

For Whom Did Christ Die?

by **Charles Hodge** (1823-1886)

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1. State of the Question

This is a question between Augustinians and Anti-Augustinians. The former believing that God from all eternity having elected some to everlasting life, had a special reference to their salvation in the mission and work of his Son. The latter, denying that there has been any such election of a part of the human family to salvation maintain that the mission and work of Christ had an equal reference to all mankind.

The question, therefore, does not, in the first place, concern the nature of Christ's work. It is true, if it be denied that his work was a satisfaction for sin, and affirmed that it was merely didactic; that his life, sufferings, and death were designed to reveal and confirm truth; then it would follow of course that it had no reference to one class of men more than to another, or to men more than to angels. Truth is designed for the illumination of all the minds to which it is presented. But admitting the work of Christ to have been a true satisfaction for sin, its design may still be an open question. Accordingly, Lutherans and Reformed, although they agree entirely as to the nature of the atonement, differ as to its design. The former maintain that it had an equal reference to all mankind, the latter that it had special reference to the elect.

In the second place, the question does not concern the value of Christ's satisfaction. That Augustinians admit to be infinite. Its value depends on the dignity of the sacrifice; and as no limit can be placed to the dignity of the Eternal Son of God who offered Himself for our sins, so no limit can be assigned to the meritorious value of his work. It is a gross misrepresentation of the Augustinian doctrine to say that it teaches that Christ suffered so much for so many; that He would have suffered more had more been included in the purpose of salvation. This is not the doctrine of any Church on earth, and never has been. What was sufficient for one was sufficient for all. Nothing less than the light and heat of the sun is sufficient for any one plant or animal. But what is absolutely

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necessary for each is abundantly sufficient for the infinite number and variety of plants and animals which fill the earth. All that Christ did and suffered would have been necessary had only one human soul been the object of redemption; and nothing different and nothing more would have been required had every child of Adam been saved through his blood.

In the third place, the question does not concern the suitability of the atonement. What was suitable for one was suitable for all. The righteousness of Christ, the merit of his obedience and death, is needed for justification by each individual of our race, and therefore is needed by all. It is no more appropriate to one man than to another. Christ fulfilled the conditions of the covenant under which all men were placed. He rendered the obedience required of all, and suffered the penalty which all had incurred; and therefore his work is equally suited to all.

In the fourth place, the question does not concern the actual application of the redemption purchased by Christ. The parties to this controversy are agreed that some only, and not all of mankind are to be actually saved.

The whole question, therefore, concerns simply the purpose of God in the mission of his Son. What was the design of Christ's coming into the world, and doing and suffering all He actually did and suffered? Was it merely to make the salvation of all men possible; to remove the obstacles which stood in the way of the offer of pardon and acceptance to sinners? or, was it specially to render certain the salvation of his own people, i.e., of those given to Him by the Father? The latter question is affirmed by Augustinians, and denied by their opponents. It is obvious that if there be no election of some to everlasting life, the atonement can have no special reference to the elect. It must have equal reference to all mankind. But it does not follow from the assertion of its having a special reference to the elect that it had no reference to the non-elect. Augustinians readily admit that the death of Christ had a relation to man, to the whole human family, which it had not to, the fallen angels. It is the ground on which salvation is offered to every creature under heaven who hears, the gospel; but it gives no authority for a like offer to apostate angels. It moreover secures, to the whole race at large, and to all classes of men, innumerable, blessings, both providential and religious. It was, of course, designed to produce these effects; and, therefore, He died to secure them. In view of the effects which the death of Christ produces on the relation of all mankind to God, it has in all ages been customary

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with Augustinians to say that Christ died "sufficenter pro omnibus, efficaciter tantum pro electis;" sufficiently for all, efficaciously only for the elect. There is a sense, therefore, in which He died for all, and there is a sense in which He died for the elect alone. The simple question is, Had the death of Christ a reference to the elect which it had not to other men? Did He come into the world to secure the salvation of those given to Him by the Father, so that the other effects of his work are merely incidental to what was done for the attainment of that object?

