

The Atonement of Scripture

By Jesse Morrell

Every atonement view must ask this fundamental question, what is keeping God from forgiving sin? You must first pin point the obstacle that needed to be overcome before you can analyze the design of the remedy. What was necessary for God to forgive sin must be answered by the means of the atonement. But the question is what necessarily needed to be satisfied in order for God to forgive or pardon sin? The answer is that either retributive justice or public justice needed to be satisfied before God can forgive sin.

Retributive Justice: this is the letter of the law which treats each individual according to their merit or demerit. When retributive justice is executed, sin is punished, the debt is paid.

Public Justice: this is the spirit of the law. This is the reason or purpose for God's law (precept and penalty). This is why God established the letter of the law - the good of all.

Retributive justice, by nature, cannot be satisfied if sin is forgiven (instead of punished), if the debt is pardoned (instead of paid). Retributive justice is to give to each individual according to what they deserve. Forgiveness or pardon is to treat one more favorably than they merit, in a manner in which they do not deserve. By nature, retributive justice and forgiveness are entirely contrary; they are forever at an antithesis. When sin is forgiven, retributive justice is unsatisfied. When sin is punished, retributive justice is satisfied. But you cannot have forgiven sin and punished sin at the same time, it must be one or the other and so retributive justice is either satisfied or unsatisfied, sin is either forgiven or punished. More on this view will be mentioned later in this article.

The other view is that public justice needed to be satisfied before God can forgive sin. That God is capable of actually forgiving sin, of actually pardoning debt, if it is safe for Him to do so, if the reason for retributive justice is fulfilled by alternative means of the atonement. God is already willing to forgive sin, if it were safe for Him to do so. He is willing to withhold His wrath; He is willing to withhold the punishment of sin, if it is safe to public justice, or public interest, for Him to do so. God is under no obligation to punish sin and pour out His wrath if the purpose of punishment and the reason for His wrath is satisfied by the alternative means of the atonement.

SECTION ONE:

SCRIPTURAL POINTS THAT MAKE UP THE OVERALL VIEW OF THE SATISFACTION TO PUBLIC JUSTICE:

1. God is by nature benevolent and He loves the whole world:

“God is love” 1John 4:8, 1John 4:16

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” 1John 4:9

2. God is all wise and built His government, providential and moral, upon wisdom and understanding:

“The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.” Proverbs 3:19-20

“I wisdom....The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there was no depth, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mounts were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, or the fields, or the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” Proverbs 8:12, 22-30

“Every purpose is established by counsel” Proverbs 20:18

“Through wisdom is a house built, and by understanding it is established.” Proverbs 24:3

3. God already is and always has been willing to forgive everyone of their sin, if it were safe for Him to do so:

“For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.” Ezekiel 18:32

“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die” Ezekiel 33:11

"Who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth."
1Timothy 2:4

“The Lord...is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2Peter 3:9

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” Hebrews 13:8

4. The shedding of blood is a necessary condition for forgiveness:

“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission [forgiveness] of sins” Hebrews 9:22

“Oh my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” Matthew 26:42

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood; ye have no life in you.” John 6:53

5. The price of the atonement is the blood of Christ:

“the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:28

“ye know that ye were not redeemed [or bought] with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1Peter 1:18-19

“for thou was slain, and has redeemed [or bought] us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Revelations 5:9

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” 2Peter 2:1

6. The design of the blood atonement is to show God just in forgiving sin, to declare God’s righteousness, and to show God’s condemnation of sin:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:24-26

“God sending his own son...condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:3

7. The penalty of violating the Divine Law is the second death –eternal burning by hell fire, which is eternally unsatisfied:

“For the wages of sin is death” Romans 6:23

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Revelation 21:8

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night” Revelation 14:11

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Revelations 20:14

8. Christ suffered by being wounded, bruise, whipped (or chastised), and died by crucifixion within the period of a single day, and then rose on the third day:

“He was wounded” Isaiah 53:5

“He was bruised” Isaiah 53:5

“The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

“I will therefore chastise him” Luke 23:16

“and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.” Matthew 27:26

“and they crucified Him” Matthew 27:35

“Jesus...suffered death” Hebrews 2:9

“Christ both died, and rose” Romans 14:9

“And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.” Luke 23:44-46

9. God treated Christ as if He were us, in that God treated Christ as if He was guilty, as if He had sinned, as if He was deserving of death:

“He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities.” Isaiah 53:5

“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” Isaiah 53:6

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief, when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." Isaiah 53:10

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" Hebrews 9:28

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24

“He was numbered with the transgressors” Mark 15:28

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2Corinthians 5:21

10. It was necessary for God to uplift His protection in order for Christ to make an atonement. His father withheld all saving protection from Christ, thus forsaking him and making him accursed, as if Christ were a guilty sinner:

“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” Matthew 26:53-54

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a cursed for us.” Galatians 3:13

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46

11. The actual moral condition of Christ at death was that of being just and holy:

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” 1Peter 3:18

“Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity” Hebrews 1:9

12. Christ died to make salvation possible for all, not secured for some:

"I have come that they *might* have life" John 10:10

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" John 3:17

"Behold! The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John 12:47

"Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Romans 5:18

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" 2Corinthians 5:19

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Hebrews 2:9

"And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" Colossians 1:20

"There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, that Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." 1Timothy 2:5-6

"Who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1Timothy 2:4

"Who gave himself a ransom for all" 1Timothy 2:6

"The Lord...is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2Peter 3:9

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1John 2:2

"the Father send the Son to be the Savior of the world." 1John 4:15

"we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe." 1Timothy 4:10

13. The purpose of Christ's suffering and death was the forgiveness of sins:

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2Corinthians 5:21

“For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission [or forgiveness] of sins.” Matthew 26:28

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have no received the atonement.” Romans 5:9-11

“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Ephesians 1:6-7

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1John 1:7

“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins” 1John 3:5

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” 1John 4:9

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and send His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1John 4:10

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.” 2Corinthians 5:18

14. The forgiveness of sins consists in the pardoning of unpaid debt, so that the penalty of the law is avoided instead of executed:

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Matthew 6:12

“But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.” Matthew 18:25-27

“And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.” Luke 7:42

15. The grounds of justification is God’s grace and not law, in mercy and not justice:

“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from iniquity.” Proverbs 16:6

“we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved” Acts

15:11

“being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”
Romans 3:24

“for by grace are ye saved” Ephesians 2:8

“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Ephesians 1:6-7

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:5-7

16. If man repents and believes, the forgiveness that comes through Christ is extended to him:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved” Mark 16:16

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” Acts 3:19

“Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquity.” Acts 3:26

“Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” Luke 13:3

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” Acts 2:38

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” 1John 5:1

“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.” John 3:36

17. Until those for whom Christ died repent of their sins and put their faith in Christ, the wrath of God is upon their life, they are enemies to Him, and they are condemned before God:

“And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from

your hearts forgive not everyone of his brother their trespasses.” Matthew 18:34-35

