

Christ our Sacrifice

1 John 2:2. He is the propitiation for
our sins; and not for ours only, but also
for the sins of ^{the whole} world.

Circumstances of a peculiar nature jus-
tified our venerable apostle in addressing
his brethren in the faith in the endearing
language of a father calling them his little
or dear children. He was probably the
only surviving apostle at the time this
epistle was written, and the advanced
age to which he had arrived, together
with his long continued usefulness,
faithfulness and love to Christians, his care
and anxiety for their spiritual and eternal
welfare gave him a kind of parental au-
thority over them, and it was therefore
peculiarly proper for him to address them
as his spiritual family. Feeling the responsi-
bility of his station, as a father in the church
and an overseer of the flock of God he no doubt
felt it to be his duty to instruct them
more fully in ^{the} doctrines of the gospel and to
endeavor to establish them in the truth
before he should go hence to receive his reward.

The things, which he was about to write were for their edification and comfort, to "stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance"; that they might with ~~much~~ watchfulness and prayer guard against every temptation to sin; and lest, when they had fallen into sin, (as every one is liable to) they might be despair of pardon from God, he assured them that "if any man ~~(that is, Chris-~~^{any} ~~tian)~~ sin he has an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous?" and that He was the propitiation for their sins and not for this only but also for the sins of the whole world: that he would intercede with the Father for them and therein all "might have a strong consolation, who had fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them."

Jesus Christ is here set forth as a propitiation. — The Greek word "ἱλασμος" here translated propitiation, signifies according to our most approved dictionaries, a sacrifice to appease God's wrath, an atonement for a crime a propitiation. Christ uses then our sacrifices to God to appease His holy wrath, to answer ^{of the divine law} the demands, against the sinner, and to render the great Jehovah propitious towards us that we might approach unto Him in hopes of pardon. He was an atonement for our sins therefore ^{we} will pursue the subject under

the term Atonement and endeavor in
I To shew the design, and
II The extent of the atonement.

I We shall endeavor to shew the design of the atonement viz. that it was to take away sin, to make perfect satisfaction to the divine law; to answer its demands against the sinner, that ~~he~~ might be justified, not by his own works for, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified," but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The law of God required perfect obedience ^{of man} to every article thereof, upon which life was promised, but man being left to the freedom of his own will, soon ~~exhibited~~ ^{by} the ~~avowed depravity~~ ^{open rebellion} of his heart ~~against God~~. transgressed the commands of God and thus brought death on himself and ruin on his posterity. The law ~~was~~ broken and justice demanded satisfaction, which man was unable to make, in consequence of the impurity of his nature, therefore he must suffer its penalty viz. eternal death. "There was no created arm, that could bring salvation." Justice was about to be executed upon the sinner, when the ~~mercy~~

ulate Son of God he held him and petitioned
his condition, and freely offered to take
on himself the weight of man's redem-
ption to suffer in his stead. "He
offered himself without spot to God"
that the sinner through him might
be justified and restored to divine favor.
He poured forth his most precious
blood to wash away the sinner's guilt
to deliver him from the curse of the
law, which would inevitably sink him
to hell - "He died the just for the un-
just that he might bring sinners to
God." He thereby repaired the breach in
the divine law, and opened a way
whereby sinners might obtain salva-
tion from their sins and rest in the
Kingdom of heavenly glory.

But the atonement never was designed
to save men in their sins but from
their sins & therefore no person can
derive the least benefit from it,
who does not forsake his sins and
cordially embrace the Lord Jesus
as his Redeemer and trust in him

alone for justification. Again, The
sinner's guilt is not in the least di-
minished by the propitiatory sacra-
ment of Jesus Christ (The way only is
open by which he may be justified) and
if he ever is saved, he is as much in-
debted to divine grace as though Christ
had not died, and whosoever hopes to
go to heaven except through Christ
"the door" will find himself disap-
pointed when he shall see Abraham and
Isaac & Jacob in the pining dome of heav-
en and himself shut out."

II We are to shew the extent of the atonement.

