



ATONEMENT

One Sheet

The *atonement* is the means of reconciliation of fallen humans—image bearers—to our perfect God for the purpose of everlasting love relationship. The reconciliation is accomplished by the removal of the obstacles to love relationship: (1) individual guilt for actively choosing satisfaction in truth, goodness, and beauty from an assumed source other than God as a result of elevating that chosen relationship over relationship with God and (2) the corporate, enslaving hold of the cursed human-spirit master—humankind’s physical essence. The atonement is accomplished by God’s forgiveness removing both obstacles.

Atonement’s Foundational Principles:

#1: The Fall: The Fall occurred when Adam chose relationship with physical creation rather than relationship with God as the more desirable means to satisfy his own passion for truth, goodness, and beauty. Immediately, Adam’s choice brought guilt of sin—missing the mark of humankind’s covenant with God for pure love relationship. A second obstacle to relationship with God was formed at the time. Adam was of the first pair of image bearers to whose spirits were given possession and rulership of physical creation. Therefore, by his choice, Adam effected the separation of physical creation from God, causing (1) it to be cursed by God and (2) his spirit, along with all human spirits, to become enslaved to his (and their) own cursed essence.

#2: Sin’s Dominion: As described in the fall, image bearers are separated from God by sin, the missing of the mark of relationship with God. The enslavement to the dominion of our shared and cursed physical essence holds sway over our individual spirits so that we continue to make choices for sin. It is impossible for the human spirit to extract itself from the enslavement to the cursed flesh so as to live in relationship with God. Thus, image bearers are destined by this shared status of cursed essence to separation from God—everlasting death.

#3: Forgiveness: God’s restoration goal is the return to love relationship with his image bearers. Restoration requires reconciliation. That reconciliation is accomplished through forgiveness, the removal of the two-part obstruction to resumed relationship. God removes the first part—individual guilt of sinful activity—through his own mercy extended by grace to those who desire relationship with him. God will remove the second part—sin status of the cursed human essence—at Christ’s return when the redemption he accomplished will be applied to all physical creation. Jesus accomplished this redemption by first becoming human—an individual spirit within the shared and cursed human physical essence. Unlike all other humans, in his spirit, Jesus never succumbed to the evil influence of the shared and cursed human physical essence. Therefore, without guilt of sin, Jesus then put his cursed physical essence to physical death (separation from God) in fulfillment of its curse. His human spirit, who had been unaffected by influence from the cursed essence and was thus pure, holy, and undefiled, reclaimed (redeemed) his physical essence (his body), bringing it (now without the curse ended in death) to life again (renewed and sinless relationship with God). The redemption of his body was but the firstfruits of the still-to-come full redemption of all physical creation, which he will accomplish at his physical return to this earth.

#4: Restoration: By the atonement accomplished by Christ, trusting human spirits may take part in the atoning work that freed human essence from the curse. In this age, only Jesus’s body (as firstfruits) has been reclaimed from the physical-essence curse. However, believers (those who desire relationship with God and trust in his atonement) hope for his return at which time all physical creation will be put to death and reclaimed to life with God.