“He that believeth not is condemned already.” John 3:18

“But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.” Luke 19:27

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness” Romans 1:18

“we were enemies, we were reconciled to God” Romans 5:10

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ.” Philippians 3:18

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Ephesians 2:3

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet not hath he reconciled." Colossians 1:21

“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” Romans 2:5

“He that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3:36

“the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God” 1 Corinthians 6:9

“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.” Ephesians 5:6

18. The atonement of Christ now gives pressing influence upon the heart of man to be reconciled unto God and to submit unto His Government (or Kingdom):

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” 1John 3:16

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love.” 1John 4:7-8

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” 1John 4:11

“We love him, because he first loved us.” 1John 4:19

SECTION TWO:

AN EXPLANATION OF THESE SCRIPTURAL POINTS WITH QUOTES FROM THEOLOGIANS

1-2. God is by nature benevolent and He loves the whold world; God is all wise and built His government, providential and moral, upon wisdom and understanding:

God is all wise and therefore has a reason for all that He does. God is love and is therefore always motivated by love. Because God is a loving and a wise God, He has a loving reason or a benevolent purpose for everything He does. Even God's retributive justice, eternal hell, is grounded and rooted in a benevolent reason or purpose, namely the welfare of His universe.

God is a benevolent Moral Governor, and so His entire government is established by benevolent purposes. All of God's dealings and actions with His creation are determined by His infinite love for His creation and His infinite wisdom in protecting and securing their well-being. He is motivated by love for all and is guided by His wisdom in selecting means to His desired end. God is not arbitrary in any sense of the word, but He has a benevolent and wise reason for all that He does and commands. His moral government therefore, its laws (precept and sanction), is established by His love and wisdom, and is therefore wisely designed to secure the highest well-being of all (His own glory and the good of others), or in other words, to promote and protect public justice or public interest..

"That creation and moral government, including both law and gospel, together with the penal sanctions are only efforts of benevolence, to secure the highest good." Charles G. Finney *1

"That God's ultimate end, in all he does, or omits, is the highest well-being of himself, and of the universe, and that in all his acts and dispensations, his ultimate object is the promotion of this end." Charles G. Finney *2

"God acts, not from any contracted, selfish motives, but from the most noble benevolence and regard to the public good. It hath often and long since been made a matter of objection to the doctrines of future punishment of the wicked, and the atonement of Christ, that they represent the Deity as having regard merely to his own honor and dignity, and not to the good of his creatures, and therefore represents him as deficient in goodness." Jonathon Edwards *29

"God legislates, not arbitrarily or oppressively, but wisely and equitably." John Miley *56

Scriptures: 1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16, John 3:16, 1 John 4:9, Proverbs 3:19-20, Proverbs 8:12,22-30, Proverbs 20:18, Proverbs 24:3

3. God already is and always has been willing to forgive everyone of their sin, if it were safe for Him to do so:

God already is and always has been willing to forgive every sinner, if it were safe for the universe or His government for Him to do so. Nothing needs to take place in order to make God willing or wanting to forgive, but only to make the act of pardon safe to public justice. The barriers to pardon are not personal in any respect, but solely governmental. Nothing needs to change on the part of God, God does not need to change to be reconciled unto sinners, but sinners need to change to be reconciled unto God.

"A voluntary disposition of mercy and forgiveness prevails equally among all the Members of the Godhead. The Godhead are without personal vindictiveness. The problems of forgiveness are not personal but government. God does not require an exact payment for sin to satisfy retributive justice, but only requires that an atonement shall satisfy public justice and all the problems of a full and free reconciliation in His government of moral beings." Gordon C. Olson *35

Because God is wise and loving He seeks public justice. He will not endanger the universe at large by pardoning the wicked when it is not safe for Him to do so, when it is to the detriment of His government or Kingdom. He will not forgive sin or pardon debt unless public justice (the promotion and protection of the highest well-being of all by means of His government) is satisfied and upheld, unless the purpose or reason of the execution of the penalties of the law is fulfilled by the alternative means of atonement.

"Is it not plain that the Father received the ransom, not because He himself required or needed it, but for the sake of the Divine government of the universe, and because man must be sanctified through the incarnation of the son of God?" Gregory of Nazianzus (yr 330-390) *33

"The atonement does not change God. It does not make him in any sense a different Being from what he was before the atonement was made. It is not held, and it cannot be held, that God was, before the atonement was made, severe, stern, and inexorable, and that he has been made mild and forgiving by the death of the Redeemer. It is not held, and cannot be held, that he was indisposed originally to show mercy and that he has been bought over to mercy, or that such an influence has been exerted on him by the atonement as to make him now willing to do what he was indisposed to do before." Albert Barnes *8

"The simple statements of the Bible seem to be, that sin is such a dreadful tragedy in the kingdom of God that it cannot be disposed of in any simple manner. Some equivalently terrible event must be brought to pass to deal honorably with the matter. God may be ever so ready to forgive freely man's sin out of His great bounty of love, but cannot do so simply because there are other conditions and problems involved." Gordon Olson *34

“The unchangeable God may consistently offer pardon to a sinner now that an atonement has been made, though there would be insuperable difficulties in such an offer if no atonement had been provided.” Albert Barnes *9

"An atonement was needed, not to render God merciful, but to reconcile pardon with a due administration of justice." Charles G. Finney *52

"God is love, and prefers mercy when it is safely exercised. The Bible represents him as delighting in mercy, and affirms that judgment is his strange work." Charles G. Finney *53

"The government bearings of this scheme are perfectly apparent. The whole transaction tends powerfully to sustain God's law, and reveal his love and even mercy to sinners. It shows that he is personally ready to forgive, and needs only to have such an arrangement made that he can do it safely as to his government. What could show his readiness to forgive sin so strikingly as this? See how carefully he guards against the abuse of pardon! Always ready to pardon, yet ever watchful over the great interest of obedience and happiness, lest they be imperiled by its freeness and fullness!" Charles G. Finney *48

Scriptures: Ezekiel 18:32, Ezekiel 33:11, 2Peter 3:9, 1Timothy 2:4, Hebrews 13:8

4-6. The Shedding of blood is a necessary condition for forgiveness; the price of the atonement is the blood of Christ; the design of the atonement is to show God just in forgiving sin, to declare God's righteousness, and to show God's condemnation of sin:

Therefore the shedding of blood, as a public declaration of God's hatred for sin and honor of His laws, was an unavoidable condition for pardon, seeing that God must uphold His government that was designed to secure public justice, or the well-being of the universe. The atonement was a public declaration of God's righteousness, which shows Him just in forgiving sin. The atonement was a public declaration of God's condemnation of sin, so sinners could not hope to sin with impunity. The cost or price by which this atonement was bought, which makes forgiveness for all possible, was the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

“Atonement...is necessary that it should confirm, and not set aside, law; that it should carry out, and not set aside, the real purpose of the penalty of the law as expressing the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the value of law and the evil of violating it; that it should secure the reformation and future good conduct of him who is pardoned; that it should preserve a community from harm if any number of offenders should be forgiven; and that it should furnish in it's own nature a proper representation of the character of him who has appointed the atonement.” Albert Barnes *6

