life in the knowledge of God. That's its essence, to know God, to know him in all of the beauties and perfections of his character and know him also in the beauties and perfections of his work, which he has done through Jesus Christ.

I read a statement today by an interpreter of the Bible in which he said, God has never had a thought and never will have a thought in the past or in the future which is not concerned with Jesus Christ. That's a very interesting idea. I don't know whether he has a thought that is not in some way connected with Jesus Christ.

Probably that's true, for everything sooner or later is really connected with the triune God. Well, that of course is the importance of the Son. And life, true life, is life in the knowledge of the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit in all of their person and in all of their work.

I would gather from this that we have plenty of activity in heaven. If you think that getting to heaven is arriving there and picking up your harp and sitting down and strumming on that harp and polishing your crown for all eternity, you have another thing coming. Dr. Barnhouse, who led me to Christ, has in one of his books told the story of a medical doctor who used to attend the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

His wife was a very active Christian, and he was a Christian, but Dr. Barnhouse said that for years he listened to Dr. Barnhouse preach and never, so far as he could tell, ever responded to any message that he gave. Now, that is a most amazing thing. If you've ever heard Dr. Barnhouse, it's just, it would seem to me, impossible not to respond in some way.

Well, he kept coming back. That was at least that kind of response. But Dr. Barnhouse said that he would get in the, he would sit in his pew, and he said, I looked at him constantly, he would sit in his pew, he would put his hands together like this, fold them, and sit, and he said often he would just look down toward the pew in front of him.

And this went on Sunday after Sunday, week after week, month after month, year after year. And when Dr. Barnhouse went down the aisle of the church out to the front to greet the people on Sunday morning after the message, he never would even come by. His wife would, and she would always have something to say, but he had to make hospital visitation at that time, and so he would turn and go out of the church the other way when Dr. Barnhouse went there.

So he would go out, Dr. Barnhouse never saw him after the meeting. But he said, one morning I was preaching, and I made a statement. I said, if you think that getting to heaven is arrival there, and picking up your harp, and strumming on your harp, and polishing your crown without any activity at all, you have another thing coming.

And he said, the dakkaru was sitting there like this, and he said, for the first time he looked up at me. And he said, then I went on to explain what I meant. He said, just this past week I have noticed in the paper that a scientist has claimed that there are 37 varieties of flowers.

37 varieties. Then Dr. Barnhouse went on to say, don't you see, these 37 varieties of flowers are just thoughts of God. Now God has just as many thoughts about every subject that you can ever think of.

Now when we get to heaven, and we come into the fullness of the knowledge of God, we're not going to do it overnight. The chances are there may be a hundred to two hundred thousand varieties of flowers.

Just flowers within his creation.

It's going to take more than overnight investigation in heaven to discover the nature of the flowers. So Dr. Barnhouse went on, and he talked about medical knowledge, and biological knowledge, and chemical knowledge, and various other kinds of knowledge. And then he said, you know, it's just entirely possible that you may be interested in flowers.

And you may come to God, now this is all Dr. Barnhouse, this isn't in the Bible, but he said you may come to God and say, oh God, I love flowers. I like to investigate flowers. And so God may say, all right, I'll create a hundred thousand new varieties, and you can spend the next six or ten years investigating the varieties of flowers.

Well, that was just a human illustration to illustrate the infinite character of the knowledge of God. And so he went on to stress the fact that when we get to heaven, that's when we really get busy. And we get busy about things that really count.

Well, he said that morning, Dr. Roo didn't go to visit his patients by retreating behind the pulpit and out the side door. He came down the front of the aisle, down to the front of the church, and greeted me outside and said, for the first time in my life, I understand what the Christian life may be about. He said, I've been a Christian all these years, and I've known that I'm going to heaven.

But I've been a very busy man, and I must say to you, I've thought of heaven, just as you said, that some people might think of heaven. And consequently, I've thought that it was going to be terribly boring in heaven. And as a result of what you've said, it's obvious that heaven is not going to be boring, and frankly, I'm now getting a little excited about getting there.

This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Now reading that story makes me a little more anxious to get to heaven too, because there are lots of things that I want to know about theology. I'm not interested in flowers.

You can go pick all the flowers you want to, and investigate how many varieties there are. But I am interested in theology, and I've got more than a hundred thousand questions right now. I'm looking forward to that, but life eternal.

