

UNLIMITED ATONEMENT

1. Whether Jesus' atonement is limited or unlimited is hotly disputed.

- a. Some verses suggest limited atonement.
 - (1) **Jn 10:14-15** 14 I am the good shepherd, and I know my own and my own know me, 15 even as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.
 - (2) **Ac 20:28** 28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock..., to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.
 - (3) **Eph 5:25** 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Messiah also loved the church and gave himself up for her.
- b. Others suggest unlimited atonement.
 - (1) **Jn 3:16** 16 God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
 - (2) **1 Ti 2:4-6** 4 [God] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Messiah Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all.
 - (3) **1 Jn 2:2** 2 [Jesus] himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.
- c. How do we reconcile these apparently contradictory verses?
 - (1) "The issue is well defined, and men of sincere loyalty to the Word of God and who possess true scholarship are found on both sides of the controversy. It is true that the doctrine of a limited redemption is one of the five points of Calvinism, but not all who are rightfully classified as Calvinists accept this one feature of that system. It is equally true that all Arminians are unlimited redemptionists, but to hold the doctrine of unlimited redemption does not necessarily constitute one an Arminian."¹
 - (2) Among Calvinists there are some who hold to unlimited atonement (so-called four-point Calvinists or Amyraldians, after Moses Amyraldus, d. 1664), and some who teach limited atonement (so-called ultra or five-point Calvinists).²
 - (3) Advocates of unlimited atonement include Moise Amyraut, Lewis S. Chafer, and Charles C. Ryrie.
 - (4) Advocates of limited atonement include John Calvin, the Synod of Dort, John Owen, Louis Berkhof, and J. I. Packer.
- d. The question re-stated:
 - (1) "Did the Father in sending Christ, ...to make atonement for sin, do this with the design or for the purpose of saving only the elect or all men? That is the question, and that only is the question."³
 - (2) "Was the objective in Christ's death one of making the salvation of all men *possible*, or was it the making of the salvation of the elect *certain*?"⁴

¹ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:183.

² C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 367-68.

³ L. Berkhof, quoted in C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 367.

⁴ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:194.

(3) What was finished at the cross? The payment of the sins of all, or the payment of sins of believers only?

(a) **Jn 19:30** 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, It is finished. And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

e. Unlimited and limited atonement advocates agree about:

- (1) Man's total depravity.
- (2) Jesus' substitutionary death as the only sufficient ground for a person to be saved.
- (3) Man's inability to believe apart from the enabling power of the Spirit.
- (4) Not all people being saved.

2. Unlimited atonement defined.

- a. On the cross, Jesus paid the judicial penalty for every human sin, without exception.
- b. On this basis, justification is available to every human being through faith in Jesus.
- c. One gets the benefit of unlimited atonement only when one believes in Jesus.
 - (1) Jesus died provisionally for all men, but the benefit is applied only when the condition of personal saving faith is met.⁵
 - (2) "The Atonement of Christ paid for the sins of the whole world, but the individual must appropriate that payment through faith."⁶
- d. The provision of atonement does not have to equal the application of atonement.
 - (1) Justification is potential for everyone but actual only for believers.
 - (2) **Ro 3:24-26** 24 [All believers] are justified by [God's] grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood [unlimited provision], to be received by faith [limited application]. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- e. Not everyone is justified and going to heaven.
- f. The sin of unbelief is different in kind from all other sins.
- g. Jesus' unlimited atonement does not extend to the sin of unbelief.
 - (1) Unbelief in Jesus is the unforgivable sin.

3. Scriptural evidence for unlimited atonement.

- a. Scripture portrays the love of God in universal terms.
 - (1) **Lk 19:10** 10 ...The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
 - (a) All human beings are lost.
 - (2) **Jn 3:16-17** 16 God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
 - (3) **Jn 6:33** 33 ...The bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

⁵ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:188.

⁶ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 372-373.