2. Proof of the Augustinian Doctrine.

That these questions must be answered in the affirmative, is evident, —

1. From the nature of the covenant of redemption. It is admitted that there was a covenant between the Father and the Son in relation to the salvation of men. It is admitted that Christ came into the world in execution of that covenant. The nature of the covenant, therefore, determines the object of his death. According to one view, man having by his fall lost the ability of fulfilling, the conditions of the covenant of life, God, for Christ's sake, enters into a new covenant, offering men salvation upon other and easier terms; namely, as some say, faith and

repentance, and others evangelical obedience. If such be the nature of the plan of salvation, then it is obvious that the work of Christ has equal reference to all mankind. According to another view, the work of Christ was designed to secure the pardon of original sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit for all men, Jews or Gentiles, and those are saved who duly improve the grace they severally receive. The former is the doctrine of the ancient Semi-Pelagians and modern Remonstrants; the latter of the Wesleyan Arminians. The Lutherans hold that God sent his Son to make a full and real legal satisfaction for the sins of all mankind; and that on the ground of this perfect satisfaction the offer of salvation is made to all who hear the gospel; that grace is given (in the word and sacraments) which, if unresisted, is sufficient to secure their salvation. The French theologians at Saumur, in the 17th century, taught also that Christ came into the world to do whatever was necessary for the salvation of men. But God, foreseeing that, if left to themselves, men would universally reject the offers of mercy, elected some to be the subjects of his saving grace by which they are brought to faith and repentance. According to this view of the plan of salvation, election is subordinate to redemption. God first redeems all and then

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elects some. This is the view extensively adopted in this country. According to Augustinians, men, by their fall, having sunk into a state of sin and misery, might justly have been left, as were the fallen angels, to perish in their sins. But God, in his infinite mercy, having determined to save a multitude whom no man could number, gave them to his Son as his inheritance, provided He would assume their nature and fulfil all righteousness in their stead. In the accomplishment of this plan Christ did come into the world, and did obey and suffer in the place of those thus given to Him, and for their salvation. This was the definite object of his mission, and therefore his death had a reference to them which it could not possibly have to those whom God determined to leave to the just recompense of their sins. Now this plan only supposes that God determined from eternity to do what in time He has actually accomplished. If it were just that all men should perish on account of their sin it was just to leave a portion of the race thus to perish, while the salvation of the other portion is a matter of unmerited favour. It can hardly be denied that God did thus enter into covenant with his Son. That is, that He did promise Him the salvation of his people as the reward of his incarnation and sufferings; that Christ did come into the world and suffer and die on that condition, and, having performed the condition, is entitled to the promised reward. These are facts so clearly and so repeatedly stated in the Scriptures as not to admit of their being called into question. But if such is the plan of God respecting the salvation of men then it of necessity follows that election precedes redemption; that God had determined whom He would save before He sent his Son to save them. Therefore our Lord said that those given to Him by his Father should certainly come to Him, and that He would raise them up at the last day. These Scriptural facts cannot be admitted without its being also admitted that the death of Christ had a reference to his people, whose salvation it rendered certain, which it had not to others whom, for infinitely wise reasons, God determined to leave to themselves. It follows, therefore, from the nature of the covenant of redemption, as presented in the Bible, that Christ did not die equally for all mankind, but that He gave Himself for his people and for their redemption.

Argument from the Doctrine of Election.

2. This follows also almost necessarily from the doctrine of election. Indeed it never was denied that Christ died specially for the elect until the doctrine of election itself was rejected. Augustine,

the follower and expounder of St. Paul, taught that God out of his mere good pleasure had elected some to everlasting life, and held that Christ came into the world to suffer and die for their salvation. He purchased them with his own precious blood. The Semi-Pelagians, in denying the doctrine of election, of course denied that Christ's death had more reference to one class of men than to another. The Latin Church, so long as it held to the Augustinian doctrine of election, held also to Augustine's doctrine concerning the design and objects of Christ's death. All through the Middle Ages this was one of the distinctive doctrines of those who resisted the progress of the Semi-Pelagian party in the Western Church. At the time of the Reformation the Lutherans, so long as they held to the one doctrine held also to the other. The Reformed, in holding fast the doctrine of election, remained faithful to their denial of the doctrine that the work of Christ had equal reference to all mankind. It was not until the Remonstrants in Holland, under the teaching of Arminius, rejected the Church doctrine of original sin, of the inability of fallen man to anything spiritually good, the sovereignty of God in election, and the perseverance of the saints, that the doctrine that the atonement had a special reference to the people of God was rejected. It is, therefore, a matter of history that the doctrine of election and the Augustinian doctrine as to the design of the work of Christ have been inseparably united. As this connection is historical so also is it logical. The one doctrine necessarily involves the other. If God from eternity determined to save one portion of the human race and not another, it seems to be a contradiction to say that the plan of salvation had equal reference to both portions; that the Father sent his Son to die for those whom He had predetermined not to save, as truly as, and in the same sense that He gave Him up for those whom He had chosen to make the heirs of salvation.