Now we were talking about the glorification of the Son, and I said there were two glorifications that are actually the outgrowth of the saving work of Christ. The first is the glory of the cross and the resurrection, and the second is the glory of the pre-incarnate state. And will you notice verses four and five now? He says, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Now this is not the mediatorial glory that he spoke about in verse one. He says, glorify the Son now that thy Son may glorify thee in heaven by giving eternal life to those whom thou hast given to him. That's the mediatorial glory, the glory that he has as the mediator who, obedient to the Father, accomplishes redemption.

And we see the holiness and the love and the righteousness of God in the work of the Son, and he is glorified, his mediatorial glory, that which continues. He is in the mediatorial glory of heaven, carrying out his work of bringing other sheep into the fold. But he also had a glory before he ever came here, and that is the glory of the eternal Son.

And he asks now that the Father will glorify him with that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Now you remember that the Gospel of John began with, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Now when he was with God, in fellowship with God, he enjoyed the glory of the second person of the eternal Trinity throughout all of the ages of eternity past.

And here he asks simply that he may have that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. These verses, it seemed to me, are explained to some extent, or at least parallel to the statement that Paul makes in Philippians chapter 2, when he says, in connection with the work of the Son, in the ninth verse, after having said that the Son is obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, he adds, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, now the name is not Jesus, but it's Jesus' name, that at Jesus' name every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Jehovah. Notice that, that Jesus Christ is Jehovah.

That's his name. He is the eternal Jehovah, that he is Jehovah to the glory of God the Father. So then, the atonement of Jesus Christ leads to his glorification and the assumption of the glory of the cross in its fullness, his mediatorial glory, as well as the restoration to him, or the resumption to him, of the glory of the pre-incarnate state.

The second thing that results from the atonement, with reference to Jesus Christ, is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Turn over to the book of Acts, chapter 1 and verse 5. Acts chapter 1 and verse 5. In our Lord's post-resurrection ministry, he taught the disciples for 40 days. That was the greatest theological seminary that has ever existed upon the earth.

These weak, immature students of Holy Scripture and of the life of God became, as a result of this, knowledgeable apostles who could teach the Scripture with accuracy and with authority. You just cannot think of the Apostle Peter teaching, as he did in Acts chapter 2, without the 40 days of teaching ministry which our Lord engaged in, in his post-resurrection time on the earth. But we read in verse 5, for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

Now, of course, there is no incident recorded in the book of Acts which may qualify for being not many days hence, except the day of Pentecost. And since on that day, the Holy Spirit came, filling those who were there, and we saw, we see the expression and manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, we're very safe in the interpretation of the Scripture to say that it is on Pentecost that the promise of the Spirit has been realized. And that is confirmed by verse 33 of Acts chapter 2, when we read, this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses, therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.

In other words, as a result of the atoning ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is given to the Son, and in turn, the Son sheds forth as a pouring out, the ministry of the Spirit upon the true church. So the result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus is the gift of the Holy Spirit. We should never forget that.

I wish that we had time to go back to the Old Testament and point out that the gift or the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy according to the feasts of Jehovah. That was an event in the redemptive program of God. When the Lord Jesus ascended, he received from the Father as a result of his obedience of the cross and the atoning work, he received the gift of the Spirit, and then he in turn pours out the Spirit upon the waiting church.

So the gift of the Spirit is given as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus. If there had been no atoning work of Jesus Christ, there would be no activity of the Holy Spirit in the sense in which he is active today at all. And even the activities of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament period are the result of what was going to come to pass.

Just as forgiveness of sin in the Old Testament is accomplished on the basis of the atoning work that is to transpire, so all of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to men in the Old Testament is the result of the atonement that is to come. And all of the ministry of the Spirit in this age is the result of the ministry, is the result of our Lord's atonement and the gift of the Spirit consequent upon that atonement. Now the gift of the Spirit is primarily, according to Acts chapter 2 and other passages, primarily the gift of the Spirit is for the formation of the church of Jesus Christ.

We have not heard a thing in the book of Acts about church. And we do not hear a thing about church in the book of Acts until the coming of the Holy Spirit. Then in the fifth chapter, incidentally in the eleventh verse, for the first time in the book of Acts, we have the word church.

Now the authorized version is found in chapter 2, but the older manuscripts do not have the word church there. In Acts chapter 5 and verse 11, we read, in great fear came upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things. That's the first mention of the term church after our Lord's atoning ministry.