“God could not have been just in justifying the believer, had not Christ been made a propitiation...If his death were not necessary, he died in vain...if it had been possible that

the designs of God in the salvation of sinners should be accomplished without the death of Christ, Christ's prayer, in this instance, would have been answered, and he would have been exempted from death. And since he was not exempted, we have clear evidence that his death was a matter of absolute necessity...Why is an atonement necessary in order to pardon the sinner? I answer, it is necessary on the same ground, and for the same reasons, as punishment would have been necessary, if there had been no atonement made. The ground of both is the same...to maintain the authority of the divine law. If that be not maintained, but the law fall into contempt, the contempt will fall equally on the legislator himself; his authority will be despised and his government weakened. And as the contempt shall increase, which may be expected to increase, in proportion to the neglect of executing the law, the divine government will approach nearer and nearer dissolution, till at length it will be totally annihilated." Jonathon Edwards *21

"An atonement is necessary because there is nothing else that will remove the difficulties in the way of pardon, or because there is no other way by which it can be consistent for God to forgive an offender and to restore him to favour." Albert Barnes *7

"The atonement is a governmental expedient to sustain law without the execution of its penalty to the sinner." Charles G. Finney *31

"The atonement of Christ was necessary to demonstrate His righteousness in the free pardon of repentant sinners. The word demonstrate signifies a manifestation, a public declaration, a showing forth or a proof of God's righteous method in the administration of forgiveness." Gordon C. Olson *37

"The sacrifice made on Calvary is to be understood as God's offering to public justice--God himself giving up his Son to death, and this Son pouring forth his life's blood in expiation for sin--thus throwing open the folding gates of mercy to a sinning, lost race. This must be regarded as manifesting his love to sinners. This is God's ransom provided for them." Charles G. Finney *47

Scriptures: Hebrews 9:22, Matthew 26:42, John 6:53, Acts 20:28, 1Peter 1:18-19, Revelations 5:9, 2Peter 2:1, Romans 3:24-26, Romans 8:3

7. The penalty of violating the Divine Law is the second earth - eternal burning by hell fire, which is eternally unsatisfied and eternally unsatisfiable:

In His love and wisdom, God established the exact and literal penalty of the law as eternal hell-fire, eternal torment, to uphold His government which was designed to secure public justice, or His glory and the highest well-being of all. The fact that God is just and also sends sinners to hell-fire eternally, shows that eternal hell-fire is the just penalty for transgression of His law, and nothing short of this penalty can be considered the exact and literal penalty of transgression. If eternal hell-fire is more then what is demanded by retributive justice, or exceeds what is required by the law, then such punishment would be unjust, seeing it is more then is required. But if eternal hell-fire is precisely what is

required by retributive justice, nothing short of eternal hell-fire can be considered satisfaction to retributive justice.

"Sin deserves eternal penalty, and the penalty may not be remitted, except on rectorally sufficient ground." John Miley *43

Scriptures: Romans 6:23, Revelations 21:8, Revelations 14:11, Revelations 20:14

8. Christ suffered by being wounded, bruised, whipped (chastised), and died by crucifixion within the period of a single day, and then rose on the third day:

The exact and literal penalty of the law calls for eternal torment by burning with hell-fire. Because retributive justice calls for eternal torment, this penalty is eternally unsatisfied by its nature. An eternal penalty is by nature a penalty eternally unsatisfied or incomplete. Therefore the atonement of Christ (the cross) as an alternative to the exact and literal penalty of the law (eternal hell-fire) sought to secure the same purpose, design, or reason as the penalty of the law.

His voluntary sufferings were not exact to the penalty of the law in its kind, amount, or duration but it was equivalent in its purpose and value. Because of the dignity and majesty of the person of Christ, it was not needful for His sufferings to be exact in the kind, amount, or duration as the penalty of the law, but only that it was equivalent in its purpose and value.

“The very idea of atonement is something done, which, to the purpose of supporting the authority of the law, the dignity and consistency of divine government and conduct, is fully equivalent to the curse of the law, and on the round of which, the sinner may be saved from that curse...a less degree or duration of suffering endured by Christ the Son of God, may, on account of the infinite dignity and glory of his person, be an equivalent to the curse of the law endured by the sinner.” Jonathon Edwards *24

The temporal sufferings of Christ upon the cross was substituted with the eternal sufferings of sinners in hell, because His temporal and voluntary sufferings as a declaration of God’s hatred for sin and love for righteousness satisfied the same purpose the penalty of the law of eternal hell-fire would have. The purpose of the execution of the penalty of the law is to declare God’s righteousness and condemnation of sin, and the purpose fulfilled by the atonement of Christ was the declaration of God’s righteousness and condemnation of sin.

More specifically, the purpose of executing penalty was public justice, or the protection and promotion of the highest well-being of all, by the public declaration that God honors His laws, abhors all sin, and has regard to public interest and thus secure the influence of the Divine Law. The penalty of the law, as a declaration of God’s righteousness, upholds God’s government. The atonement of Christ, as a declaration of God’s righteousness, upholds God’s government. The reason or purpose of the penalty of the law and of the

atonement of Christ is identical.

Because the atonement, as an alternate means to the same end sought by the penalty of the law, satisfied the purpose of the penalty of the law, God can be just in withholding the penalty of the law from those who repent and believe, because the purpose of the penalty has been satisfied by the alternative means of the atonement. The atonement equally reveals God's honor for His laws, God's abhorrence of all sin, God's regard for the well-being of man-kind, and just as equally secures the influence of the Divine Law as the execution of the exact and literal penalty would have.

Christ was bruised, wounded, whipped (or chastised), and crucified, for the ultimate purpose of making the forgiveness of sins possible for all. He did not, and is not, suffering eternal torments by hell-fire. His death was in no sense eternal, given the fact of the resurrection on the third day.

“He did not endure eternal death....eternal death was the penalty of the law...No man can possibly hold that the Redeemer endured eternal sorrow; and no man, therefore, who believes that the penalty of the law is eternal death, can consistently maintain that he endured the literal penalty of the law.” Albert Barnes *12

“The atonement is something substituted in the place of the penalty of the law, which will answer the same ends as the punishment of the offender himself would. It is instead of punishment. It is something which will make it proper for the lawgiver to suspend or remit the literal execution of the penalty of the law, because the object or end of that penalty has been secured, or because something has been substituted for that which will answer the same purpose. In other words, there are certain ends proposed by the appointment of the penalty in case of violation of the law; and if these ends are secured, then the punishment may be remitted and the offender may be pardoned. That which will secure these ends is an atonement.” Albert Barnes *13

