

Propitiation

19 November 2023 AM – Text: 1John 4:10 – Topic: Salvation – Series: Sal23

Introduction: If you lived before the death of Christ, every time you sinned, you were required to take a sacrificial animal to the temple to atone for your sin. While the blood of that animal would pay for that sin (Hebrews 9:13), it could not take away your sin (Hebrews 10:4). Each time in the future, when you sinned, you must repeat the same process. With each new sin, a new sacrifice had to be killed.

All that changed when Christ died on the cross. He came to take away the sins of the world (Joh 1:29). By shedding His blood, He obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9:12). His spotless blood can clean the conscience (Hebrews 9:14). Unlike the O.T. sacrifices, Christ shed his blood once for the sins of the world (Hebrews 9:28). When Jesus cried, "**It is finished**", He was fulfilling God's just demand for judgment on human sin by suffering, bleeding, and dying in our place. As the Lamb of God, His sinless blood paid every sinner's judgment in full. We call that satisfactory payment, **propitiation**.

Transition: This morning, I want to attempt to simplify the marvels of propitiation so that everyone can understand it.

1. We have a Serious Problem.

a. Our problem is that we are sinners.

- 1) Right after Creation, God warned Adam that if they disobeyed, they would die. (Genesis 2:17) "**But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**" (Romans 6:23) "**For the wages of sin is death; ...**" (James 1:15) "**Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**"
- 2) We have all disobeyed God. (Ecclesiastes 7:20) "**For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.**" (cf., Rom 3:10, 23, Psa 44:21).
- 3) God knows the secrets of your heart, the bad things you have thought, said, or done that no one else knows.
- 4) Sin is far more dreadful than we usually think. (Isaiah

the eternal judgment your sin deserves.

- 3) If you received a \$100 fine for driving too fast, do you think that the judge would accept your promise to be good as payment in full? Of course not. Yet, many people think that God should accept their good deeds as payment to rescue them from eternal hell and give them a home in heaven. It will never work! (Cf., Eph 2:8-9; Tit 3:5).
- 4) Christ's death and resurrection is the only propitiation that God will ever accept. It cost Him dearly!

b. Christ's propitiation paid for the sins of the whole world.

- 1) Christ died for every sinner who has ever lived, 1Jn 2:2.
- 2) The false teaching that Christ died only for an elect few, simply is not true.
- 3) His propitiation was thorough enough to atone for the worst of sinners if they will humbly trust Him.

c. We can receive His propitiation through faith alone.

- 1) Look at what Paul tells us in Romans 3:25. "**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 ...**" The only way that you and I can receive Christ's propitiation is by placing our faith or trust in what He did for us.
- 2) When the humble publican prayed in the temple, he "... **smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.**" (Luke 18:13). When he asked for mercy, he used the verb propitiate. He was asking that his sins be paid for and his guilt removed.

Conclusion: This morning, I have sought to simplify the marvel of propitiation. If you know Christ as your Saviour, memorise these facts so that you can meditate on them, and thank God for them often.

If you have no assurance that your sins are forgiven, God loves you and sent Christ to be your propitiation. He is waiting for you to humbly admit your guilt and ask Him to apply Christ's propitiating payment to your sinful account. I urge you to do so before you leave this morning.

Song: Jesus paid it all, **125**

64:6) **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."** The good things we do are like filthy blood-stained rags. (Jeremiah 17:9) **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** Our sinful heart is incurable. It is malignant.

- 5) During high school carpentry class, I learned a hard lesson. I was wearing a favourite shirt while varnishing a project. When I pounded the lid back on the varnish, it squirted varnish on my shirt. Nothing would remove that stain. I had to throw away the shirt. Sin is even more permanent and destructive.

b. Being sinners condemns us to hell.

- 1) God must punish all sin because He is holy. Thus, sin separates sinners from God. (Romans 1:18) **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..."** As disobedient sinners, God's wrath is on us. This is not wild anger but righteous judgment.
- 2) God's wrath (or righteous judgment) must doom every sinner. However, that breaks the heart of our loving God. Peter tells us, (2 Peter 3:9) **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."**

2. Propitiation is Christ's Payment

a. No human effort can remove God's wrath.

- 1) If you drop your friend's phone in the ocean, unless it is a waterproof phone, the "wrath" of that water will ruin that phone. It will die. You can dry it. Say you are sorry. You can promise never to do it again, but that phone will never come back to life. Similarly, your sin cannot escape God's wrath by your good deeds or efforts.
- 2) God states in (Hebrews 9:22) **"... without shedding of blood is no remission."** God was saying that our sin demands a blood payment.
- 3) The O.T. animal blood sacrifices were only temporarily

covered sin (Hebrews 10:4). They could not take it away.

b. Christ came to earth to propitiate man's sin.

- 1) Because of His great love for humans, God sent His Son Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10) **"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."**
 - a) God's act of sending Christ to earth is an example of agape love. Look more closely at this act of love. God left heaven to become a man that He might pay the necessary price to satisfactorily pay for our sins.
 - b) What was that great price? Christ fulfilled God's just demand for judgment on human sin by suffering, bleeding, and dying in our place. As the Lamb of God was crucified, His sinless blood paid every sinner's judgment in full. He did that for you. That is love!
- 2) Speaking of Christ, Hebrews 9:12, 14 states, **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**
- 3) Look with me at 1Jn 2:1-2. God does not want us to sin. However, if we sin, Christ is our advocate with the Father. Harry Ironside brought it to my attention that Christ is not our advocate with God, but with the Father. God is still our Father even when we sin. He does not disown us. As our advocate, when the devil accuses us before God, Christ points to His righteous payment on our behalf when He became the propitiation for our sins.
- 4) **"Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain – He washed it white as snow."** E.M. Hall

3. Propitiation is Christ's Present

a. Christ's propitiation paid for all our sins.

- 1) Christ is the propitiation for our sins, 1Jn 2:2.
- 2) It is His payment alone that the Father will accept. No amount of good deeds can ever propitiate (i.e., satisfy)