

Redemption in Romans Lesson 1 3Q 2010

Paul And Rome

Before we start I want to f/u on a clarification from last week. Regarding Revelation 12:7 I said the Greek for “war” was polemo from which we get politics and it was a political war in heaven. Karin and Max clarified that the Greek is polemo but it is not the basis for politics – I checked and she was right (Thanks Karin and Max). The Greek polemo is the basis for polemic and this is what polemic means:

a: an aggressive attack on or refutation of the opinions or principles of another **b:** the art or practice of disputation or controversy

So what kind of war was going on in heaven?

Introduction to the Study Guide

Read second paragraph in the introduction, “No matter his works...” thoughts? Do you think there is a connection in believing in a wrathful God and lack of peace?

Imagine you are sick with tuberculosis, you work really hard not to have fever, cough, etc. But no matter how hard you try you just keep getting worse. Several years go by and you are getting emaciated, weak, coughing up blood. And now you believe that very soon a doctor is coming to inspect you and if he finds anything wrong with you, any symptoms at all, he will have you tortured, your flesh peeled off and executed.

Did Martin Luther understand God’s wrath?

The lesson asks the next question “Who wouldn’t?” Do we struggle in our church today with person’s preaching a wrathful God?

We are all familiar with Romans chapter one where Paul describes God’s wrath as letting go, but where did Paul get this idea? Let’s see

what Moses, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Hosea say about God's anger and wrath:

“My anger will flame up like fire and burn everything on earth. It will reach to the world below and consume the roots of the mountains. I will bring on them endless disasters and use all my arrows against them.” (Deuteronomy 32:22,23 – GN)...
“They fail to see why they were defeated; they cannot understand what happened. Why were a thousand defeated by one, and ten thousand by only two? **The Lord, their God, had abandoned them; their mighty God had given them up.”** (Deuteronomy 32:29,30 – GN)

“When that happens, I will become angry with them; I will abandon them, and they will be destroyed. Many terrible disasters will come upon them, and then they will realize that these **things are happening to them because I, their God, am no longer with them.**” (Deuteronomy 31:17 – GN)

“I will fight against you with all my might, my anger, my wrath, and my fury. I will kill everyone living in this city; people and animals alike **will die of a terrible disease....** Anyone who stays in the city will be **killed in war or by starvation or disease...It will be given over** to the king of Babylonia, and **he** will burn it to the ground. I, the LORD, have spoken...I will set your palace on fire, and the fire will burn down everything around it. I, the LORD, have spoken.” (Jeremiah 21:5,6,9-10,14 – GN)

“The LORD has abandoned his people like a lion that leaves its cave. The horrors of war and the LORD's **fierce anger** have turned the country into a desert.” (Jeremiah 25:38 – GN)

“You will feel my anger when I turn it loose on you like a blazing fire. And **I will hand you over** to brutal men, experts at destruction.” (Ezekiel 21:31 – GN)

“I will attack the people of Israel and Judah like a lion. I myself will tear them to pieces and then leave them. When I drag them off, no one will be able to save them. **I will abandon** my

people until they have suffered enough for their sins and come looking for me. Perhaps in their suffering they will try to find me.” (Hosea 5:14,15 – GN)

Read next two paragraphs, “Then one day...” thoughts?

When you hear phrases like “his acceptance with God...” what ideas does that connote? Does it imply that somehow God is unaccepting? Does it suggest that Christ’s merits somehow satisfies God so that He will now accept?

But, what makes one acceptable with God? What is God desiring? What is it that God cannot accept? Why? God cannot accept His children in sin because sin is lawlessness, being outside the law of love, which is the basis for life, God can’t accept His children “dead in trespass and sin.” As a parent is it acceptable to you for your child to tie a plastic bag over his/her head?

The lesson said, “the righteousness of Christ alone given to the believer through faith.” How is this righteousness given? Is it given in a book in heaven? In other words, when we open the heart in trust to God does an angelic accountant make a notation in the record books of heaven checking off that we are now righteous? Or, is there something that actually transpires within the mind/heart of the believer?