“The atonement is the substitute for the punishment threatened in the law; and was designed to answer the same ends of supporting the authority of the law, the dignity of the divine moral government, and the consistency of the divine conduct in legislation and execution. By the atonement it appears to God is determined that his law shall be supported; that it shall not be despised or transgressed with impunity; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. The very idea of an atonement or satisfaction for sin, is something which, to the purposes of supporting the authority of the divine law, and the dignity and consistency of the divine government, is equivalent to the punishment of the sinner, according to the literal threatening of the law. That which answers these purposes being done, whatever it be, atonement is made, and the way is prepared for the dispensation of pardon.” Jonathon Edwards *23

“The death of Christ manifests God's hatred of sin and love of holiness in the same sense as the damnation of the wicked manifests these, namely, on the supposition that the divine law is just and holy. If it be allowed the divine law is just and holy, then every thing done to support and execute that law, is a declaration in favor of holiness and

against sin; or a declaration of God's love of holiness and his hatred of iniquity...By atonement I mean that which, as a substitute for the punishment which is threatened in the law, supports the authority of that law, and the dignity of the divine government." Jonathon Edwards *28

"If free pardon is to be extended to penitent sinners, some great measure must be substituted for the punishment of sinners that will uphold the moral government of God at least equally as well as the pronounced consequences would have done." Gordon C. Olson *38

Scriptures: Isaiah 53:5, Luke 23:16, Matthew 27:26, Matthew 27:35, Hebrews 2:9, Romans 14:9, Luke 23:44-46

9-10. Christ was treated as if he were us, in that Christ was treated as if He was guilty, as if He had sinned, as if He was deserving of death; It was necessary for God to uplift His protection in order for Christ to make an atonement. His Father withheld all saving protection from Christ, thus forsaking him and making him accursed, as if Christ were a guilty sinner:

In the atonement of Christ, as a public declaration of God's hatred for sin and love for righteousness, Christ was treated as if he were a sinner, and therefore He suffered as though he was a sinner, and Christ died as though he was deserving of such a death. Thus God withheld all saving protection as He would from a sinner, therefore leaving Christ forsaken and accursed as if He were a sinner receiving His just punishment.

"Though innocent, he was treated in his death as if he had been guilty; that is, he was put to death as if he had personally deserved it...He was suspended on a cross, as if he had been a malefactor. He was numbered with malefactors; he was crucified between them; he was given up by God and man to death as if he had himself been such a malefactor." Albert Barnes *14

"Standing for the sinner, he must, in an important sense, bear the curse of the law--not the literal penalty, but a vast amount of suffering, sufficient, in view of his relations to God and the universe, to make the needed demonstration of God's displeasure against sin, and yet of his love for both the sinner and all his moral subjects. On the one hand, Jesus represents the race; on the other, he represented God." Charles G. Finney *46

"On the supposition of his dying as a Savior for sinners, all is plain. He dies for the government of God, and must needs suffer these things to make a just expression of God's abhorrence of sin. While he stands in the place of guilty sinners, God must frown on him and hide his face. This reveals both the spirit of God's government and his own infinite wisdom." Charles G. Finney *49

"Cursed. It conveys the idea of being given over to destruction, or left without those influences which would protect and save, -as a land that is given over to the curse of

sterility or barrenness...it would mean that all saving influences were withdrawn" Albert Barnes *51

"The Savior identify Himself with sinners so intimately that He is treated as if their sins were His, if the seemingly insurmountable problems of reconciliation were to be solved. He must be the great High Priest who voluntarily places the sin of mankind, not upon the head of an innocent animal, but upon Himself, with dreadful heart-broken solemnness, until it crushes out His holy and spotless life." Gordon C. Olson *55

Scriptures: Isaiah 53:5, Isaiah 53:6, 1Peter 2:24, Mark 15:28, 2Corinthians 5:21, Matthew 26:53-54, Galatians 3:13, Matthew 27:46

11. The actual moral condition of Christ as death was that of being just and holy:

Though Christ was treated as if He was a sinner, and suffered and died as if He had sinned against God and deserved such treatment, His actual moral condition in life and at death was that of being just and holy.

"In his undertaking the work of redemption; in his manifested character on earth; in his teaching; in the spirit with which he bore his trials; in his readiness to meet death, and in the manner in which he actually met it; in the offers of salvation which he made to mankind on the ground of the sacrifice which he made for human guilt, no one who believes the Saviour at all can doubt that he was in all respects pleasing to God. Whatever were the sufferings which were brought upon him, they were not of the nature of punishment for his own offences; whatever was the reason why he was left in darkness and gloom on the cross, it was not because he had incurred for himself the wrath of God. In the very midst of those sufferings he was performing a work which, of all the works ever performed on the earth, was most acceptable to a pure and holy God." Albert Barnes *50

Scriptures: 1Peter 3:18, Hebrews 1:9

12. Christ died to make salvation possible for all not secured for some:

The purpose of Christ's death was to make salvation or forgiveness available to all men, and by suffering and dying as if He was a sinner, publicly making a declaration of God's hatred for sin and love of righteousness, the spirit of the law (public justice) has been fulfilled so God can now extend mercy to all men, and can pardon the debt of all sinners, who repent and believe the gospel.

The atonement "must be of universal application, since there is no partiality with God. God can have no selected favorites as long as He is love and universally benevolent...Thus whatever God makes possible, He will make equally possible for all men." Gordon C. Olson *39

Scriptures: John 3:16, John 3:17, John 1:29, Romans 5:18, John 10:10, John 12:47, Colossians 1:20, 1Timothy 2:4, 1Timothy 2:6, 2Peter 3:9, 2Corinthians 5:19, Hebrews 2:9, 1Timothy 2:5-6, 1John 2:2, 1John 4:15, 1Timothy 4:10

13. The Purpose of Christ's suffering and death was the forgiveness of sins:

The clear purpose of His death was for the forgiveness of sins. The reason he suffered as if He were a sinner, the reason He died as though He was a criminal, the reason He publicly declared God's righteousness, was for the purpose of God safely extending forgiveness and mercy to sinners, to pardon their debts. Because Christ (who never sinned) was treated as if He were us, in that He was treated as if He had sinned, we (who have sinned) can now be treated as if we were Him, in that we can be treated as if we had never sinned. The forgiveness of sins is not only withholding the deserved punishment, but it is treating the individual as if they had never sinned in the past.

“Christ was treated as though he had been a sinner - and as his sufferings answered the purpose of the sinner's punishment, and are the ground of his pardon, it may be said with respect to all believers, that their sins were imputed or reckoned to Christ, and his righteousness imputed or reckoned to them. That is, Christ was treated as sinners deserve, and sinners are treated as Christ deserves.” Nathan Beman *58

Scriptures: 2Corinthians 5:21, Matthew 26:28, Romans 5:9-11, Ephesians 1:6-7, 1John 1:7, 1John 3:5, 1John 4:9, 1John 4:10, 2Corinthians 5:18

14. The forgiveness of sins consist in the pardoning of unpaid debt, so that the penalty of the law is avoided instead of executed:

The forgiveness God can now offer to sinners because of the atonement, is the forgiveness of their sin, the pardon of their debt, so that they are now treated as if they had never sinned before. God set's aside the punishment and forgives the sin of His people because of the atonement. God wipes away the debt of sinners because He is gracious and merciful. And all those who deserve punishment, can escape their deserved punishment, and be reconciled to God because of the atonement, if they will repent and believe. Mercy is the setting aside of judgment and this act of pardon has become safe, it has been rendered consistent with public justice, because of the atonement.

