

Session 7

Chapter 6 Redemption (Part B)

B. God's righteous requirement satisfied

The most important aspect of the Lamb that was slain is that through it an adequate atonement for sin was made that satisfied the righteous requirements of a holy God.

1. The idea of satisfying God's righteous standard derives mainly from apostle Paul.

“God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished” (Rom. 3:25 NASB).

“God . . . sen[t] his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us (Rom. 8:3^b-4^a).

2. What is God's righteous requirement?

- a. The Greek verb *hilaskōmai* literally means, “to placate” as in averting wrath.

In English, the word “atonement” means amends or reparation made for an injury or wrong.

- b. The animals used in the Passover sacrifice, whose shed blood averted coming God's wrath, were unblemished lambs.

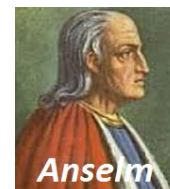
The apostles Peter, Paul and John, then, projected that imagery unto Christ, making him “a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Pet. 1:19^b), whose “precious blood” (1 Pet. 1:19^a) “save[s sinners] “from God's wrath” (Rom. 5:9).

1 Thess. 5:9: “For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Rom. 5:9: “Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him.”

3. This view of atonement runs parallel to the medieval theologian Anselm's satisfaction theory.

- a. He stated: “Sin runs up a debt with God which humans can never themselves repay. But Christ's death was of such worth that it satisfied God's offended majesty and earned a reward. Hence the



Father gives humanity salvation on account of the merits of Christ.”¹

- b. To the question of why the punishment was necessary, Anselm responded:
 “It is not enough simply to restore what has been taken away.
 (Your child was told not to throw the ball inside the house; he did and as a result a vase was broken. It is not enough that he glues it back);

but, in consideration of the insult offered, more than what was taken away must be rendered back.”²

- c. Then, he considered the opposite case of leaving the sin unpunished.

(1)“Let us consider whether God could properly [cancel] sin by mercy alone without satisfaction. So to [cancel] sin would be simply to abstain from punishing it. And since only possible way of correcting sin, for which no satisfaction has been made, is to punish; not to punish it, is to [cancel] it uncorrected.”³



(2)“To [cancel] unpunished sin would be treating the sinful and the sinless alike which would be incongruous to God’s nature.”⁴

In modern churches where sin is treated as a disease or a by-product of bad environment, and Jesus portrayed as a personal trainer whose job is to empower us to get the most out of life, this is indeed a sobering thought.

C. What transpired on the cross?

1. By dying on the cross and later resurrecting, Jesus destroyed the devil’s rap sheet (written code) and disarmed him, meaning, the devil doesn’t have the legal right to harass us anymore with his accusations.



Col. 1:13-15: When you’re dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took

it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

What we owed the devil, namely death, Jesus paid in full on our behalf.

¹ Colin Brown in Dowley, p. 276

² Ibid.

³ Bettenson, ed., p. 138

⁴ Ibid.

2. The communion service, which Jesus instituted to be celebrated by the believers, clearly captures what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

1 Cor. 11:23-6: For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

- a. What the broken bread represents
(i.e., the torn curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place)

It represents the broken body of Jesus that took the punishment for our sins by being “pierced for our transgressions” and “crushed for our iniquities” (Is. 53:5).



- b. The shed blood of Christ (that took away sins) represents God’s permanent forgiveness of sins and his willingness to forget about it.

Heb. 10:16^a, 17: “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. . . . ¹⁷ Then he adds: ‘Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.’”

Discussion¹: Since God is sovereign, He didn’t have to have His Son die to redeem us; there are other ways. So, what is revealed by the fact that God chose the most difficult “method” to redeem us? How does that affect love for Him?

VI. The Final Result of Redemption

In short, it is eternal life. Paul says,



“What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:21-3).

A. Two requirements for the redemption from the wages of sin

1. Obviously, faith is required in order to place trust in what Jesus did: “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).
2. Along with faith, repentance is also needed.

The apostle Paul, standing before his accusers, summarized his years as an itinerant evangelist in the following manner: “I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds” (Acts 26:20).