As you know one of our class members is struggling with cancer. There is nothing he can do by force of will or good works to resolve the cancer. What if he goes to a doctor, who after reviewing the medical records, biopsy reports, CT and MRI scans, asks him, “do you trust me? If you trust me I can save you.” And our class member places his trust in the doctor and the doctor then removes the records documenting cancer and makes a notation, “Dennis is recognized or accounted to be cancer free.” Do you think Dennis would be happy? Would this cure or save him?

What about the idea that when we trust God there is a heavenly accounting mechanism whereby a person’s heavenly records are adjusting notating they are saved? What does such a concept

connote? That sin is merely a problem of rules and broken laws, a legal problem and is not an actual defect in the heart/mind of man. It diminishes the seriousness and offensiveness of sin.

What if the doctor, after Dennis places his trust in him, goes to our friend and intervenes in him with a remedy and the cancer goes into remission? What happens to our friend? And what happens in the medical records? They show the disease, but they also show the remedy applied and the outcome that our friend is cancer free.

Is this how it works in God's heavenly records?

How is it that the "merits" of Christ save, heal and make us righteous? Is it a heavenly accounting trick or is it an actual accomplishment in those who trust in God?

Remember, **your character is being daguerreotyped [photographed] by the great Master Artist in the record books of heaven**, as minutely as the face is reproduced upon the polished plate of the artist. What do the books of heaven say in your case? Are you conforming your character to the Pattern, Jesus Christ? Are you washing your robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb? "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" [Revelation 22:12]. . . {TSB 62.1}

Every passing hour of the present is shaping our future life. These moments spent in carelessness, in self-pleasing, as if of no value, are deciding our everlasting destinies. The words we utter today will go on echoing when time shall be no more.

The deeds done today are transferred to the books of heaven, just as the features are transferred by the artist onto the polished plate. They will determine our destiny for eternity, for bliss or eternal loss and agonizing remorse.

Character cannot be changed when Christ comes, nor just as a man is about to die. Character building must be done in this life. We fear that repentance will come to the self-indulgent, tainted soul all too late. A few resolves, a few tears,

will never reverse a guilty past life nor blot out of the books of heaven the transgressions, the willful, knowing sins of those who have had the precious light of truth, and can explain the Scriptures to others, while sin and iniquity are drunk up like stolen waters. As though written with an iron pen, they may be found lead in the rock forever. {TM 429.3}

Thoughts?

What is recorded in heaven? The condition of our hearts and minds! Thus the Scripture teaches we are to be reborn, renewed, recreated in the inner man, have circumcision of the heart, law written on the heart and mind, mind of Christ, hear of stone removed and flesh created within etc.

So what makes us acceptable with God?

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it **not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us.** "All our righteousness are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Ps. 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. **By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

The ethics inculcated by the gospel acknowledge no standard but the **perfection of God's mind**, God's will. God requires from His creatures conformity to His will. **Imperfection of character is sin, and sin is the transgression of the law.** All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole. Every one who receives Christ as his personal Saviour is **privileged to possess** these attributes. This is the science of holiness. . . . {TMK 131.2}

The glory of God is His character. . . . This character was revealed in the life of Christ. That He might by His own example condemn sin in the flesh, He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. Constantly He beheld the character of God; constantly He revealed this character to the world. **Christ desires His followers to reveal in their lives this same character.** {TMK 131.3}

Before the world, God is developing us as living witnesses to what men and women may become through the grace of Christ. **We are enjoined to strive for perfection of character.** The divine Teacher says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Would Christ tantalize us by requiring of us an impossibility? Never, never! What an honor He confers upon us in urging us to be holy in our sphere, as the Father is holy in His sphere! He can enable us to do this, for He declares, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). This unlimited power it is our privilege to claim. . . . {TMK 131.4}

God works with those who properly represent His character. Through them His will is done on earth as it is done in heaven. . . . {TMK 131.5}

It is our lifework to be reaching forward to the perfection of Christian character, striving constantly for conformity to God's will. Day by day we are to press upward, ever upward, until of us it can be said, "Ye are complete in him" (Co. 2:10). {TMK 131.6}

SUNDAY

Read Fourth paragraph, "Visiting the Galatian..." then read Green section at bottom. Thoughts?