And it has come to pass because the Holy Spirit has come and has unified the church in his great baptizing ministry. That is expressed for us doctrinally in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 12 and 13, where Paul says, for as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit.

So as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit is given to our Lord. He pours out the Holy Spirit, sends forth the Spirit in the ministry of forming believers into the church of Jesus Christ. That occurred, the beginning of that ministry, on the day of Pentecost.

Well, as a result of the coming of the Holy Spirit, we have a third thing that happens. There are not only, there does not only come or come into existence the gift of the Spirit, but there also now exist in the Christian church gifts, plural, of the Spirit. Let me read in Ephesians chapter 4. You might turn there.

Ephesians chapter 4. Paul says in Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 7, Ephesians 4 and verse 7, but unto every one of us, every one of us believers, every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Now, every one of us has a grace gift, at least one. There is no reason why someone may not have two.

Someone may be a teacher as well as an evangelist, or pastor-teacher as well as evangelist. But every one of us has at least one spiritual gift. If you're a Christian, you have one.

It's very important, therefore, that you learn what your gift is, and also exercise that gift in the local church. He continues, Wherefore, he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts, plural, unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

And here are some of the gifts. And he gave apostles, gifted men, some prophets, other gifted men, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, in order that they may do the work of the ministry and the body be edified. I paraphrase the significance of that twelfth verse.

So as a result of the atoning work of Christ, then, our Lord is glorified. He gives the gift of the Spirit to form the body, the church. In addition, he pours out upon that body gifts, individual gifts, in order that the body may be perfected.

Now that perfection of the body does not transpire until the second coming of our Lord Jesus. That's what he means when he says, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That will take place when Jesus Christ comes and the program for the church is wound up.

So the church is not perfect today. That's no new knowledge for you, is it? And finally, in addition, the effect of atonement with reference to Christ means that it issues or leads to the gift of the messianic kingdom. The gift of the messianic kingdom.

The kingdom of our Lord, of which a great deal of the Bible is revelatory. That is, the Bible contains many, many passages in the Old Testament about the nature of this kingdom and sufficient references in the New to make it an assured teaching of Scripture. This kingdom is something that comes as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus.

Let's turn over to Ephesians chapter 2, verses 5 through 9. I think perhaps we can see the connection here. The writer of the Epistle says in the fifth verse of Hebrews chapter 2, For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come. Now the world to come is the inhabited world to come.

That is, the kingdom of God upon the earth. The mediatorial kingdom. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak.

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him, man, a little lower than the angels. Thou crownest him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. It's man who is put over God's creation.

Thou hast put all things in subjection unto his feet. For in that he put all in subjection unto him, he left nothing that is not put under him. So man's destiny is to be ruler over the earth.

He was originally ruler over the earth, but the fall took place, and he lost his dominion. Consequently, as we look out now, it's obvious man does not have control of things. He can't even control a little thing like inflation.

It's about to kill us. And it's beyond our control, it appears. The best minds in this country are not able to control a simple little thing like that.

We do not control this universe in which we live. There's, the author is a very knowledgeable man, that's why he says at the end of verse 8, But now we see not yet all things put unto him. The kingdom is not here yet.

But, he says, we have a pledge and a guarantee that it will ultimately be, man will ultimately again be crowned king over the creation. Because what we lost has been regained by the representative man, the

Lord Jesus. So he says in the 9th verse, But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, for atonement, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation, perfect through sufferings. So the author says, since the Son has come, and since the Son has accomplished atonement in the suffering of death, tasting death for men, therefore, by, as a result of his atoning work, he has regained for man, being the representative man, standing for all who are believers in him, he has regained for man dominion over the universe. Now he is seated at the right, he is, he is seated at the right hand of the Father right now, and he has the promise of the Old Testament from the Father, addressed to the Son, remember, Ask of me, Psalm 2, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

And I'm waiting with bated breath, because I'm waiting for the Son to say, I want it now. And that's when he shall come, and through his second advent shall establish his kingdom upon the earth, being given that kingdom as a result of the cross. Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations of the earth for thine inheritance.

Now this connection is made very plain in the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation, where there again, in a similar context, John, remember, seeing the book which has to do with the affairs of God and men upon the earth, seeing the book in the right hand of the one who sits upon the throne, seeing that no one can open the book, that is, no one has the right to come and to take over dominion over the earth, begins to weep. And he hears an angel say, Stop weeping, John. The Lamb, the Lamb of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book.