“An atonement is, properly, an arrangement by which the literal infliction of the penalty due to sin may be avoided; it is something which may be substituted in the place of punishment; it is that which will answer the same end which would be secured by the literal infliction of the penalty of the law. It is not a commercial transaction, - a matter of debt and payment, of profit and loss. It pertains to law, to government, to holiness; not to literal debt and payment.” Albert Barnes *10

“Retributive justice, therefore, is not at all satisfied by the death of Christ. But the general justice to the Deity and to the universe is satisfied. That is done by the death of Christ which supports the authority of the law, and renders it consistent with the glory of God, and the good of the whole system, to pardon the sinner.” Jonathon Edwards *30

Scriptures: Matthew 6:12, Matthew 18:25-27, Luke 7:42

15. The grounds of justification is God's grace and not law, in mercy and not justice:

Because God's forgiveness consists in the pardon of debt, in the forgiveness of sins, the grounds of this justification is God's grace and mercy by extending to man what he does not deserve, and treated man in a way in which he does not merit.

Scriptures: Proverbs 16:6, Acts 15:11, Romans 3:24, Ephesians 2:8, Ephesians 1:6-7, Titus 3:5-7

16. Because God is love and wise, and is ultimately interested in public justice, seeking the highest well-being of all, sinners must repent of their sins and put their faith in Jesus Christ for God to safely pardon their debts because of the atonement of Christ.

"God may not forgive sin irrespective of the interests of his moral government." John Miley *42

Scriptures: John 3:16, Mark 16:16, Acts 3:19, Acts 3:26, Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38, 1John 5:1, John 3:36

17. Though Christ died for the whole world, God still has wrath for the whole world, and are still in danger of having to pay their eternal debt of burning in hell-fire, unless they repent and believe the gospel. All wrath and judgment can now be withheld because of the cross, but not all wrath and judgment is automatically withheld because of the cross. Those for whom Christ died must still repent and believe or else perish and be condemned.

Scriptures: Matthew 18:34-35, John 3:18, Luke 19:27, Romans 1:18, Romans 5:10, Philippians 3:18, Ephesians 2:3, Romans 2:5, John 3:36, 1Corinthians 6:9, Colossians 1:21, Ephesians 5:6

18. The fact that all of the sufferings of Christ was endured on behalf of all mankind, that Christ voluntarily endured agonizing death in order to remove the obstacles and barriers which hindered God from pardoning the repentant, is a deep and pressing influence upon the heart or will of man to respond to the love of Christ, by picking up his own cross, denying himself, and following Christ; to love Christ by keeping His commandments.

The atonement of Christ secures the influence of the Divine Law far more effectively than the execution of the exact and literal penalty of the Law would have.

"The fact, that the execution of the law of God on rebel angels had not arrested, and could not arrest, the progress of rebellion in the universe, proves that something more needed to be done, in support of the authority of the law, than would be done in the execution of its penalty upon rebels. While the execution of law may have a strong tendency to prevent from the beginning of rebellion among loyal subjects, and to restrain rebels themselves, yet penal infliction do not, in fact, subdue the heart, under any government human or divine." Charles G. Finney *54

"Let it be distinctly understood that the divine law originates in God's benevolence, and has no other than a benevolent end in view. It has revealed only and solely to promote the greatest possible good, by means of obedience. Now, such a law can allow of pardon, provided an expression can be given which will equally secure obedience--making an equal revelation of the lawgiver's firmness, integrity, and love. The law being perfect, and being most essential to the good of his creatures, God must not set aside its penalty without some equivalent influence to induce obedience. The penalty was designed as a testimony to God's regard for the precept and his law, and to his purpose to sustain it. An atonement, therefore, which should answer as a substitute for the infliction of this penalty, must be of such sort as to show God's regard for both the precept and penalty of his law. It must be adapted to enforce obedience. Its moral power must be in this respect equal to that of the infliction of the penalty on the sinner." Charles G. Finney *45

"The Lord Jesus by His life and suffering for the sins of the whole world...rendered satisfaction to public justice (a demonstration before all that rebellion against authority will be punished), as distinguished from retributive or vindictive justice, thus removing the governmental barrier to the free pardon of repentant sinners - the governmental of sin-prevention problem. The advent and sufferings of Christ has provided a moral force of far greater proportions to confront the minds of moral beings as they contemplate sin, than the threatened eternal punishment of sinners had provided. The great mass of unrepentant sinners have a public testimony of the awfulness of the Moral Governor's hatred of sin and the dreadful certainty that no sin will go unpunished. If such an ordeal of suffering was endured by the Godhead to make the forgiveness of sin possible, sinful rebellion must be viewed as a colossal tragedy in the moral government of God, to be feared by all." Gordon C. Olson *41

Scriptures: 1John 3:16, 1John 4:7-8, 1John 4:11, 1John 4:19

In essence or summary: Christ voluntarily suffered as if He was a sinner, thus revealing and declaring God's righteousness. The atonement, as a means, satisfied or secured the same end the penalty of the law, as a means, would have. Now all sinners can be reconciled to God, they can be made *at-one* because of the *atonement*, and can receive the forgiveness and mercy of God for their debt, if they repent of their sins and put their faith in Jesus Christ.

This view of the atonement consistently holds to the truth of the scriptures that the penalty of the law is eternal hell-fire, and Christ died on the cross for everyone, but not everyone is automatically or unconditionally saved, but that they must first repent and believe or else the wrath of God still abides upon them, and that the atonement of Christ made it possible for God to justly forgive everyone of their debt by His grace and mercy if they repent and believe.

SECTION THREE:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE OPPOSING VIEW

A proper view of the atonement is fundamental to theology. A faulty perspective inevitably leads to a faulty theology. Throughout Christian history, many heretical doctrines have risen out of a false perspective of the blood atonement of Christ which further goes to show how strict attention must be given to this topic. Many theologians have reasoned rightly, but from the wrong presupposition. A wrong premise excludes a right conclusion.

The opposing atonement view is that Christ actually suffered “the exact and literal penalty of the Divine Law” or that Christ was made the object of God’s wrath which we had stored up. We can properly refer to this view as Retributive Satisfaction. This view holds that Christ, not seeking to satisfy public justice, sought to satisfy retributive justice. In this view, God cannot actually forgive sin, He can never forgive debt, but requires that all sin be punished and all debts be paid, either by the one who accumulated it or by a third party. This view holds that the guilt of sin (of the elect or the whole world) was transferred to Christ, thus the punishment for sin was transferred to Christ in its exact and full amount. Therefore, since Christ received the exact and full punishment for our sin, we are safe from God's wrath by law of necessity. The bowl of God's wrath has been emptied upon Christ two thousand years ago and so there is no more wrath in the bowl for us to ever possibly receive.