Repentance is the effect of having understood what Jesus did (dying for our sins so that we are not consumed by God’s wrath): a decision to turn from sin.

- a. Some advocate that repentance is a change of opinion about who Christ is (i.e., the Son of God), which is already included in believing; it doesn’t include contrition over sins and turning from them.
- b. On the contrary, others teach as if they expect the obedient life to manifest in its fullest measure from the outset of the Christian life.

Its leading advocate John MacArthur once said,
“Faith is not complete unless it is obedient.”

3. The position presented in this study is different from these.
 - a. Upon placing faith in the work and person of Christ, and as the Holy Spirit regenerates that person at the same time, there ought to be an inward repentance consisting of contrition over sins and a desire, intent, and will to turn from sin.
 - b. The actual changes in behavior and how quickly these changes may occur, are largely dependent on the degree to which the believers cooperate with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

This will be fully addressed in later chapters.

B. The logical order of salvation (all happening simultaneously)

In light of our study on regeneration, justification and redemption, the logical order of salvation is as follows:

1. Regeneration=New Birth=Born-Again.
2. Recognition of one’s sinfulness and sins.
 - a. → Which leads to contrition (“I am sorry for my sins.”)

(1) Peter said before Jesus:

“Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” (Lk. 5:8^b).

(2) Isaiah said before God: “Woe to me. . . I am ruined!

For I am a man of unclean lips” (Is. 6:5).



b. → Which then leads to repentance (turning from sin)

(1) Inward: this refers to having the desire, intent, will and attitude to turn from sin.

(2) Outward: this does not necessarily mean that this person will turn from all his actual sins right away.

c. Having been made alive by God, sinners are now able to recognize the following:

(1) They are “a prisoner of sin” (Gal. 3:22).

(2) They are unable to rescue themselves.



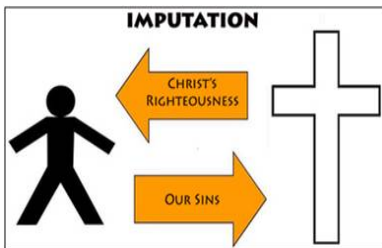
3. Reception of faith.

Once made alive and having repented, they now receive the gift of faith, which enables them to look outside of themselves to Christ and His work as the only hope and strength.

Eph. 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

4. Imputation of God’s righteousness.

God imputes His righteousness on those who have appropriated the faith on account of Christ’ finished work, as if they have never sinned.



Rom. 5:19: “For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”

2 Cor. 5:21: “He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

5. Justification.

A judicial act in which God the judge officially pronounces the sinners to be righteous. This official acquittal means that the devil no longer has any legal claims on us.

Rom. 5:1^a: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, . . .”

Rom. 8:1: “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

John 8:36: “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”

Discussion²: In the Western church, justification is understood in a legal sense: Not guilty! But in the Orthodox church, justification is understood as the restoration of the lost image or likeness of God, which occurred at the fall. Does that change your view of justification? What does it mean that in Christ our original likeness to God (James 3:9b) has been recovered (1 Pet. 1:15; 2 Pet. 1:4)?

Homework

Read over the material covered in the last class and the additional Bible reading (if any). If you have any questions, please note them here and ask me later.

3. What is atonement? Why was that necessary for God to accept sinners?
4. What is the main difference between the ransom theory and the theory of satisfaction of God’s righteous requirement?

Answer:

- a. The ransom theory posits that through sin mankind became subject to the devil; the mark of this subjection was death. God in his grace wished to free men, but he was unable to because the devil’s claim was just.”
- b. “Consequently, to neutralize Satan’s claim a ransom had to be paid in the form of a valuable person over whom Satan had no right—a sinless man. Thus, the devil was tricked when Christ was crucified, because the Son of God was sinless; now God can with justice save whomsoever he please.
- c. But we shouldn’t think that the devil forced Jesus to do this; according to Jn, 10:17-8, no one takes away life away from Jesus, but he lays it down of his own accord.
- d. The righteous requirement of God is placating his anger toward sin. For to satisfy his anger, the sin cannot be properly cancelled unless punishment for sin has been carried out. To cancel unpunished sin would be treating the sinful and the sinless alike which wouldn’t reflect God’s nature.