Our apostle appears to have directed his
epistle to the believing Jews, and was address-
ing them in particular ~~in this~~ when he said
"He is the propitiation for our sins," therefore
"we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus
Christ the righteous and he is the propitiation
for our sins" so that if any among those be-
lieving Jews should commit sin he had hope
of pardon by the intercession of this glorious
Advocate and Mediator. He further observes
that He was not the propitiation for their sins
only but also for the whole world: that not
for them only, but who were Jews; but also for
believing Gentiles.

But again it is said he is the propitiation
for the sins of the whole world; which is
to be taken in a limited sense for it is con-
trary to the analogy of faith and sound reason
to believe that He would die to redeem
or atone for those whom He knew from
all eternity would not be saved: Therefore
He made an atonement for all who would
believe throughout the whole world whether
Jew or Gentile. ~~But~~ It may be objected by
some that all will be saved that he atoned
for all for it is written 1 Cor. 15: 22. For as in
Adam all die so in Christ shall all be made
alive: but this appears to have special reference
to the general resurrection, in ^{which} all will be made
alive, the saints to everlasting glory and sinners
to shame and everlasting contempt. Again it is
said in Isa. 53: 12. He made intercession for the trans-
gressors ^{which} ~~and~~ was fulfilled in Luke 23: 34. Father
forgive them in praying for his enemies, "Father
forgive them for they know not what they do"
But ~~this~~ ^{this} must be applied to him in his
human nature, in which he was bound with
the rest of mankind, to do good unto them
^{who} hated him and pray for them that persecuted him.
Therefore as man, he interceded for his enemies;
not as God. It may appear more plain that

it was only in his human nature that he prayed
for them, (in which the greatness of his affection was
manifested and, ~~not~~ their salvation inferred) for he
in the prayer he put up to the Father for himself
in the Garden of Gethsemane, just before his suf-
fering, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me."
Matt 26:39. whereby he signified the formidable length
of the death he was to undergo, and that his human
nature could not but dread such a degree of
suffering." This must be considered different from
his mediatorial intercession for ~~sinners~~ his
people, in which he represents the merits of
his death as what would effectually procure
the blessings purchased thereby.

If Jesus made an atonement for every individual
as some suppose he then delivers those from
the wrath to come, who are and shall forever be
children of wrath, driven into everlasting pun-
ishment where there shall be weeping and wait-
ing and gnashing of teeth," which implies a plain
contradiction of divine revelation. We might
with as much propriety say that Christ died
to save those, whom he knew would be damned;
~~and that ^{thus} he died in vain~~ in which case he
would have died in vain. This is contrary to
scripture and common sense. ~~He~~ ^{no person} would
suppose that the Son of God would leave the
throne of his glory and come into this
lower world and suffer what our ~~ance-~~
sors did from the malice of his enemies.

unless he had some glorious work to
accomplish? Never would the Father
have consented for his only begotten Son to
~~leave~~ ^{leave} his bosom for any thing ~~what~~
of the work for which he came viz. man's
redemption, which ~~he~~ ^{was} accomplished when
he cried "it is finished," and gave up the
ghost." But he did not die for ~~all~~ ^{any} ~~with~~
~~appearing we entered~~, but for those who ob-
tain it, viz. believers. which we shall
endeavor to prove and

1 They are stiled his sheep, of which he
is the Shepherd. "I am the good Shepherd,
the good Shepherd giveth his life for
the sheep. John 10:11. Therefore in this met-
aphor ~~before~~ those for whom Christ
died, are distinguished from the world
as the objects of his special care and pro-
tection. Our Saviour further says "verse 14.
"I know my sheep and am known of
mine." That is with a knowledge of affec-
tion, which cannot be said with respect
to the world, for he says Matt 25:12 "verily
I say unto you I know you not."
Again, the sheep shall obtain salvation
as our Saviour says of them John 10:

27. 28. My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands, which cannot apply to all the world.

2 They are also called believers for whom Christ died, to distinguish them from the rest of the world or those who remain in unbelief and impenitency for Christ says John 10: 26

"Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep."