Do we have any struggles in our church?

The pastoral staff has been sending out a letter to various individuals who have inquired about why we are no longer at the church. The letter references a Biblical Research Institute article and suggests that our class is out of harmony with this article.

Let's examine the article:

Below is the article from the BRI followed by documentation is on our website of facebook fanpage (and has been) documenting we are in harmony with the BRI article.

Why Did Jesus Die? How God Saves Us

George W. Reid, Former Director
Biblical Research Institute

With the end of the first century of the Christian Era and the death of John-the last intimate eyewitness of Christ's ministry-questions previously taken for granted began to surface: Who was Jesus? Why did He come? Why did He die?

Responses to such queries came through a host of metaphors found in the Scriptures: the sacrificial Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; the conquering King of kings; the Light of the world. Jesus was seen as the Son of God-a cosmic deliverer, an emissary from heaven. But also as the Son of man, identifying with us.

One of the most telling pictures lies in the idea of ransom. Jesus says, "The Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).* And echoing Him, Peter says, "**You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your**

fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

The idea of ransom was common in the ancient world. The word indicated something of value used to reclaim something from a pawnshop. It also referred to the purchase of freedom by a slave. Of course, the ancients also knew all too well about the practice of paying ransom for release of a captured hostage or prisoner of war. Hence Paul's comment, "You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men" (1 Cor. 7:23).

The Ransom Price

However, restless imaginations soon went to work, and raised the question, If ransomed, who collected the ransom price?

Interestingly, the Bible never says. Over the centuries a dramatic scenario took shape-part fact, part fiction. According to the tale, a deal was struck between the Father and Satan. Adam had sold his rights-indeed, his soul-to the devil. Knowing the Father's earnest desire to have Adam returned, Satan, with a fiendish cackle, demanded the ultimate price: the life of the Son of God, the final object of Lucifer's hatred.

So Jesus came-so goes the scenario-and lived under the duress of Satan's torment, and finally forfeited His life. But according to the story, Lucifer himself was fooled, for the Father raised His Son from the grave, leaving Lucifer shorn of his prize, possessor of nothing but an empty tomb. He lost the prize he had extorted from the Father.

The Important Truth

Despite the fantasy window dressing, we discover here a nugget of truth. Christ did indeed give His life a ransom for us sinners. But the worthwhile question has little to do with who received payment. There is a far more important truth-namely, that in Christ's atonement a monumental price was paid, not in crass commercial terms, **but to accomplish reconciliation**

between us as fallen sinners and our righteous God, to set us right with God. "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10).

Before a watching universe God demonstrated once for all how far He would go to make possible redemption of lost sinners. In this extension of His love is revealed the manner in which His sacrifice partakes of ransom qualities.

We must never forget that it was our God who initiated our rescue, who reached out to us. "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself" (2 Cor. 5:18). And He continues to reach out to us today. When we accept His merciful invitation, we walk in the certainty of salvation guaranteed by His death and resurrection.

In one brief sentence Paul probes the depths of what it means for God to love. "But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

Three truths leap out at us. First, God demonstrates His kind of love. Second, we grasp our helpless, ever-ignorant condition as sinners. And third, we watch Him initiate the whole plan.

In God's plan Christ fulfills the everlasting covenant, meeting a commitment crafted before the world was. He would volunteer to lay down His life for us. As Adventists understand especially well, He was fulfilling concurrently a purpose of cosmic proportions.

From Come and Reason Website,
http://www.comeandreason.com/files/ss_lessons-2008/2008_Q3_L01_the_apostle_paul.mp3

At 42:38 into the SS recording we hear the following:
 Quotes 1 Peter 1:18,19

Tim: Let's talk about how you understand ransom. Recently there was an online discussion in which I am involved in which this came up. Some people pointed out that some people use ransom in a forensic way that

Jesus had to pay the penalty to His Father so the Father could then be able to pardon and forgive our sins and appease the wrath of His Father and pay our ransom. This is a traditional way of using the word. This particular person rejects that concept and so they said the only thing it really means is that it cost God a lot. Well it did cost God a lot and it cost Christ a lot that is true too. But what does a ransom do? What is the function of a ransom?

