


# School of Theology



## The Cross of Christ

### Part 2 – What did the cross achieve? (part 1)

Sunday 10 March 2024

#### Recap

Last time we looked at “Why the Cross is necessary”

1. Why **we** need the Cross
  - a. We have inherited Adam’s guilt
  - b. We have joined Adam’s rebellion
  - c. We bear the consequences, meaning we are:  
guilty; alienated; enslaved; defiled; and spiritually dead.

*“The Fall [is] the only encouraging view of life, for it holds...that we have misused a good world, and not merely been entrapped into a bad one.” **G K Chesterton***

2. Why **God** needs the Cross
  - a. God is holy
    - i. His holiness exposes our sin
    - ii. His holiness opposes our sin in wrath
  - b. God is the just Judge who cannot overlook evil
  - c. God is loving and forgiving

*“Forgiveness is to man the plainest of duties;  
to God is it the profoundest of problems.”*

**Carnegie Simpson**

# 1. How can the Lord Jesus be our **substitute**?

What is needed for someone to be a suitable substitute? (Think sports team; substitute teacher; substitute item in shopping; etc.)

What will need for someone to be a substitute for our sin?

## (a) He came as a **mediator**

*For there is one God and one mediator between  
God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all people.  
**1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NIV 2011)***

- Fully God

*“[I]t was...imperative that he who was to become our Redeemer  
be true God and true man. It was his task to swallow up death.  
Who but the Life could do this? It was his task to conquer sin.  
Who but very Righteousness could do this? It was his task to  
rout the powers of world and air. Who but a power higher than  
world and air could do this? Now where does life or  
righteousness, or lordship and authority  
of heaven lie but with God alone.”*

**John Calvin**

- Fully man

*“Ungrudgingly he took our nature upon himself to impart to us what was his, and to become both Son of God and Son of man in common with us.”*

**John Calvin**

*“The unassumed is the unhealed.”*

**Gregory of Nazianzen**

## (b) The incarnation: God the Son took on flesh

God the creator makes the incarnation possible, because he is...

- Not distant from creation (unlike Deism)
- Nor confused with creation (unlike Pantheism)

So we see...

- Creation is the theatre in which God works
- Creation was made to be ruled by humanity as his deputies

(Genesis 1:28)

*The central miracle asserted by Christians is the Incarnation. They say that God became Man. Every other miracle prepares for this, or exhibits this, or results from this.*

**C S Lewis**

(c) He came as the **true & better Adam**

*‘The first man Adam became a living being’;  
the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.  
**1 Corinthians 15:45** (NIV 2011)*

The Lord Jesus is **LIKE** Adam

- Virgin earth / virgin birth
- Both from same stock – Mary is a descendant of Adam

The Lord Jesus is **BETTER THAN** Adam

- Perfect **IMAGE** of God

*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and  
the exact representation of his being...  
**Hebrews 1:3** (NIV 2011)*

- Perfect **OBEDIENCE** to God

Genesis 3:1-7 (page 5)

How do Adam & Eve respond to Satan’s temptation?

Matthew 4:1-11 (page 967)

How does the Lord Jesus respond to Satan’s temptation?

(The Lord Jesus also the **true & better Israel**, cf. Deuteronomy 8:2-3)

- Perfect **RULE** over creation – calming of the storm (Mark 4:35-41)
  - Divine power
  - Perfect rule

#### (d) A new head for humanity

Christ came as the true and better Adam, the new head of humanity. The *technical term* for this is “Recapitulation” or “reheadshipping”.

It was needed because Adam **capitulated** in the garden meaning humanity had been **decapitated**. A new head for humanity was ***desperately needed***.