Chapter 6 Predestination (Part A)

Predestination means that eternal destination of people is already decided by God even before

they are born into the world; what determines the predestination is God's election. The real conflict boils down to the basis behind God's election: God's eternal decree or God's foreknowledge.

I. The Two Conflicting Positions regarding Predestination

A. French theologian John Calvin's (1509-64) view on predestination and election

1. The sinners' response of faith and repentance were the result of God's prior electing grace; that is, God predisposed their wills to respond to His call.
 - a. Salvation, therefore, is a matter of divine election apart from human merit or divine knowledge; it was decided before anything humans did or did not do.
 - b. In this way, election is based on the sovereign will of God.
That is, he didn't choose to believe; rather, he predetermined to do so.
 - c. Some Calvinists uphold a dual predestination of some to salvation and others to condemnation.
2. Supporting passages for the unconditional election of Calvinism:



Eph. 1:4-5: "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—."

Rom. 9:6-7, 14-5: "It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'"

... What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all!

For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.'"

John 6:65, 37: "[Jesus] went on to say, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him . . . All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.'"

2 Tim 1:9: "God . . . has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time."

3. There are several problems, real or imagined, with this view:

- a. God's election seems quite arbitrary
- b. It impairs human free will.
- c. No verse in the Scripture states that God makes some people incapable of believing, on account that they are not elected for salvation.

B. A counter view proposed by Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609)



This Dutch theologian broke away from Calvinism because he felt that predestination (inferring that the unelected be damned to hell) made God the author of sin; regardless, he rejected neither predestination nor election.

1. The basis of election.

“Though he did not deny election he based it not on a divine arbitrary decree, but upon God's foreknowledge of man's merit.”

- a. In Calvinism, God's electing grace is based on his unilateral decree (Eph. 1:11) that prompts a response of faith among the chosen and their turning to God;

1 Peter 1:2, however, seems to back Arminius' view: “To God's elect . . . who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God.”

(1)The word “foreknowledge” derives from a compound Greek word of *pro* (in front of) and *gnosis* (knowledge).

(2)Its implication:

God, “foreseeing [men's] potential faith and the fact that they would turn to Him when they heard the gospel,” sealed their response with election.”⁵

- b. Despite this difference, those who categorically accuse Arminianism of humanism should know how similar Calvinism and Arminianism are, at least at the outset. In fact, it was Arminius who made the following statement:

“That God, by an eternal and unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his son, before the foundation of the world were laid, determined to save, out of the human race which had fallen into sin, in Christ, for Christ's sake and through Christ, those who through the grace of the Holy Spirit shall believe on the same his Son. . . .”⁶

2. Supporting passages for Arminianism.

Acts 13:39: “Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.”

⁵ T. C. Hammond, *In Understand Be Men*. 6th rev. ed., (London: IVP: 1968), p. 88.

⁶ Bettenson, p. 268

John 6:40: “For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I’ll raise him up at the last day.

2 Pet. 3:9: “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Tit. 2:11: “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.”

1 Tim. 4:10^b: “We trust in the living God, who is the savior of all men, especially of those who believe.”

3. This view also has some problems, real or imagined.
 - a. Salvation seems to be a result of human decision.
 - b. Difficult to see why the term “election” is used since God merely seals what humans have decided.

Discussion³: How do you personally feel about this issue that has often resulted in heated discussions between passionate Calvinists and Arminians? What would Jesus, who prayed that “all of them may be one” and “be brought to complete unity” (Jn. 17:21, 23), say to them?

Homework 7

Read over the material covered in the last class and the additional Bible reading (if any). If you have any questions, please note them here and ask me later.

1. Define “unconditional election” and “predestination” according to Calvinism. Provide at least two supporting verses for this position.
2. What is God’s foreknowledge and how do Arminians use it to back up their understanding of God’s election?