Express Declarations of Scripture.

3. We accordingly find numerous passages in which the design of Christ's death is declared to be, to save his people from their sins. He did not come merely to render their salvation possible, but actually to deliver them from the curse of the law, and from the power of sin. This is included in all the Scriptural representations of the nature and design of his work. No man pays a ransom without the certainty of the deliverance of those for whom it is paid. It is not a ransom unless it actually redeems. And an offering is no sacrifice unless it actually expiates and propitiates.

The effect of a ransom and sacrifice may indeed be conditional, but the occurrence of the condition will be rendered certain before the costly sacrifice is offered.

There are also very numerous passages in which it is expressly declared that Christ gave Himself for his Church (Ephesians v. 25); that He laid down his life for his sheep (John x. 15); that He laid down his life for his friends (John xv. 13); that He died that He might gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad (John xi. 52); that it was the Church which He purchased with his blood (Acts xx. 28). When mankind are divided into two classes, the Church and the world, the friends and the enemies of God, the sheep and the goats, whatever is affirmed distinctively of the one class is impliedly denied of the other. When it is said that Christ loved his

Church and gave Himself for it, that He laid down his life for his sheep, it is clear that something is said of the Church and of the sheep, which is not true of those who belong to neither. When it is said that a man labours and sacrifices health and strength for his children, it is thereby denied that the motive which controls him is mere philanthropy, or that the design he has in view is the good of society. He may indeed be a philanthropist, and he may recognize the fact that the well-being of his children ill promote the welfare of society, but this does not alter the case. It still remains true that love for his children is the motive, and their good his object. It is difficult, in the light of Ephesians v. 25, where the death of Christ is attributed to his love of his Church, and is said to have been designed for its sanctification and salvation, to believe that He gave Himself as much for reprobates as for those whom He intended to save. Every assertion, therefore that Christ died for a people, is a denial of the doctrine that He died equally for all men.

Argument from the Special Love of God.

4. By the love of God is sometimes meant his goodness, of which all sensitive creatures are the objects and of whose benefits they are the recipients. Sometimes it means his special regard for the children of men, not only as rational creatures, but also as the offspring of Him who is the Father of the spirits of all men. Sometimes it means that peculiar, mysterious, sovereign, immeasurable love which passes knowledge, of which his own people, the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven, are the objects. Of this love it is taught, (1.) That it is infinitely great. (2.) That it is discriminating, fixed on some and not upon others

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of the children of men. It is compared to the love of a husband for his wife; which from its nature is exclusive. (B.) That it is perfectly gratuitous and sovereign, i.e., not founded upon the special attractiveness of its objects, but like parental affection, on the mere fact that they are his children. (4.) That it is immutable. (5.) That it secures all saving blessings, and even all good; so that even afflictions are among its fruits intended for the greater good of the sufferer. Now to this love, not to general goodness, not to mere philanthropy, but to this peculiar and infinite love, the gift of Christ is uniformly referred. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John iv. 10.) Hereby perceive we the love of God (or, hereby we know what love is), because He (Christ) laid down his life for us. (1 John iii. 16.) God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans v. 8.) Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John xv. 13.) Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. (Romans viii. 35-39.) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Romans viii. 32.) The whole argument of the Apostle in Romans v. 1-11, and especially throughout the eighth chapter, is founded upon this infinite and immutable love of God to his people. From this he argues their absolute security for time and eternity. Because He thus loved them He gave his Son for them; and, having done this, He would certainly give them everything necessary for their salvation. No enemy should ever prevail against them; nothing could ever separate them from his love. This whole argument is utterly irreconcilable with the hypothesis that Christ died equally for all men. His death is referred to the peculiar love of God to his people, and was the pledge of all other saving gifts. This peculiar love of God is not founded upon the fact that its objects are believers, for He loved them as enemies, as ungodly, and gave his Son to secure their being brought to faith, repentance,

and complete restoration to the divine image. It cannot, therefore, be explained away into mere general benevolence or philanthropy. It is a love which secured the communication of Himself to its objects, and rendered their salvation certain; and consequently could not be bestowed upon all men, indiscriminately. This representation is so predominant in the Scriptures, namely, that the peculiar love of God to his people, to his Church, to the elect, is the source of the gift of Christ,

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of the mission of the Holy Spirit, and of all other saving blessings, that it cannot be ignored in any view of the plan and purpose of salvation. With this representation every other statement of the Scriptures must be consistent; and therefore the theory which denies this great and precious truth, and which assumes that the love which secured the gift of God's eternal Son, was mere benevolence which had all men for its object, many of whom are allowed to perish, must be unscriptural.