There are numerous serious theological problems with this other view:

The Retributive Satisfaction view leads to Limited Atonement, Universalism, or Double Punishment. It must always lead to one of these three.

Limited Atonement:

If Christ’s death was the exact and literal penalty of the law, and God does not give double punishment for sin, but the whole world will not be saved, then it is only logically concluded from this premise that the death of Christ was not for the whole world but only for select individuals, those who actually are saved.

Universalism:

If Christ’s death was the exact and literal penalty of the law and God does not give double punishment for sin, and Christ died for the whole world, then it is only logically concluded from this premise that no one in the world will be condemned, all will be saved.

“If Christ died for everyone, everyone would be saved.” Joshua Williamson *3

Double Punishment:

If the death of Christ was the exact and literal penalty of the law, and Christ died for everyone, but not everyone will be saved, then it is only logically concluded from this premise that God does issue and execute double punishment for sin. In this view, Christ was already punished for the sins of the whole world. But not the whole world will be saved. And so many people in the world will receive the punishment for their sins, just as Christ was already punished for their sins. Thus, God gives double punishment.

What can be the ground for punishment other than retributive justice? And if Christ satisfied all the demands of retributive justice, upon which grounds can punishment, to those for whom Christ died, be given? Certainly the ground could not be retributive justice if all the demands of retributive justice have been already satisfied. Double punishment for a single sin then becomes groundless because the punishment can not be given upon the ground of retributive justice. And there's no other ground for punishment other than retributive justice.

“Two persons cannot be held responsible for the same offense. If a debt has been paid by a friend, it cannot be demanded of him who originally contracted it. If one could be substituted in the place of another in a penitentiary, and serve out the term of punishment assigned to the original offender, the offender could not be again imprisoned for the crime.” Albert Barnes *15

“No man can be held accountable for a debt that has already been paid for on his behalf to the satisfaction of the offended party. But a double jeopardy, a duplication of indebtedness, is indeed involved if the non-elect are to be punished for sins which the Lord Jesus Christ has already endured punishment.” Culance *17

“For God to have laid the sins of all men on Christ would mean that as regards to the lost He would be punishing their sins twice, once in Christ, and then again in them.” Boettner *18

“Reformed people argue that if Christ's death actually paid for the sins of every person who ever lived, then there is no penalty left for anyone to pay, and it necessarily follows that all people will be saved, without exception. For God could not condemn to eternal punishment anyone whose sins are already paid for: that would be demanding double payment, and it would therefore be unjust.” Wayne Grudem *19

There is no direct scriptural support for Limited Atonement, Universalism, or Double Punishment, but they are solely established through logical conclusion upon the premise of Retributive Satisfaction.

Scriptures against Limited Atonement, Universalism, Double Punishment: John 3:16, John 3:17, John 1:29, John 10:10, John 12:47, Romans 5:18, 2Corinthians 5:19, Hebrews 2:9, Colossians 1:20, 1Timothy 2:5-6, 2Peter 3:9, 1John 2:2, 1John 4:15, 1Timothy 2:4, 1Timothy 2:6, 1Timothy 4:10, 1John 5:19, 1Corinthians 6:9-10,

Galatians 5:19-21, Revelation 21:8.

The Retributive Satisfaction view leads to Unconditional and Automatic Salvation.

This is a form of antinomianism which has found its grounding upon the exact and literal penalty view. If our debt has been paid, we are unconditionally and automatically freed from our obligation, seeing that it has already been paid. You are not obligated to pay a paid debt. Believing and repenting, and even following Christ have no reason for being conditions of salvation, seeing that those for whom Christ died are in no danger of any punishment for any of their past, present, or future sins, since the punishment for all their sins has already been given. This has been the foundation of the antinomian doctrine of "Once Saved, Always Saved".

"If A owes B \$100, and C pays B \$100 in behalf of A, then A owes B nothing." Gordon C. Olson *36

Even those for whom Christ died, who have not yet been born, who have not yet sinned - repented or believed the gospel, must already be automatically forgiven unconditionally, from the very moment that their debt was paid, from the very moment retributive justice would have been satisfied. Their forgiveness would have been automatically secured 2,000 years ago, at the very moment of their payment of their debt, at the very moment retributive justice was satisfied on their behalf, and so Christians born after Christ must never have really been objects of God's wrath or anger, were never really enemies of God at all, even when they were openly living in sin and rebellion after the death of Christ.

"Every elect vessel, *from the first instance of his being*, is as pure in the eyes of God from the charge of sin as he shall be in glory. Though such persons do act rebellion, yet the loathsomeness and hatefulness of his rebellion is laid on the back of Christ; he bears the sin, as well as the blame and shame: and God can dwell with persons that act the thing, because all the filthiness of it is translated from them upon the back of Christ." Dr. Crisp [one who held to the automatic and unconditional salvation view]*4

"With equal clearness it would follow that they [those for whom Christ died] could not be required to repent of the sin which they had committed. If the whole matter is transferred and cancelled, then it is clear that there can be no reason why they should repent, or, indeed, why there should be any repentance in the case." Albert Barnes *16

"if a third person pay a debt, there would be no grace exercised by the creditor in the discharging of the debtor; yet when a third person atones for a crime, by suffering in the stead of a criminal, there is entire grace in the discharge of the criminal, and *retributive justice still allows him to be punished in his own person.*" Jonathon Edwards *27

"Forgiveness of sins is not automatic in the Christian life but requires repentance, confession, and the exercise of a humbled faith in the atoning death of Christ... before

forgiveness and cleansing can take place.” Gordon Olson *32

There is no direct scriptural support for Automatic or Unconditional Salvation but is solely established through logical conclusion upon the premise of Retributive Satisfaction.

Scriptures against Automatic and Unconditional Salvation: Exodus 32:30-35, Psalms 32:1-5, Psalms 51:1-4, Proverbs 28:13, Joel 2:12-14, Luke 22:31-32, Acts 8:30-24, Romans 5:9-10, Romans 6:1-2, Romans 8:1, 1Corinthians 5:4-5, 2Corinthians 7:9-11, Hebrews 6:6, Hebrews 10:26, Hebrews 10:29, James 5:19-20, 1John 1:9

The Retributive Satisfaction view leads to salvation by law (*punishment*) and not grace (*forgiveness*).

This view makes the foundation of our forgiveness from our debt justice rather than grace, seeing how it's just to forgive a paid debt, but its mercy to forgive an unpaid debt. Pardoned sin is not punished sin, and punished sin is not pardoned sin.

Suppose a man had a \$1000 debt, but didn't have a cent in the bank. A friend of his pays the debt for him. The action of his friend was a gracious act. But once the debt is paid, the act of releasing him from his obligation on behalf of the debtor is a just act. If this were the picture of salvation, then the grace becomes a condition for forgiveness (paying the debt) while the actual forgiving of the debt is grounded upon justice (releasing the obligation to pay a paid debt).