*“The world was so created that when it fell, it could again be restored; humanity was organized under a single head in such a way that, sinning, it could again be gathered together under another head. Adam was so appointed as head that Christ could immediately take his place.”*

***Herman Bavinck***

- **Able to act on behalf of humanity**

Adam’s guilt was passed down to future generations. So, Christ’s obedience and righteousness can be passed down to us when joined to him by faith – while our sin goes to him. (See Romans 5:12-21)

*“...he is the only one who can really represent all men and women from the innermost centre and depth of human being. He came then, not only as the creator of our race, but as the head of our race, for in him the whole race consists (Colossians 1.15-20).” T. F. Torrance*

- **Able to reconcile (& rule) the whole creation**

*For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,<sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*  
**Colossians 1:19-20 (NIV 2011)**

(cf. Hebrews 2:5-9; Psalm 8)

*In the Christian story God descends to re-ascend. He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity... But He goes down to come up again and bring the ruined world up with Him...*  
**C S Lewis**

(e) Question: won't the Lord Jesus save everyone?

- Everyone who responds to the Lord Jesus in faith will be represented and saved

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour.<sup>22</sup> 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 –<sup>23</sup> if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.*  
**Colossians 1:21-23 (NIV 2011)**

(cf. Romans 10:9-13; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:8-9; etc.)

## (f) Summary

The Lord Jesus can be our substitute because he is

- A mediator – being fully God and fully man
- The true and better Adam
- The new head of humanity

## 2. How can the Lord Jesus make atonement?

(a) How should we think of the cross?

### 3 Views of the Cross

#### 1. Moral Example

Jesus death serves first and foremost as an example to us, evoking a response of repentance and faith. (1 Peter 2:21)

*Problems*

- Deals with the future not the past
- Deals with sin in me but not against others or against God

#### 2. Christus Victor

Jesus death serves first and foremost as a victory over the evil forces in the world: sin, the world and the devil. The Christian then can live a sharing in Christ's triumph here and now. (Colossians 2:15)

*Problem*

- Sin is a problem not just *outside* me but *inside* me too!

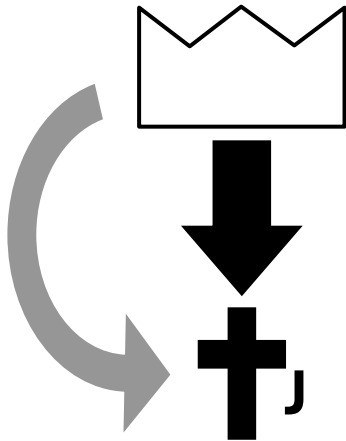
#### 3. Substitutionary Atonement

Jesus death serves first and foremost as a means of bearing God's wrath (penalty) for our sin in our place. Meaning the Christian no longer faces God's hostility for sin but His favour. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

All three are in the Bible. All three are important. But how do they relate to each other?

Substitutionary atonement is the **HUB** but not the **WHOLE**.





**Satisfaction**  
 God, the just judge of all, was satisfied in His judgement of sin thus upholding His justice. He thus is now able to freely forgive without compromising his holiness and his justice.

**Substitution**  
 God, in the person of His Son, took our place to bear God's wrath upon Himself for our sin.

(b) Substitution in the sacrificial system

|                                    | Who is the substitute? | Who is the substitute for? | What happens to the substitute?<br>What's achieved? |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Genesis 22:9-13<br>(page 22)       |                        |                            |   |
| Exodus 12:1-7,<br>12-13 (page 68)  |                        |                            |   |
| Leviticus 1:3-5<br>(page 102)      |                        |                            |   |
| Leviticus 4:1-4<br>(page 103)      |                        |                            |   |
| Leviticus 5:14-16<br>(page 105)    |                        |                            |   |
| Lev. 16:15-16,<br>20-22 (page 119) |                        |                            |   |

## (c) What the Lord Jesus said

### “must suffer... and die...”

*He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. **Mark 8:31** (NIV 2011)*

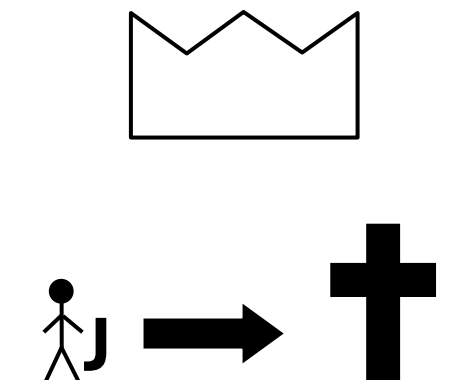
(cf. Mark 9:31; 10:33-34)

