



The Five Points of Calvinism 4

Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption) (Rom. 5:6-11)

o Christ's death made atonement for the sins of His people only.

1. Atonement for sin is needed because God is not only merciful but also just.

- The consequences of sins need to be atoned for, i.e. to be neutralised, or made up for.
 - : Expiation (*hilaskomai*, Rom. 2:17; Heb. 1:3), making up for the offence of sin, by substitution. Looking from man's point of view.
 - : Propitiation (*hilasterion*, Rom. 3:25), enabling God to receive sinners, by His wrath turned away. Looking from God's point of view.
- We need to be redeemed, i.e. to be set free by payment of a ransom, to God, not Satan.
 - : Redemption is accomplished by Christ dying in the place of His people (Rom. 3:24; Gal. 3:13).
 - : Also referred to as Christ's blood, i.e. His death (Heb. 9:13-14, 27-28; 10:28-29).
- Reconciliation/peace with God is accomplished (Rom. 5:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:18-19).
 - : William Tyndale coined the word "at-one-ment".
 - : "Double imputation" is a teaching of the Bible (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 4:22-25).

2. Christ's death was to atone for the sins of His people only.

- The Father has given the Son a fixed number of people (John 6:39; 17:24).
- Only those who belong to Christ will listen and follow Him (John 10:26-27).
- Salvation is for the elect only (Rom. 5:15, 19; 2 Tim 1:9-10 cf 2:10).
- Christ's death was not for everyone (Matt. 1:21; 20:28; Luke 19:10).
- Atonement for sins was limited to Christ's people. Christ's death was particularly for them.
- Even logic shows inconsistency if Christ died for all, but not all are saved. Did God failed?

3. Differences and difficulties.

- Amyraldism (or Amyraldianism) is also known as the School of Saumur, post redemptionism, moderate Calvinism, four-point Calvinism. Named after Moses Amyraut (1596-1664).
 - : Teaches that God foreordained a universal salvation, which is offered to all on condition of faith.
 - : Man has the power to believe, but lacks the willingness to believe because of inherent depravity.
- Summarised as "Christ's atoning death was sufficient for all and efficient for some (the elect)".
 - : However, in question is not the efficacy of Christ's death, but the intent or purpose of His death.
- Amyraldism held by Richard Baxter, Andrew Fuller, JC Ryle, Sovereign Grace preachers (e.g. John Piper), many Bible Presbyterian churches.

- : BB Warfield calls it “an inconsistent and therefore unstable form of Calvinism” (BB Warfield, “The Plan of Salvation”, Eerdmans (1973)).
- Wrong understanding of certain passages of Scripture.
- : Some Bible passages speak of Christ dying for “all” men (Rom. 5:18; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:4-6; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:1-2). However, a careful examination shows that they do not mean every individual in the world will be saved, e.g. Heb. 2:9 cf vv 10-13; 1 John 2:1-2 cf. vv 15-17.
- : Other passages speak of Christ dying for “the world” (John 1:9, 29; 3:16-17; 4:42; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:1-2; 4:14 etc.). One reason was to correct the idea that salvation was for the Jews only (cf. Rom. 3:29-30; Gal. 3:26-29).

4. Practical Implications of Limited Atonement.

- Misunderstanding of Hyper-Calvinists against free-offer of the gospel & organised evangelism since we hold to the doctrine.
- Misunderstanding of Arminians that evangelism will be hampered if we hold to the doctrine.
- : True Calvinism is strongly evangelistic and mission-minded, e.g. the 17th century Particular Baptists, William Carey, David Brainerd, CH Spurgeon.
- Do not fear preaching Limited Atonement, for all “Five Points” belong together as a system.

= The “warrant of faith” is not that Christ died for me, but Christ died to save sinners.

= The certainty that the sheep will hear His voice encourages us to preach “Christ crucified”.

Review Questions

1. What does Limited Atonement teach?
2. What do “expiation” and “propitiation” mean?
3. What is “redemption” and how is it accomplished?
4. What does the atonement for sin accomplish for the sinner in his relation to God?
5. How may Amyraldism be summarised?
6. Name some well-known men who had held to Amyraldism.
7. How did B B Warfield describe Amyraldism?
8. How should we understand Bible passages that speak of Christ dying for “all” men and for “the world”?
9. How do Hyper-Calvinists react to the doctrine of Limited Atonement?
10. How do Arminians react to the doctrine of Limited Atonement?

Assignment/Discussion

The “warrant of faith” has been a contention in history. Do we need to *know* that Christ died for me before we come to Him? Do we need to *feel* our need of Christ before we come to Him? Do we have to have *accomplish* sufficient change in life before coming to Christ? Need something be achieved *within* the person - in mind, heart, or will - before he comes to Christ? Or is the warrant outside himself, and found only in the word of God - the command to come to Christ (John 3:16; Acts 2:38; 16:31; 1 John 3:23)? Discuss how Hyper-Calvinism and Arminianism would have different opinions on this.