In this scenario, those for which Christ died can demand forgiveness upon the grounds of justice. Their forgiveness, or release from obligation to pay their own debt (hell), now becomes their right. But it would make no sense for them to plead for forgiveness upon the grounds of grace and mercy.

“When a debt is paid, there is no forgiveness; when a penalty is endured, there is no mercy.” Albert Barnes *11

“If our forgiveness be purchased, and the price of it be already paid, it seems to be a matter of debt, and not of grace.” Jonathon Edwards *20

“If the atonement of Christ be considered as the payment of a debt, the release of the sinner seems not to be an act of grace, although the payment be made by Christ, and not by the sinner personally. Suppose any one of you, my auditors, owes a certain sum; he goes and pays the full sum himself personally. Doubtless all will agree, that the creditor, in this case, when he gives up the obligation, performs a mere act of justice, in which there is no grace at all...this...places the whole grace of the gospel in providing the Savior, not in the pardon of sin.” Jonathon Edwards *25

“If Christ have, in the proper sense of the words, paid the debt which we owed to God, whether by a delegation from us or not; there can be no more grace in our discharge, than if we had paid it ourselves. But the fact is, that Christ has not, in the literal and proper sense, paid the debt for us...Payment of debt equally precludes grace, when made by a third person, as when made by the debtor himself...Grace is ever so opposed to justice, that they mutually limit each other. Wherever grace begins, justice ends; and wherever justice begins, grace ends.” Jonathon Edwards *26

"If, in the obligation of an absolute retributive justice the Father must inflict merited punishment upon sin and if in the atonement he inflicted such punishment upon his Son as the substitute for sinners-then he does not remit the penalty. No dialectics can identify such an infliction with remission. And where there is no remission of penalty there can be no grace of forgiveness. Hence, the doctrine of Satisfaction does not admit the grace of the Father in forgiveness; which fact of grace, however, is clearly given in the Scriptures." John Miley *57

There is certainly no scriptural support for salvation by law instead of grace, but it is logically concluded upon the premise of Retributive Satisfaction.

Scriptures against salvation by law instead of grace: Proverbs 16:6, John 1:17, Acts 13:39, Acts 15:11, Romans 3:24, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:16, Romans 5:2, Romans 5:15, Romans 11:6, 1Corinthians 1:4, 1Corinthians 15:10, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 2:21, Galatians 3:11, Galatians 5:4, Ephesians 2:5, Ephesians 2:8, Ephesians 1:6-7, Titus 3:5-7

The Retributive Satisfaction view leads to Antinomianism

If the death of Christ was the exact and literal penalty of the law, it leaves no reason to believe that God has anymore wrath for those in whom Christ died. If the bowl of God's wrath for the whole world has been emptied upon Christ, all judgment and wrath stopped at the cross, and all those for whom Christ died (the whole world) are already eternally saved, even if they do not know it.

Considering the biblical truth that Christ was slain before the foundation of the world, if Christ only died for some, and the cross of Christ was the wrath of God instead of an alternative to the wrath of God, and Christ emptied the bowl of God's wrath for all those for whom He died, then those elect have been saved before the foundation of the world, and since the foundation of the world God has never been angry with them, and they were never truly the enemies of God. This complicates preaching to those lost, because you can not know for certain whether they were the elect or not for which Christ died, who are not really under the wrath of God, or who God is not really angry at, because they've been accepted by God before the foundation of the world, even though they might appear lost for not presently following Christ.

Considering the biblical truth that Christ was slain before the foundation of the world, if

it were true that His slaying was the exact and literal penalty of the law so that the bowl of God's wrath is emptied, and all those for whom Christ died are already justified and already saved from wrath ever since the foundation of the world, then it stands to reason that Christians were never truly enemies of God, were never truly abiding under God's wrath, were never truly unsaved, at least since the foundation of the world or the slaying of Christ.

Furthermore, a law without penalty is no law at all, it is advice. And to say that Christ made it impossible for God to have any wrath for any of those that Christ died for (the whole world or the elect), is to say that they no longer have any possible penalty to face for transgressing the precept of God's law. That is to say that the law has lost its string, it is to say that the penalty of the law has been removed, so the law is no longer law, but is not mere advice. This is the essence of antinomianism.

“But in order to a moral law, there must be a penalty; otherwise it would be mere advice, but no law.” Jonathon Edwards *22

“There is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, *as soon as he committed it*, as to believe it after he has performed all the humiliation in the world. A believer may be assured of pardon as soon as he commits any sin, even adultery and murder...God does no longer stand displeased though a believer do sin often. There is no sin that ever believer commit that can possibly do them any harm. Therefore, as their sins cannot hurt them, so there is no cause of fear in their sins committed. Sins are but scarecrows and bugbears to fright ignorant children.” Dr Crisp [A teacher of antinomianism]*5

There is no scriptural support for Antinomianism but is solely established through logical conclusion upon the premise of Retributive Satisfaction.

Scriptures against antinomianism: Exodus 32:30-35, Psalms 5:5, Psalms 7:11, Psalms 32:1-5, Psalms 51:1-4, Proverbs 28:13, Joel 2:12-14, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 7:24, Matthew 18:32-35, Luke 12:46, Luke 22:31-32, Acts 8:30-34, Acts 14:22, Acts 14:33, Romans 2:13, Romans 5:9-10, Romans 6:1-2, 1Corinthians 5:4-5, 2Corinthians 7:9-11, Hebrews 6:6, Hebrews 10:26-31, Hebrews 10:29, James 5:19-20, 2Peter 2:21, 1John 1:9

5. The Retributive Satisfaction view leads to a confused view of the penalty for sin.

It fails to explain how the exact and literal just penalty of the law can be justly both eternal torments in hell-fire (as threatened to sinners) and temporal suffering and one-time crucifixion (as endured by Christ). The exact and literal penalty of the law must be one or the other, but cannot be both, seeing that they greatly differ in kind, amount, and duration.

There is no direct scriptural support that the wages of sin is anything other than eternal death, but it is solely established through logical conclusion upon the premise of Retributive Satisfaction.

Scriptures regarding the nature of the penalty for sin: Matthew 5:22, Matthew 18:9, Matthew 8:12, Matthew 22:13, Matthew 24:51, Matthew 25:30, Mark 9:43, Mark 9:45, Mark 9:47, Luke 13:28, Luke 16:28, Romans 6:23, Revelations 14:11, Revelations 20:14, Revelations 21:8

Scriptures regarding the nature of the atonement of Christ: Isaiah 53:5, Luke 23:16, Matthew 27:26, Matthew 27:35, Hebrews 2:9, Romans 14:9, Luke 23:44-46

The truth is, the death of Christ on the cross made it possible for the whole world to be saved, nobody is automatically or unconditionally saved, the penalty of the law has not been removed, sinners must repent and believe the gospel in order to be saved, or else they will spend eternity in hell, which is the exact and literal penalty of the law.