Argument from the Believer's Union with Christ.

6. Another argument is derived from the nature of the union between Christ and his people. The Bible teaches, (1.) That a certain portion of the human race were given to Christ. (2.) That they were given to Him before the foundation of the world. (3.) That all thus given to Him will certainly come to Him and be saved. (4.) That this union, so far as it was from eternity, is not a union of nature, nor by faith, nor by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It was a federal union. (5.) That Christ, therefore, was a federal head and representative. As such He came into the world, and all He did and suffered was as a representative, as a substitute, one acting in the place and for the benefit of others. But He was the representative of those given to Him, i.e., of those who were in Him. For it was this gift and the union consequent upon it, that gave Him his representative character, or constituted Him a federal head. He was therefore the federal head, not of the human race, but of those given to Him by the Father. And, therefore, his work, so far as its main design is concerned, was for them alone. Whatever reference it had to others was subordinate and incidental. All this is illustrated and proved by the Apostle in Romans v. 12-21, in the parallel which he draws between Adam and Christ. All mankind were in Adam. He was the federal head and representative of his race. All men sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression. The sentence of condemnation for his one offence passed upon all men. In like manner Christ was the representative of his people. He acted for them. What He did and suffered in their place, or as their representative, they in the eye of the law, did and suffered. By his obedience they are justified. As all in Adam died, so all in Christ are made alive. Such is the nature of the union in both cases, that the sin of the one rendered certain and rendered just the death of all united to Adam, and the righteousness of the other rendered certain and just the salvation of all who are in Him. The sin of Adam did not make

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the condemnation of all men merely possible; it was the ground of their actual condemnation. So the righteousness of Christ did not make the salvation of men merely possible, it secured the actual salvation of those for whom He wrought. As it would be unreasonable to say that Adam acted for those who were not in him; so it is unscriptural to say that Christ acted for those who

were not in Him. Nevertheless, the act of Adam as the head and representative of his race, was fruitful of evil consequences, not to man only, but to the earth and all that it contains; and so the work of Christ is fruitful of good consequences to others than those for whom He acted. But this does not justify anyone in saying that Adam acted as much as the representative of the brute creation, as of his posterity; neither does it justify the assertion that Christ died for all mankind in the same sense that He died for his own people. This is all so clearly revealed in Scripture that it extorts the assent of those who are decidedly opposed to the Augustinian system. One class of those opponents, of whom Whitby may be taken as a representative, admit the truth of all that has been said of the representative character of Adam and Christ. But they maintain that as Adam represented the whole race, so also did Christ; and as in Adam all men die, so in Christ are all made alive. But they say that this has nothing to do with spiritual death in the one case, or with the salvation of the soul in the other. The death which came on all men for the sin of Adam, was merely the death of the body; and the life which comes on all through Christ, is the restoration of the life of the body at the resurrection. The Wesleyans take the same view of the representative character of Christ and of Adam. Each stood for all mankind. Adam brings upon all men the guilt of his first sin and corruption of nature. Christ secures the removal of the guilt of original sin and a seed of grace, or principle of spiritual life, for all men. So also one class of Universalists hold that as all men are condemned for the sin of Adam, so all are actually saved by the work of Christ. Rationalists also are ready to admit that Paul does teach all that Augustinians understand him to teach, but they say that this was only his Jewish mode of presenting the matter. It is not absolute truth, but a mere transient form suited to the age of the Apostles. In all these cases, however, the main fact is conceded. Christ did act as a representative; and what He did secured with certainty the benefits of his work for those for whom He acted. This being conceded, it of course follows that He acted as the representative and substitute of those only who are ultimately to be saved.

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6. There is another argument on this subject generally presented, which ought not to be overlooked. The unity of the priestly office rendered the functions of the priesthood inseparable. The high-priest interceded for all those for whom he offered sacrifice. The one service did not extend beyond the other. He bore upon his breast the names of the twelve tribes. He represented them in drawing near to God. He offered sacrifices for their sins on the great day of atonement, and for them he interceded, and for no others. The sacrifice and the intercession went together. What was true of the Aaronic priests, is true of Christ. The former, we are told, were the types of the latter. Christ's functions as priest are in like manner united. He intercedes for all for whom He offered Himself as a sacrifice. He himself, however, says expressly, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." (John xvii. 9.) Him the Father heareth always, and, therefore, He cannot be assumed to intercede for those who do not actually receive the benefits of his redemption.