Class member: It frees someone that is taken captive.

Tim: It frees someone that is taken captive. Isn't that what a ransom does? And what holds us captive? Two things, we are dead in our trespasses and sins. So our very condition holds us captive number one. But, number two, lies about God - lies about God that we believe that keep us from trusting Him. So Christ came to pay the ransom necessary - One: to reveal the truth to destroy the lies to win us back to trust and, Two: cure the condition, fix it. Did He do those two things? And that was what was necessary. How could we be set free if we didn't have the truth and we didn't have a remedy that heals and cures our condition?

From Come and Reason website

http://www.comeandreason.com/files/ss_lessons-2010/2010_Q1_L04_notes.pdf

What does it mean to be justified? When you justify the margins on a document what have you done? When mankind sinned what was out of harmony that needed to be put right with God? Was God changed by Adam's sin or mankind? Then what needed to be set right or put right, God or man? Justify means to put man back right with God - in what way?

How did Christ accomplish this?

The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. {DA 762.2}

But what about His love?

Unfortunately, love has become an almost shapeless word. Often it is tied to sentiment, and even confused with a religious feeling. But as used in the Bible, love is a power word, not a soft fuzzy. Love is aggressive: God at work tracking us down to help us. **Love is a principle, Ellen White says. How can that be? The answer is that God's love is an unshakable commitment, inviolable, a predisposition in our favor that cannot be discouraged. Divine love-there is no way to shake it or deter it. It is a relentless pursuit by a God eager to help, one who never gives up. In this sense God is love.**

From Come and Reason website:

God is love and love is not-self seeking(1John 4:8, 1Corinthians 13:5). God's character of love is completely expressed in the life of Jesus (Hebrews 1:3). Every attribute of God – His justice, grace, and even His wrath –

is an expression of His character of love. God is not arbitrary, but does everything for the good of all.

http://comeandreason.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=283:godslaw&catid=64:print&Itemid=90

God's law is the law of love, which is the law of life. The law of love cannot be arbitrary, created, enacted, or legislated. God's law of love originates in the heart and character of God and thus has no beginning point and no ending point. It is immutable and can never be changed. God's law of love is the design template for life. All life is constructed to exist only in perfect harmony with this law. Deviations will bring the natural results of pain, suffering, and death, unless remedied by God Himself.

More Than Example

In the high Middle Ages a French monk, Peter Abelard, constructed what he felt described what love really means. It has come to be called the moral influence theory. Reacting against the course ransom idea of his time, he argued that in no sense was Jesus a ransom, but someone elevated. If only we could grasp the nobility of God's character, he reasoned, our self-ridden hearts would melt and be moved to repentance, and sin would be abandoned.

For Abelard, Christ's death really was the ultimate demonstration of God's love, hence a description of His character. So Jesus suffered with us to set the example. He identified fully and tasted all of life. He suffered *with* the sinner rather than directly *for* the sinner. This theory reinterpreted the meaning of those texts that tell us Christ died for us.

Despite its core truth, Abelard's doctrine fell far short of the full biblical picture. It presents Christ as subject to the law of love rather than being its Creator. Its soft view of sin suggests that difficulty arises not so much from the sinner's violation of God's perfect character as from his failure to understand God's affection for him. It leaves to wander the biblical teaching that Christ came not only to demonstrate

God's love but to manifest His justice as well. With the atonement described principally in terms of enlightening us about His purpose, Christ's work as a sacrifice dying for guilty sinners is muted. The focus falls especially on inward moral enlightenment, not so much on a plain and open **outward death that resolved the major conflict sin had introduced in God's universe**. So Abelard brought us a partial truth—Jesus as the demonstration beyond all question of God's unflinching concern for us.

But salvation means more than good feeling between us and God. **It means a grueling confrontation between righteousness and human revolt that entangles us all. It means a love that carried Jesus to the ultimate sacrifice to obtain for us reconciliation with our Creator.** The ghastly physical scene at Golgotha spoke only dimly to humans of a kind of love that, **in fact, means taking up the guilt of every sin and bearing its consequence: total alienation from God**. Only here surfaces the depths of God's self-sacrificing, persistent love.

