

Doctrine 59 & 60[Part 5: Redemption | Doctrine 13 & 14]: Christ as Propitiation & Substitute

From the 99 Essential Doctrines Book

Christ as Propitiation

Because of God's righteousness and holiness, humanity's sins must be atoned for in order for people to be reconciled to God. As the propitiation for sins, Christ's death is the appeasement or satisfaction of God's wrath against sin. Christ's propitiation for our sins demonstrates both God's great love toward sinners (1 John 4:10) as well as the necessary payment that results from the penalty of sins (Rom. 3:26).

Christ as Substitute

At the heart of the atonement is Jesus Christ substituting Himself for sinners as He died on the cross. This truth is seen against the backdrop of the Old Testament sacrificial system, which provided a picture of humanity's need for sin to be covered and guilt to be removed by an innocent sacrifice. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin.

From the Bible

1 John 4:10 (NKJV)

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Romans 3:26 (NKJV)

26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

John 1:29 (NKJV)

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Key Thoughts

These two doctrines are closely related to, and largely covered in, our discussions on atonement and sacrifice.

Additional Thought

Regarding "propitiation"

hilasmos (ἱλασμός, 2434), akin to *hileos* ("merciful, propitious"), signifies "an expiation, a means whereby sin is covered and remitted." It is used in the NT of Christ Himself as "the propitiation," in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, signifying that He Himself, through the expiatory sacrifice of His death, is the personal means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes on Christ as the One thus provided. In the former passage He is described as "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." The italicized addition in the kjv, "*the sins of*," gives a wrong interpretation. What is indicated is that provision is made for the whole world, so that no one is, by divine predetermination, excluded from the scope of God's mercy; the efficacy of the "propitiation," however, is made actual for those who believe. In 4:10, the fact that God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," is shown to be the great expression of God's love toward man, and the reason why Christians should love one another

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). In [*Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 494). T. Nelson.