

# Christ in his suffering and death

[History](#), [Ancient History](#)



The death of Christ on the cross gives the meaning to all the undertakings of God. In His sacrificial death Christ revealed the holiness, righteousness and love of God, and His infinite wisdom. Disputing the actual death of Christ and His resurrection is destructive for Christian faith. Many biblical passages predict the death of Christ and state or assume His actual death.

#### Definition of Terms

Atonement      Guilt                  Penalty                  Reconciliation

Righteousness      Substitution

Expiation                  Justice                  Propitiation                  Redemption                  Sanctification

Forgiveness Justification      Ransom                  Remission                  Satisfaction

#### Theories of the Atonement

There are principal theories of atonement, which arise from the disputes around the meaning of the death of Christ.

1. Substitutional Atonement.
2. Payment-to-Satan Theory.
3. Recapitulation Theory.
4. Commercial or Satisfaction Theory.
5. Moral Influence Theory.
6. Theory of Thomas Aquinas.

7. Theory of Duns Scotus.
8. Example Theory.
9. Mystical Experience Theory.
10. Governmental Theory of Grotius.
11. Theory of Vicarious Confession.

Although the upper theories have some aspects that can be recognized as having merit, the true concept of the death of Christ may be understood from the biblical passages that reveal the doctrines of redemption, reconciliation and propitiation, and the death of Christ thus is the substitutional or penal concept of the atonement.

The doctrine of Redemption is an important aspect of the work of God in salvation accomplished by the death of Christ. The doctrine of redemption in Christ can be erected from the study of three words: agoraz?, lutro?, and peripoie?. Agoraz? (exagoraz?) is the basic word for redemption in the scripture and expresses the idea of purchasing Christians by Christ, and His death was the price paid. Peripoie? means to save or to preserve one's self, and lutro? has the meaning to rescue by paying a ransom. The study of redemption through Christ in the New Testament discloses clearly that the death of Christ was the price He paid to God and thus purchased the sinner from the bondage of sin.

The doctrine of Propitiation represents the idea that the death of Christ fully satisfied the demands of a righteous God in respect to judgment upon the

sinner. The word is mentioned in both Testaments. Propitiation had a substitutional character and three important results.

The doctrine of Reconciliation as one of the most important in theology is being discussed wildly and has four basic interpretations. Several biblical passages reveal that reconciliation effects the change in man which reconciles him to God: II Corinthians 5: 17-21, Romans 5: 6-11, Ephesians 2: 16, Colossians 1: 20-22. Reconciliation is provided to all men, but applied only to the elect when they believe. Those who reject the love and grace in Christ are still judged according to their work. Reconciliation is applied to the whole Universe. The work of reconciliation extends to the work of God on the behalf of the believer.

### Christ in His Resurrection

The doctrine is essential for the whole Christian faith and theology. The resurrection of Christ is the first step in the series of the exaltation of Christ and His ministry as our Intercessor.

Evidences for the resurrection of Christ are abundant. The Scriptures fully describe the appearances of Christ after resurrection to many people under different circumstances; therefore resurrection is a well-documented historical event. Between the evidences for the resurrection of Christ are the following.

1. The empty tomb.
2. The character of the human witnesses to the resurrection.

3. The dramatic change in the disciples after the resurrection.
4. The disciple's experience of the divine power in the postresurrection period.
5. The events of the day of Pentecost.
6. The evidence in the custom of observing the first day of the week.

### The Origin of Christian Church

The foundation of the Christian church in the first century, its convincing power and dynamic stemmed from the belief in the resurrection of Christ. The Scriptures evidences the resurrection of the body of Christ, not only His resurrection in spiritual sense. His resurrection body was the same, though changed a little, that the one in the tomb and Scriptures evidence this fact.

### Who Raised Christ from Dead?

The resurrection of Christ is the work of triune God. The significance of the resurrection of Christ is underestimated in all branches of systematic theology. The major facets of the significance of the resurrection of Christ are:

1. Proof of His person and His offices (Prophet, Priest, and King).
2. Key to all of His present work.
3. Consummation of the divine plan in the prophetic future.

1. The article "The nature of the atonement: how should one view the cross?" by Steve Sullivan emphasises the importance of understanding the doctrine of atonement and pays particular attention to the Payment-to-Satan and Recapitulation theories of atonement. According to classical views presented by Walvoord in "Jesus", Payment-to-Satan theory is one of the earliest in the church and it is not held in modern times. This theory implies that Christ was paid to Satan as the ransom for sinner. Recapitulation Theory is based on the idea that Christ recapitulates all the phases of human life including being made sin in His death on the cross.

Sullivan combines these theories, presents the short historical intercourse into each, and then upholds the point of view that merging some of these views one can capture the Word of Faith Movement (WFM) leaders' view of Christ's death. The WFM teachers assert that 'Jesus took upon himself a satanic nature, died physically on the cross, suffered spiritual death in hell for us, and then was reborn (or born again) in hell and rose from the grave'. Therefore, when the believer is born again he becomes like Christ. Even from the short overview of the WFM ideas about one of the existing doctrines we can see how deep the interpretations of Bible can differ.

I would recommend this article as it presents the view on the death and atonement of Christ and lets the reader to compare traditional catholic teaching with one of modern Christian branch's views. This article is a good source for critical thinking and evaluating.

2. The article "The Reality of Resurrection" by Darrell Young is focused on historical proofs of Christ resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is

recognized equitable to be the most powerful event in all history. Further, the author cites numerous passages from the New and Old Testament concerning the prophecy of resurrection, its vital importance for the Christian faith, and its significance in the context of the Second Coming. I would recommend this article as a rich source of historical approach to resurrection and to some questions related to the doctrine of resurrection, such as resurrection of believers during the Second Coming, the resurrected bodies of believers, the time of resurrection and others.

#### The Bibliography

Sullivan, Steve. The Nature of the Atonement: How should One View the Cross? - Part-I [on-line]. Ankerberg Theological Research Institute; available from [http://www.ankerberg.com/Articles/\\_PDFArchives/theological-dictionary/TD1W0600.pdf](http://www.ankerberg.com/Articles/_PDFArchives/theological-dictionary/TD1W0600.pdf); Internet; accessed 9 November 2005