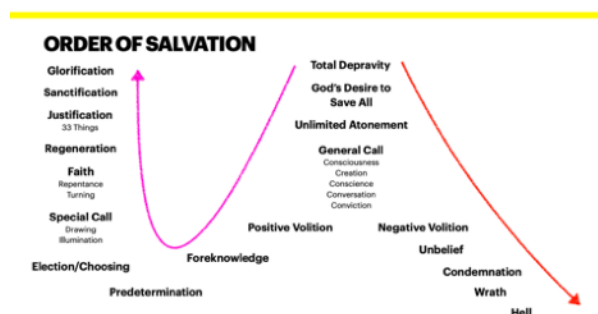
- (4) **Jn 6:51** 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.
 - (5) **2 Co 15:18-19** 18 All this is from God, who through Messiah reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. 19 That is, in Messiah God was reconciling the world (κόσμος) to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
 - (6) **1 Ti 2:4-6** 4 [God] desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth [God's desire to save all]. 5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and humanity, the man Messiah Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all [unlimited atonement], which is the testimony [general call] given at the proper time.
 - (7) **1 Ti 4:10** 10 To this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all people [potentially], especially [actually] of those who believe.
 - (8) **Tit 2:11** 11 The grace of God has appeared, bringing [the possibility of] salvation for all people.
 - (9) **1 Jn 4:10** 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation (ἰλασμός) for our sins.
- b. Scripture portrays the death of Jesus in universal terms.
- (1) **Is 53:5-6** 5 [The Servant] was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned—every one—to his own way. And Yahweh has laid on him the iniquity of us all [believers and unbelievers].
 - (2) **Jn 1:29** 29 The next day [John] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
 - (3) **Ro 5:6-8** 6 ...While we were still weak, at the right time Messiah died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Messiah died for us.
 - (4) **Ro 5:15** 15 If the many (οἱ πολλοὶ) died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for the many (τοὺς πολλοὺς).
 - (5) **2 Co 5:14-15** 14 The love of Messiah controls us because we have concluded this: that one has died for (ὑπέρ) all, therefore all have died. 15 And he died for (ὑπέρ) all, that those who live [believers] might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
 - (6) **Col 1:19-20** 19 It was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in [the Son], 20 and through him to reconcile all things (τὰ πάντα) to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, through him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven [the existence of the fallen universe and all angelic and human history].
 - (7) **1 Ti 2:4-6** 4 [God] desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth [God's desire to save all]. 5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and humanity, the man Messiah Jesus, 6 who gave

himself as a ransom for all [unlimited atonement], which is the testimony [general call] given at the proper time.

- (8) **Heb 2:9** 9 We see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.
 - (9) **Heb 2:17** 17 [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation (ἱλάσκομαι) for the sins of [all] the people.
 - (10) **1 Jn 2:2** 2 [Jesus] is the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of all the world (περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου).
 - (a) "...[T]he only other occurrence of the phrase 'the whole world' in John's writings is in 1 John 5:19, and there it undebatably includes everybody. So the presumption is that it also means everyone in 2:2. And this means that Christ died for all people even though all are not ultimately saved."⁷
- c. Scripture commands the universal proclamation of the gospel.
- (1) **2 Co 15:18-20** 18 All this is from God, who through Messiah reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. 19 That is, in Messiah God was reconciling the world (κόσμος) to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore we are ambassadors for Messiah, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- d. Scripture portrays some for whom Jesus died being eternally lost.
- (1) **2 Pe 2:1** 1 False prophets...arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought (ἀγοράζω, aor.) them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.
 - (a) "It is generally acknowledged that the verse most difficult to harmonise with the limited atonement view is 2 Peter 2:1."

4. Logical arguments for unlimited atonement.

- a. In the order of salvation, unlimited atonement fits perfectly between God's desire to save all and God's general call. See *Order of Salvation*, *God's Desire* and *God's General Call*.



⁷ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 371.

