

The Sufficiency of the Atonement

This work then, opens the door for our relationship with God to be restored! Because of this wonderful redemption paid by Christ, God is no longer alienated from us. ***This is to say that the atonement brings about “reconciliation” between us and God.*** By taking away sin, God has removed the ground of alienation between us and Him, and thereby restored our relationship to Him. This work was initiated by God who reconciled us to Himself (2 Cor 5:18).

Romans 5:8-11 - 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**. 9 Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be **saved from the wrath of God** through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies, **we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but **we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation**. NASB

We see then, that all these things that have been accomplished by God through Christ in the atonement, have reconciled God to us and us to God, and our relationship has been restored.

Colossians 1:21-22 - 22 But now **he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight**, without blemish and free from accusation- NASB

Through Jesus' redemptive death upon the Cross, we have been *fully* reconciled to God. This is because Jesus *fully* met the demands of God's righteousness in the Law for our sins, having paid the penalty the Law demanded for sins, but also having earned a positive righteousness before God by His perfect obedience to the perceptive requirements of the Law. John Murray comments on this.... *“Christ as the vicar of His people came under the curse and condemnation due to sin and He also fulfilled the law of God in all its positive requirements. In other words, He took care of the guilt of sin and perfectly fulfilled the demands of righteousness. He perfectly met both the penal and the perceptive requirements of God's law.”* Therefore the demands of the Law have been fully met in Christ, and this is the ground of our reconciliation to God. ***In legal terms, the Bible describes us having been justified before God.*** Justification is the act of God declaring us righteous now based on the merits of Christ through faith in Him. This means that we have a *foreign* righteousness that is *“not our own,”* but is ours by faith in Christ.

Philippians 3:9-10 - 9 and may be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own** derived from the Law, but that **which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith**, NASB

Romans 3:21-24 - 21 But now apart from the Law **the righteousness of God** has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a **gift by His grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; NASB

This is good news. This life and death of Christ is so complete before God that it not only meets the legal demands of God's Law, but ***even cleanses and washes away the defilement of our sins so as to purify us before God's spotless holiness so that we are fully sanctified.***

Hebrews 10:14 - 14 For **by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified**. NASB

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 - 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, **who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption**, 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." NASB

This ***“justification”*** and ***“sanctification”*** before God is so complete that it has removed any and all condemnation of God from us so that we are set free the tyranny of the Law's demands, which a sinner can never meet.

Romans 8:1-2 - 8:1 There is **therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. NASB

Jesus then, is the consummation of God's Law for us, and we now rest in freedom from its demands. We now have perfect freedom to obey the Law because, if and when we fail, Christ is our righteousness, and we can be resolved once again to obey it, without having the penalty of death inflicted upon us. Every moment is new for the Christian!

Romans 10:4 - 4 For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes**. NASB

We must conclude then from these things that Jesus life and death are sufficient to redeem us from sin and reconcile us to God. And that this reconciliation is final, complete and eternal, so that nothing more is required to be justified or sanctified before God.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 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, that no one should boast.** NASB

Romans 3:27-28 - 27 Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. 28 For **we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.** NASB

It is therefore imperative to recognize the many false distortions of the Gospel which call people to some further obedience required than that of simple faith in Christ. It is Christ in whom we have believed, and He Himself is our righteousness before God, and we have received Him by simple faith.

John 6:28-29 - 28 They said therefore to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.**" NASB

There are no works that we can perform that somehow merit Christ for us, rather if we look beyond Christ to find merit before God, we forfeit Christ and this is the *ultimate* offense to God.

Galatians 5:1-4 - It was **for freedom that Christ set us free**; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, **Christ will be of no benefit to you.** 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 **You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law**; you have fallen from grace. NASB

This was the tragic mistake of Israel which ultimately brought the judgment of God upon them.

Romans 9:31-10:4 - 31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law. 32 Why? **Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works.** They stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For **not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own**, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** NASB

We do not seek to be justified before God by the works of the Law, but rather because we have been justified by Christ, we now live by faith in Him, continually looking to His life and death on the Cross as our righteousness before God.

Galatians 2:20-21 - 20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and **the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. 21 "I do not nullify the grace of God; **for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.**" NASB

John 3:14-15 - 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must **the Son of Man be lifted up**; 15 **that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.** NASB

The Law then is a display of what Christ's life looks like in practice, so that we learn how to walk in His Spirit and fulfill the righteousness of the Law toward God and other people.

Obedience to Law is something we greatly desire, as a result of being justified by God through Christ, because we are motivated by gratitude for what he has done and a desire to honor Him with our life. But it is not, and never will be the grounds of our justification and sanctification before God. We have become recipients of the love and mercy of God *in spite* of our life of sin and disobedience.

Titus 3:4-7 - 4 But when **the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy,** by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that **being justified by His grace** we might be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life. NASB

We have been released from our sins by the blood of Jesus the Christ, because of His love.

Revelation 1:5 - 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. **To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood,** NASB