

Defining and Being Defined by the Gospel

2 Corinthians 5:21

I want to be sure that we are **thinking** and **living** biblically, truthfully, and accurately about Jesus being **crucified** and **raised** as God's plan to save all who come to trust in Jesus for forgiveness from their sins.

The atonement is “that aspect of the work of Christ, and particularly his death, which makes possible the **restoration of fellowship** between individual believers and God.”
(Wayne Grudem)

In what way(s) did Christ become sin for us, become a curse for us, and bear our sins in His body?

2 Corinthians 5:21 establishes three critical biblical facts about Christ's atoning death.

CHRIST'S ATONING DEATH

I. Jesus the **Son**: God sent His Son to **atone for sins**

God must act *towards* us and *in* us, because in our sin:

1. We are spiritually dead to God
2. We do not seek God
3. We are helpless to help ourselves

(Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:11, 5:6)

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While every other religion in the world is miserably failing at trying to get God to love them, forgive them, and bless them, *“God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* (Romans 5:8)

CHRIST'S ATONING DEATH

I. Jesus the **Son**: God sent His Son to **atone for sins**

- Hebrews 4:15, 7:26
- 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22, 3:18
- 1 John 3:5

II. Jesus the **Substitute**: God sent His Son to **stand in our place**

Where will God find a person without a sin nature, who has never sinned, and who is perfect in every way?

And how can Jesus stand in place of sinners and yet not be sin Himself, so that He remains a perfect, sinless sacrifice which will be acceptable to God?

II. Jesus the **Substitute**: God sent His Son to **stand in our place**

Imputation:

- “**To think of** as belonging to someone, and **therefore** to **cause it to belong** to that person.” (Wayne Grudem)
- God thought of your sins as belonging to His Son, Jesus.
- Jesus bore your sins; He carried your sins; your sins were laid upon Him by imputation.

II. Jesus the **Substitute**: God sent His Son to **stand in our place**

In the person of Jesus Christ, righteousness and sinlessness had to **die in the place** of unrighteousness and sinfulness.

III. Jesus the **Savior**: God sent His Son to **rescue us** from sin and death.

“He made Him to be... so that in Him we might become...”

God **punished** Jesus for something **He** was not, a **sinner**, so that God could **bless** us with something **we** are not, **righteous**.

III. Jesus the **Savior**: God sent His Son to **rescue us** from sin and death.

The entire point of the **spiritual exchange** on our behalf is that Jesus bore **our** sins while **remaining sinless Himself**.

Our holiness depends entirely on Jesus' holiness.

III. Jesus the **Savior**: God sent His Son to **rescue us** from sin and death.

What is the gospel? The good news that:

“On the cross, God treated Christ as if He sinned all the sins of everyone who would ever believe [in Him], so that He could treat them **as if** they had lived Christ’s perfect life.” (John MacArthur)

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