He has conquered by means of his death. And John sees a Lamb as it had been slain, atoning Lamb, you see, atonement. And he comes and takes the book out of the hand of him that sits upon the throne, and that is the occasion for all of the universe to break forth in praise to the Lamb and to the one who sits upon the throne, and dominion is given to the Lamb as well as to those who have been redeemed by him, who are made a kingdom and priests of God upon the earth, all related to atonement.

So, you see, atonement is a very, very important thing. It relates not only to the puny little event of your individual salvation, but it pertains to your salvation and the salvation of the whole church, the glorification of the Son of God, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the coming kingdom upon the earth. Now we come finally to the effect of the atonement with reference to the sinner.

Now, of course, this would be a course of study that could take us as long as we've been on the atonement. We surely could start talking tonight and we would not finish before next Monday night. And then we would have to say, I'm sorry, we have not covered the subject completely.

Just think of all the things that have happened as a result of Jesus Christ's death. There's an old story which I've told before in this series a long time ago. A good many of you weren't there, so I'll tell it again.

It's been told by every Dallas Seminary graduate of over twenty years ago. And I can remember Dr. Chafer telling the story. One summer, Dr. Chafer, after he had spent a very busy year, was offered a vacation home in Maine for the summer for a month.

And so Dr. Chafer determined that he was going to rest. And he and his wife went to Maine. They went to this friend's cottage.

He decided that in order that he might rest, he would take only the Bible. That was the only book that he took. Well, he said, when he arrived the first day, it began to rain.

It rained the second day. It rained the third day. It rained the fourth day.

It rained thirty straight days. He said that, I can remember him saying, that's the first time that I ever realized it could rain for thirty days and a flood like Noah's not come on the face of the earth. But it rained.

Well, he had nothing to do. He started to read his Bible. He started in the book of Matthew.

And while he was in the first chapter of the book of Matthew, he said, I think I ought to read with a purpose. So I will, I will seek as I read through the New Testament to see how many things have happened to the Christian as a result of his belief in Jesus Christ. How many things happen to a Christian as a result of his salvation? He began to count them up.

Oh, there were things like, he becomes a son of God. He becomes a child of God. The distinction in the two words.

He becomes a priest of God. He is justified. He is sanctified.

He shall be glorified. He is the recipient of adoption. He is reconciled, forgiven.

He began to count them up. When he finished the book of Revelation, he had counted thirty-three things that happen when we believe, happen to us when we believe in Jesus Christ. Well, he said, I ought to go back and do this again.

It was only about the tenth day and it was still raining. So he went back and he read through the New Testament again, checking again and again. He came to thirty-three things that happen to us the moment that we believed in Jesus Christ.

And then he went through one final time, just skimming through the third time, trying to ascertain that he had not overlooked anything. And then he used to teach us, there are thirty-three things that happen to you the moment you believe in Jesus Christ. And we had to memorize all thirty-three of them at Dallas Theological Seminary in our course in soteriology.

That was bound to be one of the questions. What thirty-three things happen to you the moment that you believed in Jesus Christ? And if you hear a Dallas Seminary man in those days, they don't do that anymore. But in those days he could just rattle off, you know, ten to twenty of those.

And it isn't because he was a great Bible student, it's because he had a good memory. And he could think of all of those things. Now I have a friend in Houston, he's a good friend, and he was a student of Dr. Chaffer's and he likes to be different.

And so he teaches that there are thirty-four things that happen to the believer the moment that he believes in Jesus Christ. And my good friend in Houston thinks that he has discovered one thing that Dr. Chaffer omitted in his treatment of the New Testament. Now, with all due respect to the sincerity and the earnestness of my good friend in Houston, I remember that Dr. Chaffer checked his three times.

And I don't know that he has checked his. And so I'm going to go with Dr. Chaffer. There are only thirty-three things that happen to us the moment that we believe in Jesus Christ.

Now don't be afraid, I'm not going to now preach thirty-three points in these last ten minutes. There is a famous philosopher by the name of Ockham. And Ockham is responsible for Ockham's razor, which in essence means that we should not multiply categories when it is unnecessary.