- b. Unlimited atonement does not preclude other aspects of the order of salvation, like foreknowledge, predetermination, election, and God’s special call.
- (1) “Without the slightest inconsistency the unlimited redemptionists may believe in an election according to sovereign grace, that *none* but the elect will be saved, that *all* of the elect will be saved, and that the elect are by divine enablement alone called out of the estate of spiritual death....”⁸
- c. The difference between provision and application is common in every day life.
- (1) A Roman slave whose freedom is purchased but who refuses to leave slavery.
- (a) “There is the aspect of redemption which is represented by the word ἀγοράζω, translated *redeem*, which word means *to purchase in the market*; and, while it is used to express the general theme of redemption, its technical meaning implies only the *purchase* of the slave, but does not necessarily convey the thought of his *release* from slavery. ... There is, then, a redemption which *pays the price*, but does not of necessity *release* the slave, as well as redemption which is unto *abiding freedom*.”⁹
- (2) A parent providing food for family members who refuse to eat.
- (a) “If we say that a father provides sufficient food for his family, we do not exclude the possibility that some members of that family may refuse to eat what has been provided. But their refusal does not mean that the provision was made only for those who actually do eat the food. Likewise, the death of Christ provided the payment for the sins of all people—those who accept that payment and those who do not. Refusal to accept does not limit the provision made. Providing and possessing are not the same.”¹⁰
- d. Condemnation for unbelief corresponds much better with unlimited atonement.
- (1) **Jn 3:18** 18 Whoever believes in [the Son] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
- (2) “...[M]en cannot reject what does not even exist, and if Christ did not die for the nonelect, they cannot be condemned for unbelief (cf. John 3:18).”¹¹
- (3) See below.
- e. Unlimited atonement levels the playing field and gives everyone the chance to believe in Jesus.
- (1) **Jn 3:14-15** 14 ...As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.
- f. Unlimited atonement better accords with Jesus’ redemption of planet earth.
- (1) **Re 5:5-6** 5 One of the elders said to me, Weep no more! Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals. 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven

⁸ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:183.

⁹ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:192.

¹⁰ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 367.

¹¹ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:187.

horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

- g. Unlimited atonement better accords with the justification of all human beings unable to believe or not believe, including children who die before the age of accountability.
 - (1) “Substitution may be absolute in some respects, and conditional in others, *e.g.*, a philanthropist may pay the ransom price of an enslaved family, so that the children shall be unconditionally freed, and the parents only on condition of their suitably acknowledging the kindness. Similarly the substitution of Christ was partly absolute, and partly conditional, in proportion to man’s capacity of choice and responsibility. His death availed for the rescue of infants from the race-guilt; their justification, like their condemnation, being independent of their knowledge and will, and irrespective of any condition which might render the benefit contingent. But for the further benefit of saving men who have personally and voluntarily sinned, the death of Christ avails potentially, taking effect in their complete salvation if they accept Him with true faith.”¹²
- h. Unlimited atonement does not necessitate universal salvation.
 - (1) “Unlimited redemptionists are not universalists. They do not believe that all will ultimately be saved. Nor does their view require or logically lead to such a heretical conclusion. To assert this is to create a straw man.”¹³
 - (2) “...Christ can be said to be the Saviour of all without all being saved.”¹⁴
- i. That men are lost for whom Jesus died does not mean God is somehow defeated.
 - (1) “It is God’s desire not to get everything he desires.” See *God’s Desire*.
 - (2) Man’s response to God often doesn’t match what God has made available through his grace (Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; Israel in the land of Canaan).

5. Unlimited atonement means faith in Jesus, not sin, is the unbeliever’s primary issue.

- a. The unbeliever’s past, present, and future sins have already been paid for.
- b. The sin of unbelief is in a category all its own.
- c. What makes the sin of unbelief so horrible is that it rejects all that the Father has done for the sinner through sending his own innocent Son to die.
 - (1) If you sent your own innocent son to die for someone, how would you feel if that person rejected your son’s death and spit on his grave?
 - (2) **1 Pe 1:18-19** 18 You [believers] were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Messiah, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
- d. People are condemned to hell for all eternity not because of their personal sins, but because of their unbelief.
 - (1) **Jn 3:18** 18 Whoever believes in [the Son] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

¹² M. Randles, *Substitution*, 10, quoted in L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:200.

¹³ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 368.

¹⁴ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 371.

