

CALVINISM AND LIMITED ATONEMENT

ISAIAH 53:6; HEBREWS 2:9 AND OTHERS

Text: Isaiah 53:6; Hebrews 2:9

Isaiah 53:6

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Introduction:

Of the five points of Calvin's philosophy, (and I call it "philosophy" instead of "theology" because in this particular point, it is 100% contrary to the revealed will of God as given to us in the Bible, therefore, it cannot properly be called "theology") the weakest link is his so-called false teaching on the "LIMITED ATONEMENT," or the "L" of the T.U.L.I.P. acronym of Calvinism.

It is interesting to me that this point is the center of this deadly flower.

We will consider the Basic Definition, Blatant Distortion, and the Biblical Dispute, of Limited Atonement.

1. BASIC DEFINITION OF LIMITED ATONEMENT

By “Limited Atonement” we refer to the belief which states that Christ did not die for “all or everyone” but rather died only for the elect.

While it is true that only the saved benefit from Christ’s death on the cross, Christ died for all people.

1 John 2:1-2

¹ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

In light of this definition we must now consider the:

2. BLATANT DISTORTION

Some of the verses that Calvinists use to arrive at their position regarding atonement are:

- Isaiah 53:8

Isaiah 53:8

⁸ *He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

This verse is used by Calvinists to support the doctrine that Christ died only for the elect, but the “people” for whom he was stricken, according to this verse, is the people of Israel and we know that not all of the Israelites will be saved.

Further, even if the “my people” of Isa. 53:8 referred to the “elect,” it would not follow that Christ died ONLY for the elect. That would be reading something into the verse that is not there. That would also contradict the teaching of many plain Scriptures, such as Isaiah 53:6.

Isaiah 53:6

⁶ *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Another verse that Calvinist use as an attempt to prove their belief of “Limited Atonement” is:

- Matthew 1:21

Matthew 1:21

²¹ *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

This verse does not refer to the question of whether Jesus died to make it possible for all men to be saved. The people referred to in this verse are the Jews. Jesus will indeed save the Jews from their sins, but we also know that not all Jews will be saved. But even if “his people” in this verse refers to “the elect,” that does not mean that Christ died ONLY for the elect.

Note also:

- Matthew 20:28

Matthew 20:28

²⁸ *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

That Jesus gave His life a ransom for many does not mean that He gave His life a ransom only for the elect. This contradicts other scriptures (1 Timothy 2:6, and 1

John 2:2) and we will look at these in more detail later on.

Note also:

- John 10:11

John 10:11

¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Again, that Jesus gave His life for the sheep is not to say that He did not also give His life to make it possible for all men to be saved.

Note also:

Acts 20:28

Acts 20:28

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Again, that God purchased the church with his own blood is not to say that the atonement was limited to those who would be saved. The Calvinist Limited Atonement doctrine must be read into these verses.

Also note:

- John 11:49-52

John 11:49-52

⁴⁹ And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. ⁵¹ And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; ⁵² And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

But John 11:49-52 says nothing about the extent of Christ's atonement. To say that Jesus died for those who will be saved is not to say that He died ONLY for those who would be saved.

As we have seen, the verses that are used to support the philosophy of "Limited Atonement" really have nothing to do with nor do they prove the philosophy to true but rather a distortion.

Notice finally:

3. BIBLICAL DISPUTE

The best way of refuting the false view of "LIMITED ATONEMENT" is by using the Word of God and the

verses that clearly teach “Unlimited Atonement” and not “Limited Atonement.”

Obviously, the Bible cannot teach both an "UNLIMITED ATONEMENT" and at the same time "LIMITED ATONEMENT."

Only one is correct, and the other must be incorrect, since these two systems of belief are contradictory the one to another.

Note:

- Isaiah 53:5-6

Isaiah 53:5-6

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

This section of the book of Isaiah is a reference to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is teaching clearly concerning the Lord's death for sinners on Calvary's cross.

Notice the eight pronouns.