### “give [my] life as a ransom”

*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. **Mark 10:45** (NIV 2011)*

*This saying has rightly been called ‘one of the most important in the Gospels’..., for it is ‘a large widow into Mark’s thought.’*

**Peter Bolt**



### “cup”

*Abba, Father... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will. **Mark 14:36** (NIV 2011)*

Cup is a common picture of God’s wrath (see Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:7)

## (d) The Crucifixion according to Mark

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and *handed him over to Pilate...*

They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). <sup>23</sup>Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup>And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

<sup>25</sup>It was the third hour when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup>The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. <sup>27</sup>They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup>Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup>come down from the cross and save yourself!"

<sup>31</sup>In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! <sup>32</sup>Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

<sup>33</sup>At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup>And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

<sup>35</sup>When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

<sup>36</sup>One man ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

<sup>37</sup>With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

<sup>38</sup>The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup>And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

### **Handed over to the nations**

Psalm 106:40-41  
(page 610)

### **Crucifixion**

Deuteronomy 21:23  
(page 199)

### **Mocked**

Psalm 89:38,41-42  
(page 599)

### **Darkness**

Amos 8:9 (page 924);  
Isaiah 13:9-13  
(page 699)

### **Cry**

Psalm 22:1 (page 554)

**Mark 15:22-39**

## (e) An Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah 53

- <sup>1</sup> Who has believed our message  
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
- <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot,  
and like a root out of dry ground.  
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,  
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
- <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by mankind,  
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.  
Like one from whom people hide their faces  
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.
- <sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our pain  
and bore our suffering,  
yet we considered him punished by God,  
stricken by him, and afflicted.
- <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.
- <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to our own way;  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.
- <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.
- <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away.  
Yet who of his generation protested?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living;  
for the transgression of my people he was punished.
- <sup>9</sup> He was assigned a grave with the wicked,  
and with the rich in his death,  
though he had done no violence,  
nor was any deceit in his mouth.
- <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,  
and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,  
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,  
and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
- <sup>11</sup> After he has suffered,  
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;

### Things to look out for:

1. The servant is sinless
2. The servant acted as our substitute, turning aside God's wrath
3. The servant willingly gave himself up
4. It was God's design to put our sin on the servant
5. The suffering of the servant brings blessings

by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,  
and he will bear their iniquities.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,  
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,  
because he poured out his life unto death,  
and was numbered with the transgressors.  
For he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.

### (f) Substitutionary atonement in the New Testament

|                                   | How is Jesus' death described? | How does he deal with our sin? |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Romans 3:23-25<br>(page 1130)     |                                |                                |
| 2 Corinthians 5:21<br>(page 1162) |                                |                                |
| Galatians 3:13<br>(page 1170)     |                                |                                |
| 1 Peter 2:24-25<br>(page 1218)    |                                |                                |
| 1 John 2:1-2<br>(page 1225)       |                                |                                |
| 1 John 4:10<br>(page 1227)        |                                |                                |

## (g) Objections

People have raised objections about the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. Here are a couple:

1. This is cosmic child abuse

2. This encourages abuse

### 3. Why all this matters...

God's justice is upheld as sin is punished

Our sin is paid for so we can be forgiven

Our legal standing before God is changed

**IMPORTANT: We must respond to what Christ has done**

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

**Romans 10:9** (NIV 2011)

*"...we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value to us." **John Calvin***

For those who are joined to Christ by faith, our **GUILT** is dealt with and we are **JUSTIFIED / RIGHTEOUSIFIED** (declared right in God's sight)

*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**2 Corinthians 5:21** (NIV 2011)

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*

**Romans 8:1** (NIV 2011)

*God, because in his mercy he willed to forgive sinful men, and, being truly merciful, willed to forgive them righteously, that is, without in any way condoning their sin, purposed to direct against his own very self in the person of his Son the full weight of that righteous wrath which they deserved.*

**C E B Cranfield**

*Divine love triumphed over divine wrath by divine self-sacrifice. The cross was an act simultaneously of punishment and amnesty, severity and grace, justice and mercy.*

**John Stott**