- (2) **Jn 3:36** 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey the Son [by believing in him] shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
- (3) “The unlimited redemptionists believe that the substitutionary death of Christ accomplished to infinite perfection all that divine holiness could ever require for every lost soul of this age; that the elect are saved on the ground of Christ’s death for them through the effective call and divine enablement of the Spirit; that the value of Christ’s death is rejected even by the elect until the hour that they believe; and that that value is rejected by the nonelect forever, and for this rejection they are judged.”¹⁵
- e. The sin of unbelief is the issue, not one’s already-paid-for personal sins.
 - (1) **Jn 16:8-11** 8 ...When [the Spirit] comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.
- f. Quotes.
 - (1) “[M]en cannot reject what does not even exist, and if Christ did not die for the nonelect, they cannot be condemned for unbelief (cf. John 3:18). Both salvation and condemnation are conditioned on the individual’s reaction to one and the same thing, namely, the saving grace of God made possible through the death of Christ.”¹⁶
 - (2) “The sum total of sin in the present age is *unbelief* (John 16:9), as the sum total of human responsibility toward God in securing a right relation to God is *belief* (John 6:29).”¹⁷
 - (3) “...[T]he sin of unbelief assumes a specific quality, in that it is man’s answer to that which Christ wrought and finished for him when bearing his sins on the cross.”¹⁸

6. Limited atonement explained.

- a. Limited atonement is the outworking of God’s divine decree of election, whereby some are elect and others are not.
 - (1) “By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or death.”¹⁹
- b. Jesus came into the world to save some, not all.²⁰

¹⁵ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:200.

¹⁶ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 187.

¹⁷ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:197.

¹⁸ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:198.

¹⁹ J. Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, III, xxi, 5.

²⁰ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 367.

- c. Jesus died only for the sins of the elect.
- d. The law of substitution demands that all represented by Jesus on the cross be saved. Otherwise Jesus' blood would be wasted and his intent frustrated.
- e. The provision of substitution must equal the application of substitution.
 - (1) "Christ's substitution for a lost soul *necessitates* the salvation of that soul."²¹
 - (2) "The limited redemptionists...believe that the elect are saved because it is *necessary* for them to be saved in view of the fact that Christ died for them."²²
- f. Unlimited atonement would necessitate universal salvation.

7. A response to "limited atonement" verses.

- a. Some Scriptures are ambiguous, like many of the "many" verses.
 - (1) **Mt 20:28** 28 The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many (πολύς).
 - (2) **Mt 26:28** 28 ...This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (a) It's unsure whether "many" includes everyone or just believers.
 - (3) **Ro 5:15** 15 ...The free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.
 - (4) **Heb 2:10** 10 ...It was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.
 - (5) **Heb 9:26-28** 26 ...[Jesus] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgment, 28 so Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of the many (τὸ πολλῶν), will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
 - (a) Whose the many? We're not exactly told.
- b. Some Scriptures do relate Jesus' atonement particularly to the elect. However, Jesus dying for the sins of believers does not preclude him from dying for the sins of unbelievers. The converse isn't necessarily true.
 - (1) **Is 53:11-12** 11 By his knowledge shall the Righteous One, my Servant, make many [believers] to be accounted righteous [the justification of believers], and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many [believers], and he shall divide the spoil with the strong [believers], because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. Yet he bore the sin of many [believers, but not necessarily not unbelievers] and makes intercession for the transgressors.
 - (2) **Jn 10:14-15** 14 I am the good shepherd, and I know my own and my own know me, 15 even as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep [believers, but not necessarily not unbelievers].
 - (a) That Jesus laid down his life for the sheep [believers], doesn't mean he didn't lay down his life for unbelievers.

²¹ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:199.

²² L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:200.

- (3) **Jn 15:13** 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends [disciples].
 - (a) This doesn't mean Jesus didn't lay down his life for his enemies. In fact:
 - 1) **Ro 5:10** 10 ...If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled [as believers], shall we be saved by his life.
 - (4) **Ac 20:28** 28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.
 - (a) That Jesus obtained the church with his own blood does not mean he didn't pay the redemption price for those outside the church.
 - (5) **Ro 4:24-25** 24 ...[Faith] will be counted to us who believe in [God] who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.
 - (a) That Jesus was delivered up for the trespasses of believers does not mean he was not delivered up for the trespasses of unbelievers, too.
 - (6) **Ga 3:13** 13 Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Torah by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.
 - (7) **Eph 5:25** 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Messiah also loved the church and gave himself up for her.
 - (a) That Jesus gave himself up for the church does not mean he didn't give himself up for unbelievers outside the church.
 - (8) **1 Pe 1:18-19** 18 You [believers] were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Messiah, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
 - (9) **1 Pe 2:21-24** 21 Messiah...suffered for (ὐπέρ) you [believers], leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ...24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
- c. The bottom line is we cannot make a firm conclusion about unbelievers from descriptions about believers.
- (1) “The Scriptures do not always include all the truth involved in the theme presented, at a given place. Similarly, if the fact that any reference to the nonelect world is omitted from these passages (which refer only to the elect) is a sufficient ground for the contention that Christ died only for the elect, then it could be argued with inexorable logic that Christ died only for Israel (cf. John 11:51; Isa. 53:8); and that He died only for the Apostle Paul, for Paul declares ‘who loved me, and gave himself for me’ (Gal. 2:20).”²³
 - (2) “...[T]hese unlimited verses can include the truth of the limited ones; but since the reverse is not true, it seems best to conclude that the death of Christ was unlimited in its value. It was for all men, but of course the personal application of that death is limited to those who believe in Him.”²⁴