There are some who take these eight pronouns to refer to the Jews only, so that the sacrifice of Christ is only of merit for Jews to whom Isaiah is writing.

It is obvious to all that since Isaiah was a Jew, and the people to whom he was writing were Jews, it is POSSIBLE to think that Isaiah was writing exclusively as a Jew to fellow-Jews. But this would contradict the other teachings of the Bible relating to the death of Christ on the Cross.

But interpreting scripture with scripture there is no way that Isaiah was speaking only to the Jewish people.

Others say that these pronouns refer to the "Elect" only of the Old and New Testament.

If that were true the verse would read like this:

Isaiah 53:5-6 PARAPHRASED FALSELY: *"But Christ was wounded only for the benefit of the elect's transgressions, He was bruised only for the elect's iniquities: the chastisement of the elect's peace only was upon Him; and with His stripes only we elect are healed. Only all we elect ones like sheep have gone astray; only we elect have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of only the elect."* (**Isaiah 53:5-6 PARAPHRASED FALSELY**).

This is an unsatisfactory interpretation. Though Isaiah was an Old Testament believer, it does not fit the entire context of the Bible in reference to Christ's atonement at Calvary to have him limit these eight pronouns to the elect.

The correct interpretation of these words from Isaiah 53:5-6.

Isaiah was not only a JEW, and a BELIEVER, but he was also a MEMBER OF THE HUMAN RACE.

The eight pronouns and the two "all's" in Isaiah 53:5-6 refer to ALL MANKIND without a single exception of any kind.

There are many occasions including this that Isaiah referred to "All Mankind" as human beings

- Isaiah 52:14

Isaiah 52:14

¹⁴ As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

He was referring to ALL MANKIND, and to "ANY MAN" as a representative of the human race.

- Isaiah 52:14

Isaiah 52:14

¹⁴ As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

This reference to the "SONS OF MEN" applies to ALL MANKIND and every one in the human race - not just to the Jew or to the elect alone.

- Isaiah 52:15

Isaiah 52:15

¹⁵ So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Again, the reference is too many of the unsaved nations, not Jews and not the elect.

- Isaiah 53:3

Isaiah 53:3

³ He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Again the reference is to ALL MANKIND, and to human beings as a whole, and not only to the Jews or to the elect.

- Isaiah 53:6

Isaiah 53:6

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

This is a universal reference to all men or to every human being in the human race – male, female, young, and old; Jew or Gentile and of all ages.

Other references that refute the belief of “Limited Atonement” include:

Matthew 11:28

²⁸Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

John 1:29

²⁹The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Romans 5:6

⁶For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁹To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world

unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

1 Timothy 2:5-6

⁵ *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; ⁶ Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

2 Peter 2:1

¹ *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

1 John 4:14

¹⁴ *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*

1 John 2:2

² *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

John 3:16-17

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 1:12

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

John 3:36

³⁶ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 5:24

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:35

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

John 6:47

⁴⁷ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

John 7:37

³⁷ *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.*

John 8:24

²⁴ *I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*

John 10:9

⁹ *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

John 11:25-26

²⁵ *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. *Believest thou this?**

Close:

"UNLIMITED ATONEMENT" Is Clearly Taught In The Bible.

Since the doctrine of "UNLIMITED ATONEMENT" is so clearly taught in the Bible, no one should be ashamed to believe in it as a teaching.

There should be no sense of shame or offense in believing this doctrine.

Is Not A Doctrine That Makes No Difference.

The "UNLIMITED ATONEMENT" of Christ on the cross is VITAL doctrine! It DOES make a lot of difference. Those who reject "UNLIMITED ATONEMENT" in favor of "LIMITED ATONEMENT" cannot ever say in a public meeting to the sinners in their audience, The Lord Jesus Christ died for your sins on the Cross, and all that you have to do is to "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST" and you'll be saved and given eternal life.

It's would be a sad thing if would couldn't state with certainty to those we come in contact with that Christ died for them.

Limited Atonement is the most important error in Calvinism.

May we may ever grateful that Christ died not only for us but for everyone, and everywhere.