The Church Doctrine Embraces All the Facts of the Case.

7. The final test of any theory is its agreeing or disagreeing with the facts to be explained. The difficulty with all the Anti-Augustinian views as to the design of Christ's death, is that while they are consistent with more or less of the Scriptural facts connected with the subject, they are utterly irreconcilable with not less clearly revealed and equally important. They are consistent, for

example, with the fact that the work of Christ lays the foundation for the offer of the gospel to all men, with the fact that men are justly condemned for the rejection of that offer; and with the fact that the Scriptures frequently assert that the work of Christ had reference to all men. All these facts can be accounted for on the assumption, that the great design of Christ's death was to make the salvation of all men possible, and that it had equal reference to every member of our race. But there are other facts which this theory leaves out of view, and with which it cannot be reconciled. On the other hand it is claimed that the Augustinian doctrine recognizes all the Scriptural assertions connected with the subject, and reconciles them all. If this be so, it must be the doctrine of the Bible. The facts which are clearly revealed concerning the death or work of Christ are,

(1.) That God from eternity gave a people to his Son.

(2.) That the peculiar and infinite love of God to his people is declared to be the motive for the gift of his Son; and their salvation the design of his mission.

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(3.) That it was as their representative, head, and substitute, He came into the world, assumed our nature, fulfilled all righteousness, and bore the curse of the law.

(4.) That the salvation of all given to Him by the Father, is thus rendered absolutely certain.

That the Augustinian scheme agrees with these great Scriptural facts, is readily admitted, but it is denied that it accounts for the fact that on the ground of the work of Christ, salvation may be offered to every human being; and that all who hear and reject the gospel, are justly condemned for their unbelief. That these are Scriptural facts cannot be denied, and if the Augustinian doctrine does not provide for them, it must be false or defective. There are different grounds on which it is assumed that the Augustinian doctrine does not provide for the universal offer of the gospel. One is, the false assumption that Augustinians teach that the satisfaction of Christ was in all respects analogous to the payment of a debt, a satisfaction to commutative or commercial justice. Hence it is inferred that Christ suffered so much for so many; He paid so much for one soul, and so much for another, and of course He would have been called upon to pay more if more were to have been saved. If this be so, then it is clear that the work of Christ can justify the offer of salvation to those only whose debts He has actually cancelled. To this view of the case it may be remarked, —

1. That this doctrine was never held by any historical church and the ascription of it to Augustinians can only be accounted for on the ground of ignorance.

2. It involves the greatest confusion of ideas. It confounds the obligations which arise among men as owners of property, with the obligations of rational creatures to an infinitely holy God. A debtor is one owner, and a creditor is another. Commutative justice requires that they should settle their mutual claims equitably. But God is not one owner and the sinner another. They do not stand in relation to each other as two proprietors. The obligation which binds a debtor to pay a creditor, and the principle which impels a just God to punish sin, are entirely distinct. God is the absolute owner of all things. We own nothing. We cannot sustain to Him, in this respect, the relation of a debtor to his creditor. The objection in question, therefore, is founded on an entire

mistake or misrepresentation of the attribute of justice, to which, according to Augustinians, the satisfaction of Christ is rendered. Because the sin of Adam was the ground of the condemnation of his race, does

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any man infer that He sinned so much for one man and so much for another? Why then should it be said that because the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of our salvation, that He did and suffered so much for one man and so much for another?

3. As this objection is directed against a theory which no Church has ever adopted, and as it attributes to God a form of justice which cannot possibly belong to Him, so it is contrary to those scriptural representations on which the Augustinian doctrine is founded. The Scriptures teach that Christ saves us as a priest, by offering Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. But a sacrifice was not a payment of a debt, the payment of so much for so much. A single victim was sometimes a sacrifice for one individual; sometimes for the whole people. On the great day of atonement the scape-goat bore the sins of the people, whether they were more or less numerous. It had no reference at all to the number of persons for whom atonement was to be made. So Christ bore the sins of his people; whether they were to be a few hundreds, or countless millions, or the whole human family, makes no difference as to the nature of his work, or as to the value of his satisfaction. What was absolutely necessary for one, was abundantly sufficient for all.