From Come and Reason Website:

http://www.comeandreason.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=60:1st-quarter-2007-ecclesiastes&catid=33:biblestudytoc&Itemid=67

http://www.comeandreason.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74:other-presentations-and-mental-health-lectures&catid=37:seminars-toc&Itemid=69

God Made Man Upright – What Happened

So what was the very first thing that defiled Adam and Eve? What is the real root to the sin problem? What is the infection of heart and mind that results in sinful behaviors? EGW quote:

“Eve believed the words of Satan, and the belief of that falsehood in regard to God's character, changed the condition and character of both herself and husband. They

were changed from good and obedient children into transgressors...” (RH, January 5, 1886 par. 8).

How could the belief in a lie change the condition of someone’s character?

If you believe a lie that your spouse is having an affair, even though there is no evidence or truth in it, if you believe it is true will you still trust your spouse? Will you still have peace and joy and happiness? Will love flow freely?

And what if you not only believe your spouse is having an affair but that your spouse is actually plotting to kill you?

God made man upright what happened?

Lies believed – broken love and distrust

Distrust and broken love – selfishness and fear (survival of the fittest)

Selfishness and fear – destructive behaviors

Destructive behaviors – guilt, shame, damage to mind, character body

Without intervention – a terminal condition

The wages of sin is death/ sin when full grown brings forth death

Now on this planet – the two antagonistic principles –

Love vs. survival of the fittest

the only result of selfishness is death – our condition is terminal

Christ came to restore humanity back into unity with God, to take this species which was created with God's principle love as the central operating principle, but which became infected with Satan's principle of survival the fittest and eradicate selfishness and restore God's law of love into the heart and mind of mankind.

REVEAL TRUTH and
DEFEAT the infection of selfishness and restore love into the heart:

In order to do this, He was born of a woman under law – a unique being and in His person – He did what we couldn't do – He lived victorious over selfishness vanquishing it and restoring love in the heart.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15

- a. At the cross of Calvary, love and selfishness stood face to face. Here was their crowning manifestation. Christ had lived only to comfort and bless, and in putting Him to death, Satan manifested the malignity of his hatred against God. He made it evident that the real purpose of his rebellion was to dethrone God, and to destroy Him through whom the love of God was shown. {DA 57.2}
- b. The foe who in the wilderness had confronted Christ assailed Him now with fierce and subtle temptations. Had Jesus yielded for a moment, had He changed His course in the least particular to save Himself, Satan's agencies would have triumphed, and the world would have been lost. {DA 486.1}
- c. Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of

action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name. {Ed 154.3}

- d. The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}
- e. "The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. Christ's self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. That man might be saved, He gave all that He had and then gave Himself. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle there illustrated is to give, give. This, carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness and encourages liberality and benevolence." {9T 254.2}
- f. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:52
- g. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. Heb 5:8-10
- h. The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life

stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. {DA 762.2}

- i. Satan had put forth the strongest efforts against Christ from the time when he appeared as a babe in Bethlehem. He had sought in every possible manner to prevent him from developing an unblemished childhood, a true manhood, a holy ministry, and a perfect sacrifice in yielding up his life, without a murmur, for the sins of men. {The Perfect Truth, February 18, 1886 par. 2}

So, as Paul says, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 1). We have the joy of certain salvation as we accept Him, knowing ourselves fully accepted in His love. God is love, and the magnitude of that love will continue to unfold before us as we stride through the gates into eternity.

Tucked away in a familiar New Testament text is a truth usually obscured by translators. **"Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). Literally the text says Christ became our place of sacrifice (Greek, *hilasterion*), an unclouded reference to the ancient Hebrew sacrificial system. Both on the surface and at bedrock, the principle is substitution.**

From Come and Reason Website:

http://www.comeandreason.com/files/ss_lessons-2008/2008_Q4_L01_notes.pdf

Atonement and the Cross of Christ Lesson 1 4Q 2008

God's Nature: The basis of Atonement

As we begin this quarter let's begin with a clear Biblical definition of what atonement is and what it is not.

What is atonement? At-one-ment being at one, being united, being reconciled, being in harmony, unity, oneness.