²³ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:202.

²⁴ C. C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972).

- (3) “The question is: Are there Scriptures that broaden the extent of the Atonement beyond the elect? Limited advocates say no and attempt to explain those passages that seem to broaden the Atonement in ways that do not broaden it. In other words, unlimited advocates acknowledge that the Atonement is both limited and unlimited....”²⁵

8. Logical arguments against limited atonement.

- a. Limited atonement violates God’s attributes of:
 - (1) Love.
 - (a) **Jn 3:16** 16 ...God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son....
 - (2) Justice.
 - (a) **Ro 2:11** 11 ...God shows no partiality.
 - (b) **Ac 10:34** 34 ...Peter opened his mouth and said: Truly I understand that God shows no partiality....
- b. Limited atonement contradicts:
 - (1) God’s desire to save all.
 - (2) God’s general call.
 - (a) Adherents of limited atonement are unable to say to unbelievers, “Jesus died for you,” because it is impossible for them to know if that’s the case.
 - (b) Limited atonement ends up being salvation by election and not salvation through faith.

9. Because of unlimited atonement, God is able to issue a general call to humanity.

- a. We are able to say confidently to all, “God loves you” and “Jesus died for you.”
- b. God wants us focusing on Jesus’s person and work, not whether we are elect or not.
 - (1) “The gospel must be understood by those to whom it is preached; and it is wholly impossible for the limited redemptionist, when presenting the gospel, to hide with any completeness his conviction that the death of Christ is only for the elect. And nothing could be more confusing to an unsaved person than to be drawn away from the consideration of the saving grace of God in Christ, to the contemplation of the question whether he is elect or not. Who can prove that he is of the election?”²⁶
- c. But be careful. Limited atonement advocates can be great evangelists.
 - (1) “It does seem to make more sense to say that unlimited redemption is more compatible with universal Gospel preaching. However, it must be recognised that believing in limited atonement does not necessarily dampen one’s evangelistic efforts. Some great evangelists, like Spurgeon, held to limited atonement. And some who hold to unlimited atonement fail in their responsibility to witness.”²⁷

10. There are two views how unlimited atonement relates to final judgment.

- a. View #1: The unbeliever’s personal sins are taken into account.

²⁵ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 368-369.

²⁶ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:205.

²⁷ C. C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 372.

- (1) This view says Jesus' payment for the unbeliever's personal sins was provisional but not actual. Therefore it does not violate the principle of double jeopardy for God to take into account the unbeliever's personal sins when sentencing him or her to the lake of fire.
- (2) In other words, a person's unbelief opens the door for God to consider all the person's sins.
- (3) Support for this position includes:
 - (a) **Jn 8:21-24** 21 ...[Jesus] said to [the Jewish leaders] again, I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin [of unbelief]. Where I am going, you cannot come. ...23 He said to them, You are from below. I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your [personal] sins, for unless you believe that I Am you will die in your [personal] sins.
- b. View #2: The unbeliever's personal sins are not taken into account.
 - (1) This view says under the principle of double jeopardy, because all personal sins were judged at the cross, they cannot and will not be considered by God at the final judgment. Unbelievers will be judged on: (1) whether they believed in Jesus; and (2) their human good.
- c. Revelation 20 could be interpreted either way.
 - (1) **Re 20:12-15** 12 ...I saw the dead [unbelievers], great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book [of faith in Jesus] was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead [unbelievers] were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead [unbelievers] who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead [unbelievers] who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life [due to unbelief], he was thrown into the lake of fire.

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