Webster defines a substitute as, "one person put *in the place of* another to *answer the same purpose.*" The guilty (sinners) has been substituted with the innocent (Christ), and the penalty of the law (hell-fire) has been substituted with the atonement of Christ (crucifixion). Christ took the place of sinners. And the suffering of Christ answered the same purpose that the punishment of the wicked would have. And now salvation is made possible to the whole world because of the atonement of Christ. This is the true, two-fold substitution or vicarious atonement as presented by the scriptures.

"The sufferings and especially the death of Christ were sacrificial, were not the punishment of the law but were equivalent to the meaning to it, were representative of it and substituted for it. The demands of the law were not satisfied, but the honor of the law was promoted by it as much as this honor would have been promoted by the infliction of the legal penalty upon all sinners." Gordon C. Olson *40

"The death of Christ is not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty. The necessity of an atonement is not found in the fact that the justice of God requires an invariable execution of deserved penalty, but in the fact that the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of his creatures, require that his essential and rectoral righteousness be adequately declared. The death of Christ is exponential of divine justice, and is a satisfaction in that sense, and not in the sense that it is, as of a debt, the full and complete payment of all its demands." John Miley *44

Some Armenians attempt to hold to views which contradict each other. But no single truth can be at discord with any other truth. They will claim that Christ's death was our deserved punishment, and then inconsistently go on to say that Christ died for everyone, but not everyone is automatically or unconditionally saved, and that even Christians can

lose their salvation. But their premise excludes their conclusion. The view that Christ took our exact and literal punishment is an Antinomian/Calvinistic premise and only secures an Antinomian/Calvinistic conclusion. The view of the atonement that Christ took our actual punishment is only logically consistent with the doctrines of antinomianism and Calvinism. It logically has no room within an Armenian theological system. It is a puzzle piece that simple doesn't fit into the rest of the puzzle, no matter how hard you try.

I hold that this view of the atonement, the vicarious or substitutionary atonement, which is often referred to as the Moral Government view of the atonement, is the view which is most accurately and logically consistent with the whole of scriptures.

REMARKS:

1. Some theologians suppose the “cup” in which Christ drank from was the exact and literal penalty of the Law, the eternal wrath of God (Matthew 23:39). But it must be remembered that Christ said two of His disciples would drink from the same cup He drank from (Matthew 20:23). This cup therefore must be viewed, not as the exact and literal penalty of the law, or the wrath of God, but rather it must be viewed as a cup of suffering for the sake or benefit of others. Christ did this as the only Savior of the world, and all martyrs do this, as messengers of God with the message of Christ. It was a cup of voluntary suffering for the sake of others (John 10:17-18).

For further reading on the atonement:

“The Atonement” by Albert Barnes

“The Atonement” “The Extent of the Atonement” and “Justification” by Charles Finney

“The Necessity of the Atonement”, “Grace Consistent with Atonement” and “Inferences and Reflections” by Jonathon Edwards.

QUOTES:

1. Charles G. Finney, 1851 Edition of Systematic Theology, page 60
2. Charles G. Finney, 1851 Edition of Systematic Theology, page 59
3. Joshua Williamson, Open Air Outreach message board, Doctrine and Theology section
4. Dr. Crisp, Checks to Antinomianism by John Fletcher, pg 116. Published by Carlton & Porter
5. Dr. Crisp, Checks to Antinomianism by John Fletcher, pg 116. Published by Carlton & Porter
6. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 156-157. Published by Bethany Fellowship
7. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 157. Published by Bethany Fellowship
8. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 219. Published by Bethany Fellowship
9. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 223. Published by Bethany Fellowship

10. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 230. Published by Bethany Fellowship
11. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 231. Published by Bethany Fellowship
12. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 236-237. Published by Bethany Fellowship
13. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 244-145. Published by Bethany Fellowship
14. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 296. Published by Bethany Fellowship
15. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 298. Published by Bethany Fellowship
16. Albert Barnes, The Atonement, page 299. Published by Bethany Fellowship
17. Custance, Sovereignty of Grace, page 156
18. Boettner, The Reformed Faith, page 98
19. Grudem, Systematic Theology, page 595
20. Jonathon Edwards, The Necessity of the Atonement, page 1
21. Jonathon Edwards, The Necessity of the Atonement, page 2-3
22. Jonathon Edwards, The Necessity of the Atonement, page 4
23. Jonathon Edwards, The Necessity of the Atonement, page 5-6
24. Jonathon Edwards, The Necessity of the Atonement, page 7
25. Jonathon Edwards, Grace Consistent with Atonement, page 2
26. Jonathon Edwards, Grace Consistent with Atonement, page 3-4, 6
27. Jonathon Edwards, Grace Consistent with Atonement, page 7
28. Jonathon Edwards, Inferences and Reflections on Atonement, page 3
29. Jonathon Edwards, Inferences and Reflections on Atonement, page 6
30. Jonathon Edwards, Inferences and Reflections on Atonement, page 8
31. Charles G. Finney, The Oberlin Evangelist; July 30, 1856; On the Atonement, page 2
32. Gordon Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 160. Published by Bible Research Corp
33. Gregory of Nazianzus, The Truth Shall Make You Free by Gordon Olson, page 99. Published by Bible Research Corp
34. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 108. Published by Bible Research Corp
35. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 89. Published by Bible Research Corp
36. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 93. Published by Bible Research Corp
37. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 94. Published by Bible Research Corp
38. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 95. Published by Bible Research Corp
39. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 97. Published by Bible Research Corp
40. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 100. Published by Bible Research Corp
41. Gordon C. Olson, The Truth Shall Make You Free, page 106. Published by Bible Research Corp
42. John Miley, The Governmental Theory of the Atonement, page 6
43. John Miley, The Governmental Theory of the Atonement, page 6
44. John Miley, The Governmental Theory of the Atonement, page 9
45. Charles G. Finney, The Oberlin Evangelist; July 30, 1856; On the Atonement, page 3

46. Charles G. Finney, *The Oberlin Evangelist*; July 30, 1856; *On the Atonement*, page 4
47. Charles G. Finney, *The Oberlin Evangelist*; July 30, 1856; *On the Atonement*, page 5
48. Charles G. Finney, *The Oberlin Evangelist*; July 30: 1856; *On the Atonement*, page 5
49. Charles G. Finney, *The Oberlin Evangelist*; July 30, 1856; *On the Atonement*, page 6
50. Albert Barnes, *The Atonement*, page 292-293. Published by Bethany Fellowship
51. Albert Barnes, *The Atonement*, page 295. Published by Bethany Fellowship
52. Charles G. Finney, *1851 Systematic Theology*, page 288
53. Charles G. Finney, *1851 Systematic Theology*, page 289
54. Charles G. Finney, *1851 Systematic Theology*, page 291
55. Gordon C. Olson, *The Truth Shall Make You Free*, page 33. Published by Bible Research Corp
56. John Miley, *Theory and Scripture Interpretation*, page 2
57. John Miley, *Theory and Scripture Interpretation*, page 6
58. Nathan Beman, *Four Sermons on the Doctrine of the Atonement*, page 39