And I think Ockham's razor should be applied to both Dr. Chaffer and my friend in Houston. Because as a matter of fact, a lot of these things can be put in one category, and we can sum them all up in two or three categories rather than in thirty-three or thirty-four. Now I want to talk for just a moment about the certainty of the salvation of the elect, because this is what we're going to be talking about in the weeks that follow.

As far as the atonement and the sinner is concerned, one of the most significant things is the fact that as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus, the salvation of the elect has been rendered certain. Not only did the atonement make salvation possible for the sinner, it actually secured the salvation of sinners. Now I think that is evident from our passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 14 and verse 15, when considered in the light of verse 19.

There we read, remember, 2 Corinthians 5, verse 14 and 15, For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all died. In other words, if we have a substitutionary atonement, then that atonement is substitutionary. It does accomplish a substitution for some.

That if one died for all, then all not may die, if they believe, but then all died. And that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. And then in the 19th verse he says, To wit that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

Now of course, if you think the world means everybody without exception, and their trespasses have not been imputed to them, then you would have to say that all the world has been saved. For their trespasses are not imputed to them. Now if someone would say, Oh, but faith is a requirement, well then of course I simply ask, is unbelief a sin? Well now if unbelief is a sin, then it is one of the trespasses that is not imputed to men.

So we have here then, I think, a statement of the certainty of the salvation of the elect. Now that is evident also from Romans chapter 8 verses 29 and 30. I don't have time to look at them, but you know that great passage which says, Whom he hath foreknown, he hath foreordained to be like the Son, and whom he has foreordained he has called, and whom he has called he has justified, and whom he has justified he has glorified.

In other words, it is so certain that those who are foreordained shall be glorified, that he can speak of the glorification in the past tense. So that redemption is made certain by the atoning work of the Lord Jesus. There is no question about it.

The elect shall come into the presence of God. But then secondly, we have the ancillary benefits, and I'm just only going to refer to these for our time is really up. The ancillary benefits are, now I want to, as I say, keep from multiplying categories, apply Occam's razor to them, and so I'm grouping them under three categories.

I just didn't have time to put them on this transparency. But they are, first, a judicial standing. That, of course, means that we have a standing before God in law by which we are redeemed, forgiven, justified, adopted his Son, and the other blessings that are of that character.

And second, we have a mystical union with Jesus Christ. Second Corinthians 5:21 states that, for he hath made him to be sin who knew no sin, oh, sorry, for he hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And of course, all of the New Testament that teaches the union of the believer with Christ expresses the mystical union that is ours as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus.

In other words, the work begun in regeneration continues in sanctification through the gradual mortification of the old man, the mortification of the old man, the putting on of the new man, till ultimately we come into the presence of God glorified. This is part of the work of atonement. By the way, there are people who say that if you talk about the atonement of the Lord Jesus as a judicial relationship before God, only that is that we are declared righteous as a result of what Christ did, then you have no provision for a life in sanctification or holiness by that kind of doctrine.

Now this doctrine of union with Christ by which the representative stands for us enables us to nullify that kind of objection. For the atonement which gives us a righteous standing before God also makes it possible for us to be united to the Son of God and subject to the ministry of the indwelling Spirit by which he imparts to us the practical righteousness which ultimately is completed when our Lord comes and we meet him in the air. And finally, as the third and final benefit of the work of atonement, we have the glorification of the saints and eternal bliss in the new creation.

That is all given for us in Revelation chapter twenty-one, for example, in verse three, and Revelation chapter twenty-two, verses three through five. We don't have time to talk about them. So next Wednesday, the Lord willing, I have to go to Canada over this weekend, and not telling what will happen to an American that comes to Canada these days, because Canada has great nationalistic spirit these days, and if I don't come back on Tuesday, please send someone up looking for me, particularly Bill McRae.

I think he would have influence with the Canadian government and be able to get me out of any difficulties that I may have. Do you think so, Ms. McRae? Anyway, next Wednesday night we want to consider the subject, begin to consider the subject of the extent of the atonement. A very difficult subject, one upon which I have many questions, about which I have many questions, but I think that we, if we all study it, I believe that we shall all profit from it.

We will be four, five, six weeks considering that very difficult topic. It really isn't that important, but it is that difficult, so we'll try to handle it then. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, we are grateful to thee for the privilege of the study of the scriptures, except our thanks for our Lord Jesus and the atoning work. Truly great and marvelous things have come out of the blood that was shed. We give thee praise and thanksgiving in his name.

Amen.

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