Definite Atonement

A Brief Commentary

By

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Definite Atonement

*Romans 9:15-23 For he saith to Moses,* ***I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*** *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* ***Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*** *What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,*

Perhaps one of the most disputed teachings in the Bible is this doctrine of “Definite Atonement,” also referred to as Limited Atonement or Particular Redemption. Those who assent to this doctrine are often called “Hyper Calvinists.” However, as a friend of mine once said . “I find that anyone who is more Calvinistic than you are is usually considered a Hyper Calvinist, and anyone who is less Calvinistic is considered an Armenian”

This teaching of definite atonement is hated by many because they want to have complete control of their own lives rather than for God to have control. We should not look to man for the answers in such cases, but look to the Scriptures. We must remember that we were all deserving of hell and destined for it, completely helpless in ourselves to do anything about it and not even aware or concerned about our hopeless condition.

I consider Definite Atonement a very real blessing because if God The Holy Spirit had not intervened in our totally depraved condition we would all be helplessly and eternally lost.

First let us ask the question, does God have the right to make decisions concerning our lives, or to choose whom He will for salvation? *“Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”*

*1Corinthians 6:19,20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,* ***and ye are not your own?*** *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit,* ***which are God's****.*

If therefore, we belong to God, because He purchased our salvation, that should be convincing enough to realize that He has that right.

Let us look at our spiritual condition, before salvation. We find we were responsible for our sin, yet unwilling and unable to do

anything about it.

*Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world,* ***and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned***:

*Romans 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,* ***hath abounded unto many.***

We were unable to do anything to help ourselves, because of that sin we were dead before God.

*Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were* ***dead in trespasses and sins;***

If we were “dead,” deserving of hell, spiritually dead., we could do nothing to help ourselves. Yet in our “spiritually dead condition” God “quickened” us, made us alive.

Some say all men have a little light, and all we have to do is fan that light and we can come to know our condition and get saved. There is nothing in scripture to back up such an argument.

Those same people say man has to take the first step before the Holy Spirit can act. If man could take the first step, he could take the second, third etc. Here again they have no scripture to back up such a conclusion. Actually man cannot nor will not do anything to help improve his condition because until the Holy Spirit convicts him of his sinful condition he has no desire or ability to change.

Even though man is dead in sin, unable to realize his condition, or to believe unto salvation, it is not impossible for God to bring us to the realization of our sin, and continue His work unto our salvation.

*Luke 18:25-27 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved? And he said,* ***The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.***

*Matthew 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them,* ***With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.***

As a result of our sinful condition, with men it is impossible to do anything about it, but when the Holy Spirit brings conviction upon us, we are given the ability to believe unto salvation.

*1Corinthians 2:14* ***But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God****: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

*John 3:36 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.*

*Mark 9:23,24 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe,* ***all things are possible to him that believeth.*** *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe;* ***help thou mine unbelief.***

All men are sinners, does God then give all men the same opportunity for salvation?

*John 10:26 But ye believe not, because* ***ye are not of my sheep****, as I said unto you.*

*John 12:39.40* ***Therefore they could not believe****, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.*

*Romans 11:7 What then?* ***Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for****; but the election hath obtained it,* ***and the rest were blinded***

*John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept,* ***and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition****; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

Most of us have been brought up in a time when we were taught that we must give everyone the same opportunity, however, let us remember that is a man made rule. God as creator, has the right to do as He so chooses.

*John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day*.

Can we say then that God is unjust?

*Romans 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* ***Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?***

God does not choose manfor salvationbecause He has found some good in man, for the scriptures teach that there is no good in us.

*Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and* ***all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags****; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away*.

The only righteousness we have is that which God has imputed to us who are trusting Christ for our salvation.

The Apostle Paul speaking concerning Abraham to the Church at Rome said the following:

*Romans 4:19-24 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.* ***Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;***

It is God The Father, God The Son, and God The Holy Spirit all working together to bring life to a sinfully dead soul, who can do nothing for himself, and who is otherwise destined to hell. Then God imputes to that awakened soul His own righteousness, making that person acceptable into God’s Heavenly Kingdom.

So we must conclude that even though we were spiritually dead, God by His own choosing can bring life to our dead soul, and give us new life where we were unable to do anything for ourselves. Without this intervening by God we would all be lost for eternity.

So this teaching of “Definite Atonement” which is hated by so many, is really life giving to all to whom God chooses to apply it.

It is a common teaching that Christ died for all men but They must accept Him in order for His death to apply to them. This teaching is completely foreign to scripture.

Remember we were “dead” in sin unable to do anything. So blinded by that sin that we could not comprehend what His death burial and resurrection meant. We could do nothing until God first acted on our behalf.

*John 6:44* ***No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him****: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

We must realize that Christ did not die in vain, and if He died for all men, and all men **do not** get saved then His death was in vain so far as they are concerned.

Many will say, yes but, “God is not willing that any should perish” Quoting, or rather misquoting 2 Peter 3:9

*2Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is* ***longsuffering to us‑ward,*** *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

They leave out the word us-ward, therefore, changing the thought of who the passage is directed to. The word us-ward directs us to whom he is speaking, and if we look at the first verse of this chapter we find it is the “Beloved”

*2Peter 3:1 This second epistle,* ***beloved,*** *I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:*

We see here that he is writing to the “Beloved.” Christians, those who belong to Christ. Then he refers to scoffers in the last days who are willingly ignorant, verse five. Finally in verse eight he again refers to the Beloved and he carries this thought through verse nine to “longsuffering to us‑ward.” God is longsuffering to us Christians who need to repent daily for sins of commission, and sins of omission.

We are told to confess our sins:

*1 John 1:8,9 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* ***If we confess our sins,*** *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*.

If God is not willing that any should perish, **then no one would perish.** However, we see in the book of Jude:

*Jude 1:4,5 For there are certain men crept in unawares,* ***who were before of old ordained to this condemnation,*** *ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt,* ***afterward destroyed them that believed not.***

*2Corinthians 4:3,4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:* ***In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.***

Unsaved man is so blinded by his own pride, his own sinfulness, his own ego, that he cannot recognize his sin. He is completely helpless, so depraved that he cannot change his life nor does he have any desire to do so. Many will even scoff at the mention of eternal hell, believing that they shall somehow escape the judgement of Holy God. None of us are worthy of salvation, and unless The Holy Spirit opens the eyes of an unsaved person, that person will remain so blinded by sin that they cannot even conceive of salvation.

*Mark 13:20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for* ***the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen,*** *he hath shortened the days.*

Christ’s death is sufficient for all the sin of all mankind, however, it is only efficacious to His elect, to those who come to trust Him as their saviour, and since man is unable to come until the Holy Spirit convicts him we must conclude that salvation is all of God.

*Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord:* ***and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.***

*Ephesians 1:4* ***According as he hath chosen us in him*** *before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

*John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you,* ***that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.***

Praise God, that He was willing to do for us that which we could not do for ourselves

*Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath* ***begun*** *a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

I was lost in sin, I could not cope,

Until God intervened and gave me hope.

He woke me up as from a sleep of death,

And my dead soul now has new breath.

God revealed my sin, then gave me light,

He made me righteous, by His might.

God’s only Son, died in my place,

I will someday meet Him face to face

He saved me from eternal hell

And gave me a place in Heaven to dwell.

How glorious and wonderful that will be

When I meet my Saviour who died for me.