Are there other concepts of atonement out there? What are they? Appeasement, expiation, payment of legal debt.

Which concept is Biblical and what evidence do we have?

First, the Bible was not written in English but in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic.

The English word itself, back in 1611 when the KJV was written did not mean appeasement or expiation, but meant reconciliation, bringing to unity or oneness. This is the correct understanding of the Hebrew and Greek words translated as atonement.

The Hebrew *Kaphar*, used in the OT sanctuary service with all the atonement statements is translated: atone, purge, forgive, reconcile.

The Greek in Romans 3:25 "sacrifice of atonement" is *hilasterion* and means the lid to the ark of the covenant.

See Hebrews 9:5 "Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now."

The word translated "atonement cover" in the NIV is translated mercy seat in other versions and is the same

word in Romans 3:25 translated “sacrifice of atonement” and means the lid to the ark.

Hebrews 2:17 “For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.”

The Greek is *Hilaskomai* and means reconciliation. A better translation of Romans 3 is:

^{3:21} But now God has revealed, a healthy state of being – a character that is right and perfect in everyway, that did not come from the written code, but is exactly what the Scriptures and the 10 Commandments were pointing your minds toward. ²² This perfect state of being comes from God and is created within us by God when we trust him. Our trust in him is established by the evidence given through Jesus Christ of his supreme trustworthiness. There is no difference amongst any ethnic groups, ²³ for all humanity is infected with the same disease of distrust, fear and selfishness, and are deformed in character and fall far short of God’s glorious ideal for mankind. ²⁴ Yet all, who are willing, are healed freely by God’s gracious remedy that has been provided by Jesus Christ. ²⁵ God presented Jesus as the way and means of restoration. Now, through trust established by the evidence of God’s character revealed when Christ died, we may partake of the remedy procured by Christ. God did this to demonstrate he is right and good, because in his forbearance he suspended, for a time, the ultimate consequence of sin and has been falsely accused of being unfair. ²⁶ So, he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so he would be seen as right when he heals those who trust in Jesus.

Is there other evidence this is the right understanding?
What did Jesus say about atonement?

John 17:22-23 “I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

So when we think of atonement and the Cross of Christ what are we thinking? God’s method, means, way of restoring mankind back into unity and oneness with Him! It is not a method of payment, appeasement, expiation, penal satisfaction etc. all such concepts are remnants of pagan theology which has infected the body of Christian thought!

INTRODUCTION

In the introduction to the study guide it tells a story of a man whose life was changed when he heard these words, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.”

What do these words mean?

First, is it talking about red corpuscles? When Jesus said unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no part with me was he talking cannibalism? No, the blood is symbolic of what? Leviticus tells us the “life is in the blood” so the life of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Second, what is being cleansed according to this passage? Record books in heaven or we the people? Are there other passages that support this?

Malachi 3:1-3 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the

Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.

Heb 9:14 "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

Heb 10:22 "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

And what is sin? Lawlessness (1John 3:4), what law is not being kept? The law of love – and how did the law of love get broken? And when it is broken what is the result?

Lies believed break the circle of love and trust
 Broken love and trust result in fear and selfishness
 Fear and selfishness result in acts of sin
 Acts of sin result in damage to mind, character and body

So, Christ came to purge lies, fear and selfishness from humanity and restore God's perfect character of love back into the tablets of the human heart, thus reconciling us to God or bringing us back into Oneness with Him, this is what atonement is all about.

Typical of pagan religions, the ancient Greeks worked to appease their gods, quieting the gods' anger and seeking

favor with gifts and a regimen of specified deeds.

Unfortunately, this concept persists among some Christians today, at times surfacing in arguments over faith and works. But appeasement on any grounds is a pagan idea worthy of rejection.

From Come and Reason Website

http://www.comeandreason.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=252:christianity-versus-other-religions&catid=52:tims-blog-archive&Itemid=70

Christianity is based upon the truth about God and His character of love, and love requires freedom. Christianity teaches that love is more than an emotion, but a principle upon which life is based and that reconciliation with God results in restoration of this principle into the heart/mind of the believer. In other words Christianity teaches that we are terminal and that God freely offers to heal us, and if healed we will live forever, if not then we die, not as punishment from God, but as a result of our own terminal condition.