The objection, however, is at times presented in a somewhat different form. Admitting the satisfaction of Christ to be in itself of infinite value, how can it avail for the non-elect if it was not designed for them? It does not avail for the fallen angels, because it was not intended for them; how then can it avail for the non-elect, if not designed for them? How can a ransom, whatever its intrinsic value, benefit those for whom it was not paid? In this form the objection is far more specious. It is, however, fallacious. It overlooks the peculiar nature of the case. It ignores the fact that all mankind were placed under the same constitution or covenant. What was demanded for the salvation of one was demanded for the salvation of all. Every man is required to satisfy the demands of the law. No man is required to do either more or less. If those demands are satisfied by a representative or substitute, his work is equally available for all. The secret purpose of God in providing such a substitute for man, has nothing to do with the nature of his work, or with its appropriateness. The righteousness of Christ being of infinite value or merit, and being in its nature precisely what all men need, may be offered to all men. It is thus offered to the elect and to the non-elect; and it is offered to both classes conditionally. That condition is a cordial acceptance of it as the only ground of justification. If any of the elect (being adults)

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fail thus to accept of it, they perish. If any of the non-elect should believe, they would be saved. What more does any Anti-Augustinian scheme provide? The advocates of such schemes say, that the design of the work of Christ was to render the salvation of all men possible. All they can mean by this is, that if any man (elect or non-elect) believes, he shall, on the ground of what Christ has done, be certainly saved. But Augustinians say the same thing. Their doctrine provides for this universal offer of salvation, as well as any other scheme. It teaches that God in effecting

the salvation of his own people, did whatever was necessary for the salvation of all men, and therefore to all the offer may be, and in fact is made in the gospel. If a ship containing the wife and children of a man standing on the shore is wrecked, he may seize a boat and hasten to their rescue. His motive is love to his family; his purpose is to save them. But the boat which he has provided may be large enough to receive the whole of the ship's company. Would there be any inconsistency in his offering them the opportunity to escape? Or, would this offer prove that he had no special love to his own family and no special design to secure their safety. And if any or all of those to whom the offer was made, should refuse to accept it, some from one reason, some from another; some because they did not duly appreciate their danger; some because they thought they could save themselves; and some from enmity to the man from whom the offer came, their guilt and folly would be just as great as though the man had no special regard to his own family, and no special purpose to effect their deliverance. Or, if a man's family were with others held in captivity, and from love to them and with the purpose of their redemption, a ransom should be offered sufficient for the delivery of the whole body of captives, it is plain that the offer of deliverance might be extended to all on the ground of that ransom, although specially intended only for a part of their number. Or, a man may make a feast for his own friends, and the provision be so abundant that he may throw open his doors to all who are willing to come. This is precisely what God, according to the Augustinian doctrine, has actually done. Out of special love to his people, and with the design of securing their salvation, He has sent his Son to do what justifies the offer of salvation to all who choose to accept of it. Christ, therefore, did not die equally for all men. He laid down his life for his sheep; He gave Himself for his Church. But in perfect consistency with all this, He did all that was necessary, so far as a satisfaction to justice is concerned, all that is required for

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the salvation of all men. So that all Augustinians can join with the Synod of Dort in saying, "No man perishes for want of an atonement."

If the Atonement Be Limited in Design, It Must Be Restricted in the Offer.

There is still another ground on which it is urged that Augustinians cannot consistently preach the gospel to every creature. Augustinians teach, it is urged, that the work of Christ is a satisfaction to divine justice. From this it follows that justice cannot condemn those for whose sins it has been satisfied. It cannot demand that satisfaction twice, first from the substitute and then from the sinner himself. This would be manifestly unjust, far worse than demanding no punishment at all. From this it is inferred that the satisfaction or righteousness of Christ, if the ground on which a sinner may be forgiven, is the ground on which he must be forgiven. It is not the ground on which he may be forgiven, unless it is the ground on which he must be forgiven. If the atonement be limited in design it must be limited in its nature, and if limited in its nature it must be limited in its offer. This objection again arises from confounding a pecuniary and a judicial satisfaction between which Augustinians are so careful to discriminate. This distinction has already been presented on a previous page (470). There is no grace in accepting, a pecuniary satisfaction. It cannot be refused. It *ipso facto* liberates. The moment the debt is paid the debtor is free; and that without any condition. Nothing of this is true in the case of judicial satisfaction. If a substitute be provided and accepted it is a matter of grace. His satisfaction does not *ipso facto* liberate. It may accrue to the benefit of those for whom it is made at once or at a remote period;

completely or gradually; on conditions or unconditionally; or it may never benefit them at all unless the condition on which its application is suspended be performed. These facts are universally admitted by those who hold that the work of Christ was a true and perfect satisfaction to divine justice. The application of its benefits is determined by the covenant between the Father and the Son. Those for whom it was specially rendered are not justified from eternity; they are not born in a justified state; they are by nature, or birth, the children of wrath even as others. To be the children of wrath is to be justly exposed to divine wrath. They remain in this state of exposure until they believe, and should they die (unless in infancy) before they believe they would inevitably

