

The Doctrines of Grace

Ephesians 1:3-10

Ephesians 1:3-10 (NASB)

³ “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,
⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.
⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight
⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him
¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him”

These are the so-called Five Points of Calvinism.

These are sometimes set forth in the form of an acrostic on the word “TULIP”, as follows:

T Total Depravity (i.e. Total Inability)

U Unconditional Election

L Limited Atonement (i.e. Particular Redemption)

I Irresistible Calling

P Perseverance of the Saints

3. LIMITED ATONEMENT

Ephesians 1:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.”

This third point not only brings us to the central point of the five, but also to the central fact of the gospel, that is, the purpose of Christ’s death on the Cross. This is not accidental.

The theologians who had set themselves the task of defending the truths of the Protestant Reformation against the attacks of the Arminian party were following a Biblical and logical line in their formulations and had now arrived at the very pivot of salvation.

First of all, they had asked, “Who is to be saved?” The answer was “Man.” But the Bible’s teaching with regard to man showed that man, in his natural state, is totally unable to save himself. Thus, we have the teaching of the Bible on man set under the general heading of total depravity, or total inability.

Secondly, as some men and women *are* undoubtedly saved, then it must have been God Himself who had saved them in contra-distinction to the rest of mankind. This is election: “That the purpose of God according to election might stand . . .” ([Romans 9:11](#)).

Romans 9:11 (NASB)

¹¹ for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God’s purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls,

Romans 9:11 (KJV)

¹¹ (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

However, this election only “marked the house to which salvation should travel,” as *Spurgeon* puts it, and a full and perfect and satisfactory *atonement* was still required for the sins of the elect, so that God might be, not only a Savior, but “a just God, and a Savior.” This atonement, as we all acknowledge, was accomplished through Christ’s voluntary submission to the death on the Cross where He suffered under the justice of this just God, and procured the salvation that he as Savior had ordained.

Dr. Wayne Grudem says, “The atonement is the work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.”

On the Cross, then — and, no doubt, we all accept this — Christ *bore* punishment, and *procured* salvation. The question now arises: *whose* punishment did He bear, and *whose* salvation did He procure? There are three avenues along which we can travel with regard to this:

1. Christ died to *save all men* without distinction.
2. Christ died to *save no one in particular*.
3. Christ died to *save a certain number*.

The first view is that held by “Universalists,” namely, Christ died to save *all* men, and so, they very logically assume, *all* men will be saved. If Christ has paid the debt of sin, has saved, ransomed, given His life for *all* men, then *all* men will be saved.

The second view is the “Arminian” one, that Christ procured a *potential* salvation for *all* men. Christ died on the Cross, this view says, but although He paid the debt of our sin, His work on the Cross does not become effectual until man “**decides for**” Christ and is thereby saved.

The **third view** of the Atonement is the “**Calvinistic**” one, and it says that Christ died *positively* and *effectually* to save a certain number of hell-deserving sinners on whom the Father had already set His free electing love. The Son pays the debt for these elect ones, makes satisfaction for them to the Father’s justice, and imputes His own righteousness to them so that they are complete in Him. Christ’s death, then, could only have been for **one** of these **three reasons**:

- 1) to save *all*;
- 2) to save no one *in particular*;
- 3) to save *a particular number*.

The third view is that which is held by the **Calvinist** and is generally called **limited atonement**, or **particular redemption**. Christ died to save a *particular number* of sinners; that is, those “**chosen in him before the foundation of the world**” ([Ephesians 1:4](#));

[Ephesians 1:4 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴ “**just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love.**”

Those whom the Father had “**given him out of the world**” ([John 17:9](#));

[John 17:9 \(NASB\)](#)

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.**”

Those for whom He Himself said He shed His blood: “**for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins**” ([Matthew 26:28](#)).

[Matthew 26:28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁸ “**For this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.**”

This last view, we claim, does justice to the *purpose* of Christ’s coming to this earth to die on the Cross. “**Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.**”

[Acts 2:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ “**AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**”

[Romans 10:13 \(NASB\)](#)

¹³ “**For “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**”

Not the Jews, surely, for the Jews are not saved as a people. Jesus “**loved the church, and gave himself for it**” ([Ephesians 5:25](#)).

[Ephesians 5:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵ “**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.**”

“He was delivered for *our* offences, and raised again for *our* justification” ([Romans 4:25 KJV](#)).

[Romans 4:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵“*He* who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.”

Whom does the Holy Spirit mean when He says, “*Our*”? The world? If so, then the Universalist is right, for Christ was, then, “delivered for [the world’s] offences and raised again for [the world’s] justification”, so the world is *justified* before God.

[Romans 4:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵“*He* who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.”

“As in Adam *all* die, so in Christ shall *all* be made alive” ([1 Corinthians 15:22 KJV](#)).

[1 Corinthians 15:22 \(NASB\)](#)

²²“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”

This again can only mean that *all* of Adam’s posterity die in Adam, as indeed they do, for “**death has passed upon all men**”; but *all* of Christ’s posterity — the Church that He gave Himself for — are made alive in Him. Why is this? Surely, it is because He gave Himself *for them*! “**By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities**” ([Isaiah 53:11](#)).

[Isaiah 53:11 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹“As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; **By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.**”

And when He accomplishes this as He hangs upon the Cross, says the prophet Isaiah in that great [chapter 53](#) of his prophecy, He sees “**the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied.**”

[Isaiah 53:11 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹“As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; **By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.**”

The anguish of His soul as He pours out His soul an offering for our sin shall bear spiritual children to the praise of His name, and He shall be satisfied when He sees this work accomplished.

We do not overlook the fact that there are some Scriptures which refer to the “**world**”, and many have taken these as their starting point in the question of Redemption. However, when we compare scripture with scripture, we see that the use of the word “**world**” need not imply “**every man and woman in the world.**” “**Look, the world has gone after Him,**” they said of Jesus; every person, however, had not “**gone after**” Christ.

John 12:19 (NASB)

¹⁹“So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him.”

The expression means “**every kind of person**” — and normally Gentile as well as Jew. The over-riding question must always be the Divine intention; did God *intend* to save all men, or did He not?