Other religions fall short on this point. Many have gods which require appeasement, or some offering be made to the god in order for the god to grant some favor, including eternal life. Sadly, some within Christianity have accepted this pagan idea and teach God required the blood of His Son in order for God to be forgiving and offer eternal life. This of course, is not true. Christ's death was necessary for our salvation, but not to somehow influence or change the Father.

The Father's Favor

In **Christ's death is no hint of the Saviour's effort to win the favor of the Father.** With that favor already in hand, His confidence carried Him to Calvary, despite a shuddering of His human frame. Only on the cross, confronted by

withdrawal of His Father's presence in revulsion against sin, did the stark break become clear. **As the veil of our guilt fell over Him, there was expressed from His lips an agonizing cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).**

From comeandreason fanpage:

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Collegedale-TN/Come-And-Reason/209279100070?ref=ts&ajaxpipe=1&a=5>

Question from fan: Dr. Tim, I came across this passage a little while back, and I've been trying to reconcile parts of it with what I have been studying and learning. I agree with you that Christ is our substitute, took upon himself our condition of sinfulness, and how sin itself is not a commodity that can be transferred. But you mentioned in "Qs about Christ's Death part 2" that Christ on the cross also experienced "emotional anguish (including guilt)" probably in reference to the below passage. What is this guilt, and why would Christ experience guilt?

My answer: We can interpret it in three ways, one He experienced our guilt for sin as if He committed the sin; two Christ empathized with all the sinners and was aware of the terrible burden of guilt humans experienced and this guilt from all humanity pressed upon Him as He empathized with us; and third, He experienced guilt that humans do when the Father's presence is withdrawn and a terrible sense of human anguish and inadequacy is experienced. I tend to think it is a combination of the latter two possibilities.

With this He slipped into the pit of the second death carrying the burden of rejection for rebellion against God. At that point He is in our place. His is the despair of lost sinners staring into a black hole of oblivion, devoid of hope. Standing in our place, "The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753). Death overtook Him as the abandoned sinner, alone, in the place where each of us really belongs.

Some suggest that Christ came primarily to show His

concern for us in our common human fate, to share our sorrows, to assure us God understands and cares. While all this has merit, it carries the subtle suggestion that, after all, sin is not really that serious and we should take final comfort in the knowledge that God never ceases caring. We are encouraged to look on the sunny side. But what sunlight ever falls on the precipice overlooking doom? Beyond question, Jesus demonstrates how God loves, but much more was at stake. He came to bear the inevitable punishment for revolt against the infinitely righteous character of God.

Jesus came, not to appease, but to cancel guilt and cleanse sinners. In no sense is this bribery of God or adroit footwork to meet some sort of personal demand. Instead, it was a calculated divine plan of which Paul said, "This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25, 26). *In other words, rather than responding to God's demand, it was done at God's initiative.*

Along the way Jesus paid our ransom and freed us, the captives of sin. Along the way He showed how God loves. But there is much more. Real understanding comes when we come to grips with the desperate nature of our sin problem and how God must deal with rebellion running loose in His universe.

At question is God's righteousness, His justice. Here is a dramatic departure from pagan ideas of appeasement. God undertakes to bridge the gulf. He substitutes Himself to demonstrate the changeless nature of His law, and performs all that's needed. Christ becomes the divine sacrifice, His cross an altar (see 1 Cor. 5:7). In amazement we stand aside, watching as He takes it up in our behalf. He "gave himself up for us" (Eph. 5:2) and "offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:12). God "sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

In Christ our sin was judged and condemned. God's righteous nature remains intact and its violation dispatched. While we stood like wide-eyed children, He reconciled us, now to shower the benefits upon us who accept

Him in faith. With the universe as witness to it all, what more could He do?

From Come and Reason website

http://www.comeandreason.com/files/ss_lessons-2010/2010_Q1_L04_notes.pdf

Did it cost God and Christ an infinite price to redeem mankind? Yes! Why? Because God demanded a blood payment so God would forgive? Or because the only way to overcome sin and reverse sin's impact on humanity was through Christ's life, death and resurrection?