3 They for whom Christ died are distinguished from the world by the appellation of friends John 15: 13, 14.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." and they are further distinguished from the world inasmuch as they are chosen by Christ and ordered that they should go and bring forth fruit."

4. They are stiled the children of God scattered abroad, who should be gathered together in one, as the consequence of his death. And Heb. 2: 13. Behold I and the children God hath given me."

5 They for whom Christ died and called his church, of which He is head and body of whom he is the saviour, in Eph. 5: 23. and these he is said to have loved and given himself for them.

self for, in verse 25. The church is distinguished from the world, as gathered out of it, and as being a distinct body of themselves who enjoy certain privileges, which the rest of the world do not. But we are not here to understand the word church, to mean ~~simply~~ ~~merely~~ a number of professing people of which some are true possessors of religion or others hypocrites, but to represent the true Church which is styled the spouse of Christ and in Rev. 21:9 the Bride the Lamb's wife, and is united to him by a living faith and that shall be eternally saved: being sanctified and cleansed by the washing of water by the word, which shall be presented to himself a glorious church, ~~not~~ not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

- 6 Again they are called his people whom he designs to save from their sins Matt. 1:21. who are denoted a people distinguished from the world as being "zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. and therefore however great our pretensions to religion are, if ever religion does not lead us to good works, bringing forth fruits meet for repentance we have reason to conclude that we are not of this true Church.

That Christ did not die alike for all mankind, appears from his death's being an instance of the greatest love, and they who are concerned therein, are in a peculiar manner obliged to him for it as such. It is said Rev. 1: 5. He loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and herein it is said Rom 5: 8. God commendeth his love towards us for while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. The phrase, "while we were yet sinners." appears to imply that they were at that time converts to Jesus, and moreover this epistle was directed to such as were "beloved of God", called to be saints." Rom 1: 7. Surely those towards whom Christ manifested his love by dying for them, must be distinguished from the world. Our Saviour speaks of this as far exceeding all that love which exists in the breasts of men for one another. John 15: 13. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man ^{should} lay down his life for his friends." This love is the subject matter of eternal praise of glorified spirits: And they sung a new song. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Rev 5: 9. which plainly shews that Hellens one not included; for they were redeemed out of v. 6. and again Philippi 1: 29. Unto you it is given, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but to suffer for his sake. And again it appears that Christ did not die for all mankind by his not interceding for them, as he saith John 17: 9. 20. I pray for the

I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou
hast given me for they are thine. neither pray
I for the world alone but for them also who shall
believe on me through thine word." But some

say ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~denya~~ ~~limited~~ ~~denya~~ ~~say~~
certainly Christ died for all for it is ~~written~~
said in the words of our text that he is the
propitiation for the sins of the whole world"
but let us consider that the words, all, all men,
the world, all the world, are often used ^{in scripture} in a
limited manner for a part and not the whole.

(1) The word all is evidently often used when every
individual is not intended. Thus we read Ex. 9:6.
that "all the cattle of Egypt died and in the following
words that none of the cattle of the children of Israel
died and moreover according to verse 3 of the same
chapter it appears that none of the cattle of the Eyp-
tians died except those in the field, and it is like-
wise certain that a great number of cattle were
reserved to be destroyed by the plague of hail:
And again we read in verse 25th that the hail smote
every herb of the field, and brake every tree of
the field. and in chap. 10:5. we read of the locusts
eating the residue of that which escaped and remained
unto them of the hail.

Again we read John 3:26 that John's disciples came
to him complaining that Jesus baptized and all
men came to him, which is meant nothing more
than that many of the Jews attended his ministry.
By what we have produced from scripture it is ev-
ident that the word all often denotes not every
individual but a part of mankind.

(2) We will now consider in what sense the
word on all the world is often used. Thus
the Pharisees said John 12:19. The world is gone

after him." while the Jewish nation was a small part of the world and moreover but a small part of the Jewish nation attended our Saviour's ministry.