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perish notwithstanding the satisfaction made for their sins. It is the stipulations of the covenant which forbid such a result. Such being the nature of the judicial satisfaction rendered by Christ to the law, under which all men are placed, it may be sincerely offered to all men with the assurance that if they believe it shall accrue to their salvation. His work being specially designed for the salvation of his own people, renders, through the conditions of the covenant, that event certain; but this is perfectly consistent with its being made the ground of the general offer of the gospel. Lutherans and Reformed agree entirely, as before stated, in their views of the nature of the satisfaction of Christ, and consequently, so far as that point is concerned, there is the same foundation for the general offer of the gospel according to either scheme. What the Reformed or Augustinians hold about election does not affect the nature of the atonement. That remains the same whether designed for the elect or for all mankind. It does not derive its nature from the secret purpose of God as to its application.

Certain Passages of Scripture Considered.

Admitting, however, that the Augustinian doctrine that Christ died specially for his own people does account for the general offer of the gospel, how is it to be reconciled with those passages which, in one form or another, teach that He died for all men? In answer to this question, it may be remarked in the first place that Augustinians do not deny that Christ died for all men. What they deny is that He died equally, and with the same design, for all men. He died for all, that He might arrest the immediate execution of the penalty of the law upon the whole of our apostate race; that He might secure for men the innumerable blessings attending their state on earth, which, in one important sense, is a state of probation; and that He might lay the foundation for the offer of pardon and reconciliation with God, on condition of faith and repentance. These are the universally admitted consequences of his satisfaction, and therefore they all come within its design. By this dispensation it is rendered manifest to every intelligent mind in heaven and upon earth, and to the finally impenitent themselves, that the perdition of those that perish is their own fault. They will not come to Christ that they may have life. They refuse to have Him to reign over them. He calls but they will not answer. He says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Every human being who does come is saved. This is what is meant when it is said, or implied in Scripture, that Christ gave Himself

as a propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world. He was a propitiation effectually for the sins of his people, and sufficiently for the sins of the whole world.

Augustinians have no need to wrest the Scriptures. They are under no necessity of departing from their fundamental principle that it is the duty of the theologian to subordinate his theories to the Bible, and teach not what seems to him to be true or reasonable, but simply what the Bible teaches.

But, in the second place, it is to be remarked that general terms are often used indefinitely and not comprehensively. They mean all kinds, or classes, and not all and every individual. When Christ said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," He meant men of all ages, classes, and conditions, and not every individual man. When God predicted that upon the advent of the Messiah He would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, all that was foretold was a general effusion of the Holy Ghost. And when it is said that all men shall see (experience) the salvation of God, it does not mean that all men individually, but that a vast multitude of all classes shall be saved. The same remark applies to the use of the term world. It means men, mankind, as a race or order of beings. No one hesitates to call the Lord Jesus the "Salvator hominum." He is so hailed and so worshipped wherever his name is known. But no one means by this that He actually saves all mankind. What is meant is that He is our Saviour, the Saviour of men, not of angels, not of Jews exclusively, nor yet of the Gentiles only, not of the rich, or of the poor alone, not of the righteous only, but also of publicans and sinners. He is the Saviour of all men who come unto Him. Thus when He is called the Lamb of God that bears the sin of the world, all that is meant is that He bears the sins of men; He came as a sin-offering bearing not his own, but the sins of others.

In the third place, these general terms are always to be understood in reference to the things spoken of in the context. When all things, the universe, is said to be put in subjection to Christ it is, of course, to be understood of the created universe. In 1 Corinthians xv. 27, Paul expressly mentions this limitation, but in Hebrews ii. 8, it is not mentioned. It is, however, just as obviously involved in the one passage as in the other. When in Romans v. 18, it is said that by the righteousness of Christ the free gift of justification of life has come upon all men, it is of necessity limited to the all in Christ of whom the Apostle is speaking. So also in 1 Corinthians xv. 22, As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall

