

Atonement Syllogisms

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A syllogism is:

- Major premise
- Minor premise
- Conclusion

The Calvinist reasons like this:

- Jesus satisfied the wrath of God
- Not everyone is saved from God's wrath
- Therefore Jesus did not die for everyone

This is very logical, but the problem is with this is the premise.

I would reason like this:

- Jesus Christ died for everyone
- Not everyone is saved from God's wrath
- Therefore Jesus did not satisfy God's wrath

Or

- The atonement was made for everyone
- God still has wrath after the atonement
- Therefore the atonement did not satisfy God's wrath

Consider:

- Jesus died for the remission of sins
- Remission of sins is when God turns from His wrath
- Therefore, the atonement allows God to turn from His wrath

Here is another syllogism:

- Retributive justice requires that the soul that sinned should die
- In the atonement, the sinless died and the guilty lives
- Therefore retributive justice was not satisfied

Or

- The punishment sinners deserve is eternal hell fire
- Jesus did not suffer eternal hell fire

- Therefore Jesus did not take the punishment sinners deserve

Here is another syllogism:

- God has a cup of wrath before the atonement
- God has a cup of wrath after the atonement
- Therefore, Jesus did not empty the cup of God's wrath

And

- God has a cup of wrath
- The disciples would drink the same cup Jesus drank
- Therefore, Jesus did not drink the cup of God's wrath

Rather

- Jesus died so God could forgive us our sins
- Forgiveness is when God turns from His wrath
- Therefore, the atonement enables God to turn from His wrath

Here is another syllogism:

- Forgiveness is when the execution of the penalty is set aside
- The atonement makes forgiveness possible
- Therefore the atonement was not the penalty of the law

Or

- The remission of sins is when punishment is set aside
- The atonement was made for the remission of sins
- Therefore, the atonement was not our punishment

These are the logical problems I have with the atonement view that "Jesus satisfied the wrath of God" or that someone retributive justice was fulfilled by the atonement.

What then is the atonement?

- Our punishment was eternal hell fire
- Christ died on the cross, suffering for six hours, for our sin
- Therefore, the blood atonement of Christ
was a substitute for the eternal punishment of sinners

And

- Christ died for the remission of sins
- Sinners are not forgiven until they repent and believe

- Therefore, the death of Christ made forgiveness available but not automatic

Here is another syllogism:

- The Father was loving and merciful before the atonement
- God is the same yesterday, today, and forever
- Therefore, the atonement did not change God

The atonement is that which allows God to forgive, but it does not obligate God to forgive. The atonement was a substitute for our punishment, which allows God to *set aside* our punishment, but only once we repent and believe. Until a person repents and believes, they are under God's wrath, even though Jesus Christ died for them. Though Jesus died for everyone, many will go to hell, because they do not repent and believe. His death makes their salvation possible, but not unconditional. The atonement makes salvation available to everyone, but not automatic for anyone. The atonement is a vindication of the law, which allows God to set aside the execution of the penalty of the law, which allows God to forgive and grant the remission of sins for all those who repent and believe.

If God was going to set aside the execution of our penalty, upon condition of repentance and faith, He needed to also vindicate His law through a substitutionary blood atonement. God cannot forgive us without vindicating His law. So a blood sacrifice needed to substitute our punishment if God was going to turn from His wrath.