Did Christ have to die in order for mankind to be saved? Yes! Why? Because God demanded blood? No, because it was the only way to restore mankind back into harmony with the law of love. It was the only way to reconcile man to God!

Moral Influence Theory

What is Moral Influence Theory (MIT)? A theory that basically states the only problem with sin is that we don't know God and therefore Christ came to reveal the truth about God, which would morally influence us to return to God. There was no other purpose in Christ's life, death and resurrection than to reveal truth to win us back to trust.

Is this our position? What answer would you give to demonstrate we do not promote the MIT?

Imagine you have bacterial endocarditis (infection inside the heart)

- Man claims to have a cure – Osama Bin Laden would you trust Osama to give you a cure?
- Father is physician you trust but has no remedy?
- Will trust heal you? Will you get well without trust?

- We aren't saved by faith/trust, we are saved by Grace, by God's working, God's healing power, but we don't experience God's healing grace if we don't trust Him.
- If you have no trust but have a remedy – will you get well?
- If you have trust but no remedy will you get well?
 - This would be the MIT – revealing truth to win us to trust, but providing no remedy – a theory rightly rejected

We need both, the trust to accept the remedy and a real remedy.

Christ came and revealed truth to restore trust and also procured a real remedy!

From my blog of April 24, 2009:

Heb 2:14, 2Tim 1:10 and 1John 3:8 [sum] up the reasons Christ came to earth and died.

Heb 2:14 – By His death Christ destroys him who holds the power of death that is the devil –

What is the devil's power of death? John 17:3 – “this is life eternal that they might know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” If life eternal is knowing God, then eternal death is not knowing God. What then is Satan's power of death? The lies he tells about God that keep us from knowing Him. What then is the “Gospel” in the passage? What destroys lies about God? The truth about God as revealed by Jesus, thus it is the Good News about God, as revealed by Christ, that destroys the devil's power of death.

2 Tim 1:10: Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

How did Jesus death destroy death? The law of love is the law of life, the law upon which all life in the universe was designed to operate. Death comes as the natural result of breaking the law of love, just like death comes as the natural result of breaking the law of respiration by tying a plastic bag over your head. Christ destroyed death by perfectly restoring the law of love, the basis for life, into mankind and overcoming the inherent infection of fear and selfishness (survival of the fittest). He did this when, in His humanity, He chose to surrender His life in love rather than use His power to save Himself. Thus, in Christ love overcame the infection of selfishness. The Good News – “The law of the Lord is Perfect Reviving the Soul” i.e. The kingdom of Love, emanating from the God of Love is Life and destroys death.

1John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.

What was the devil’s work? To misrepresent God, initially by lies, but then by co-opting mankind, who was created in God’s image to reveal God’s character, and replace God’s law of love with Satan’s law of selfishness (survival of the fittest) in the heart of man. Christ took our infirmity, condition, sinfulness upon Himself in order to heal, fix, resolve and resolve the sin problem. He did this by perfectly restoring God’s character of love back into the species human. In His human brain Christ lived God’s law of love perfectly revealing the true character of God that Adam was created to reveal. Thus He destroyed the devil’s work.

The life of Christ is to be revealed in humanity. Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God; but Satan has labored [worked] to obliterate the image of God in man, and to imprint upon him his own image. Lift Him Up 48.

*All Bible references are taken from the Revised Standard Version.

<http://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/documents/Why%20Did%20Jesus%20Die.htm>

TUESDAY

The lesson emphasizes that because Paul was in bonds it magnified the spreading of the gospel. Christ's crucifixion magnified the spreading of the gospel – will what is happening to us do the same?

WEDNESDAY

Read last paragraph – “The great news...” thoughts? Was it universal or global?

“All things in heaven and earth are reconciled to Christ at the cross.” Col 1:20

What was God's original intent for mankind, that they find salvation or that they never fall?

THURSDAY

Read sixth paragraph, “2. ‘Filled...” thoughts? Is it interesting that some Christian preachers argue for non-thinking unenlightened faith? Why would they do this?

FRIDAY

Read third paragraph, “The eternal God...” thoughts?