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all be made alive (i.e., quickened with the life of Christ), it is in both members of the sentence not absolutely all, but the all in Adam and the all in Christ. This is still more obvious in Romans viii. 32, where it is said that God gave up his own Son for us all. The us refers to the class of persons of which the whole chapter treats, namely, of those to whom there is no condemnation, who are led by the Spirit, for whom Christ intercedes, etc. Ephesians i. 10, and Colossians i. 20, are favorite texts with the Universalists, for they teach that all in heaven and on earth are reunited unto God by Jesus Christ. They are right in understanding these passages as teaching the salvation of all men, if by *all* in this connection we must understand all human beings. But why limit the word to all men? Why not include angels and even irrational creatures? The answer is, because the Bible teaches that Christ came to save men, and neither angels nor irrational animals. This is only saying that all must be limited to the objects of redemption. Who they are is to be learned not from these general terms, but from the general teaching of Scripture. The *all* who are

to be united in one harmonious body by Jesus Christ are the all whom He came to save. The same remark applies to Hebrews ii. 9, Christ tasted "death for every man." It is well known that Origen understood this of every creature; others, of every rational creature; others, of every fallen rational creature; others, of every man; others, of every one of those given to the Son by the Father. How are we to decide which of these interpretations is correct? So far as the mere signification of the words is concerned, one is as correct as another. It is only from the analogy of Scripture that the meaning of the sacred writer can be determined. Christ tasted death for every one of the objects of redemption. Whether He came to redeem all created sensuous beings, or all rational creatures, or all men, or all given to Him in the councils of eternity, the Bible must decide. The great majority of the passages quoted to prove that Christ died equally for all men come, under one or other of the classes just mentioned, and have no real bearing on the question concerning the design of his death.

There is another class of passages with which it is said that the Augustinian doctrine cannot be reconciled; such, namely, as speak of those perishing for whom Christ died. In reference to these passages it may be remarked, first, that there is a sense, as before stated, in which Christ did die for all men. His death had the effect of justifying the offer of salvation to every man; and of course was designed to have that effect. He therefore died sufficiently

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for all. In the second place, these passages are, in some cases at least, hypothetical. When Paul exhorts the Corinthians not to cause those to perish for whom Christ died, he merely, exhorts them not to act selfishly towards those for whom Christ had exhibited the greatest compassion. The passage neither asserts nor implies that any actually perish for whom Christ died. None perish whom He came to save; multitudes perish to whom salvation is offered on the ground of his death.

As God in the course of nature and in the dispensation of his providence, moves on in undisturbed majesty, little concerned at the apparent complication or even inconsistency of one effect or one dispensation with another; so the Spirit of God in the Bible unfolds the purposes, truths, and dealings of God, just as they are, assured that even finite minds will ultimately be able to see the consistency of all his revelations. The doctrines of foreordination, sovereignty, and effectual providential control, go hand in hand with those of the liberty and responsibility of rational creatures. Those of freedom from the law, of salvation by faith without works, and of the absolute necessity of holy living stand side by side. On the same page we find the assurance of God's love to sinners, and declarations that He would that all men should come unto Him and live, with explicit assertions that He has determined to leave multitudes to perish in their sins. In like manner, the express declarations that it was the incomprehensible and peculiar love of God for his own people, which induced Him to send his Son for their redemption; that Christ came into the world for that specific object; that He died for his sheep; that He gave Himself for his Church; and that the salvation of all for whom He thus offered Himself is rendered certain by the gift of the Spirit to bring them to faith and repentance, are intermingled with declarations of good-will to all mankind, with offers of salvation to every one who will believe in the Son of God, and denunciations of wrath against those who reject these overtures of mercy. All we have to do is not to ignore or deny either of these modes of representation, but to open our minds wide

enough to receive them both, and reconcile them as best we can. Both are true, in all the cases above referred to, whether we can see their consistency or not.

In the review of this subject, it is plain that the doctrine that Christ died equally for all men with the purpose of rendering the salvation of all possible, has no advantage over the doctrine that He died specially for his own people, and with the purpose of rendering their salvation certain. It presents no higher view of

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the love of God, or of the value of Christ's work. It affords no better ground for the offer of salvation "to every creature," nor does it render more obvious the justice of the condemnation of those who reject the gospel. They are condemned by God, angels, and men, and by their own consciences, because they refuse to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, and to love, worship, trust, and obey Him accordingly. The opposite, or anti-Augustinian doctrine, is founded on a partial view of the facts of the case. It leaves out of view the clearly revealed special love of God to his peculiar people; the union between Christ and his chosen; the representative character which He assumed as their substitute; the certain efficacy of his sacrifice in virtue of the covenant of redemption; and the necessary connection between the gift of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. It moreover leads to confused and inconsistent views of the plan of salvation, and to unscriptural and dangerous theories of the nature of the atonement. It therefore is the limited and meagre scheme; whereas the orthodox doctrine is catholic and comprehensive; full of consolation and spiritual power. as well as of justice to all mankind.

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