Again it is said Luke 2:1. "They went out a decree from Augustus that all the world should be taxed by which nothing more is intended than those countries that were subject to the Roman empire." And when the apostle tells the Romans that their faith was spoken of throughout the world he only means ~~in~~ those churches which were planted in different parts of the world. And when "Agabus [in Acts 11:28] that ~~there~~ signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world," he meant nothing more than all the adjacent country. Thus we have reason to believe that all ~~over~~, the world, and all the world, is often taken for a part of mankind, and we are confident that the phrase "the whole world" in our text is used in the same sense as the above cited passages, and therefore conclude that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for ~~the~~ sins not only for believing Jews but also for all who will believe on him throughout the world: that there is a sufficient fulness in Him for all who will repent and believe, for He says John 6:37. "he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Perhaps some will say that a limited atonement is not consistent with the character of

who is a God of justice; that it would be unjust in Him to save only a part of mankind and leave the rest to perish; but, ^{He} has a right to do what he will with his own.

But suppose (eg. a rich man dwells in our neighbourhood, who is kind and charitable to the poor - he is known generally as such whereby all the poor around hearing of what he has done for others repair to him, make known their wants and implore relief, and all who go are relieved. He supplies the wants of all the poor but bestows nothing on the rich - Now where is the person that would charge him with injustice because he did not give to the rich as well as the poor? He he is not to be found; but all will respect and honour him as a man of goodness and justice. It is precisely the same with God in bestowing salvation. All poor, broken hearted, sinful souls who feel that, without Christ, they are destitute of all things go in the character of beggars to God, confess their poverty, make known their perishing condition and desire to be fed with the crumbs of his mercy. ~~They~~ They are relieved of the burden of sin under which they laboured and a season of spiritual refreshment comes unto them from the presence of the Lord. Not one was even sent empty away; and yet God is charged with injustice because he does not stoop to save the self-righteous, who are rich in themselves. I am too proud hearted to go to him. God does not say I will come to you all and save you; but

"Come unto me and I will give you rest and he who cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Application.

We learn from the view of this subject

- 1 That all mankind are by nature in a lost and perishing condition totally unable to do any thing for their salvation That "no man could by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him;" That we are all children of wrath, under condemnation for that which we have not yet done, and that unless belief in the truth is evidenced already, that unless satisfaction could be made we must all perish forever, and
- 2 We learn that a ransom is paid; That a Saviour is provided; and Good news are sounding in our ears: That Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom we are one chief: That a door of hope is opened to a dying world: That Jesus is the way the truth and the light; the Author of safety, the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, the door to eternal life, by which if any man enter he shall be saved. How earnest then should we be, my dear friends, to secure an interest in Jesus since there is salvation in no other way; to "make all diligence to make our calling and election sure." Our duty and our interest are inseparably connected. It is our duty to repent of our sins and embrace the Saviour to love and serve him; because he commands us to do it, and again because of the infinite debt of gratitude we owe to him for what he has done for us; and it is our interest to do so, for there is no other way to obtain that which accompanies salvation.

3 We learn from the view of this subject that the atonement made by Jesus Christ cannot in the least degree profit those, who do not by repentance and a firm living faith embrace the Saviour, as he is offered ^{on} to us in the gospel. That Jesus Christ has made ample atonement for all those who will believe for he that believeth shall be saved (Mark 16:16) and that who- soever believeth ~~for him~~ ^{in him} should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:15. It is equally certain that those who do not believe shall not be saved according to John 3:18. "he that believeth not is condemned already." and in the last verse of the same chapter "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

While we have the terrors of hell on the one hand to drive us, and the glories of heaven on the other to invite us, let us make all diligence to be found of God in peace now while it is an "accepted time and a day of salvation" for the time is at hand when "he that is unjust shall be unjust still." ~~Who~~ ^{Who} can bear the sound, "Depart"? Or "Who can dwell in eternal burning"? O my friends, tarry not in all the plains of sin, but flee to the mountain of God's eternal love and take shelter beneath the outstretched arms of sovereign mercy, for a deluge of divine wrath will come upon all the ungodly! The door of the Ark (Christ Jesus) is yet open - O then be entreated to enter ⁱⁿ before the floods of divine vengeance overtake you that you may be safe in the day of God's power. That this may be the lot of you is my prayer for Christ's sake Amen.