

BIBLE CHALLENGE 2019

Week 23: June 2-8

Restoring Our Relationship with God

Read: Genesis 3:15; Exodus 34:6-7; Leviticus 17:11; 22:19-20; Deuteronomy 7:9-11; Psalm 5:4-6; 49:7-9,15; 103:8-9; Jeremiah 23:6; Habakkuk 1:13; Matthew 1:21-23; 3:15; 18:11; 20:28; 25:35-46; 26:28; Mark 10:45; Luke 2:11; 14:23; John 1:12,29; 3:16-18; 4:42; 5:30,43; 6:37-39,44,51; 8:42; 10:9,15; 17:2,6,9,11; Acts 4:12; 13:38-39,48; 20:28; Romans 1:16,18; 3:21-29; 5:1-2,6-11,19; 8:14-17,32-33; 9:11; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 5:7; 6:11; 15:3,57; 2 Corinthians 5:18,21; Galatians 2:16,20-21; 3:10-11,13; 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:4-7; 2:13; 4:32; 5:2,25; Colossians 1:20; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 4:15; 9:12-14,22-28; 10:10-14,19-20,30-31; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 2:22-24; 3:18; 1 John 1:7; 2:1-2,12; 3:1-2,5; 4:10; Revelation 1:5-6; 5:9. Also read Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 3 in full.

So, we have talked thus far about God's perfect creation and of Mankind's perfectly reprehensible sin and we have talked about how not only has the guilt of Adam and Eve's sin been passed on to us, but of how we have inherited the sin nature of our first parents and are thus born into this world sinful and separated from God. It is truly a ghastly lot that we have inherited. Is it really that bad, though, isn't God a merciful God? Yes indeed it is that bad. And while God is merciful, Heidelberg Catechism, Question 11 does a good job of summing up our situation:

"But isn't God also merciful? Yes, God is very merciful, but he is also just, and his justice requires that sin which is committed against the most high majesty of God be punished to the same extent. And that means with an everlasting punishment of both body and soul."

And so, we need a mediator to redeem us. Question 18 of the catechism asks:

"But who is that Mediator who is both fully God and fully man (but without sin)? Our Lord Jesus Christ, who was freely sent to us for the purpose of completely redeeming us and imputing his righteousness to us."

Our goal, then, this week is to talk about what Jesus did to restore our relationship with God. This culminates on the cross, but it begins long before that specific day. Most of us who were raised in the church know that Jesus suffered and died for our sins, but what exactly does that mean?

In theological circles, this conversation falls under the heading of the "Atonement." Atonement is a word constructed to mean exactly what it says. It is comprised of the words "At" and "One" with the suffix: "ment." Atonement is simply "the state of being at one" with another person — or in our case, the means by which we are reconciled so that we can return to a state of being "at one" with God.

Active and Passive Obedience: The Law demands obedience and we have not been obedient at all. Thus, for Jesus to take our place, he had to become obedient to the Law. Thus Jesus had to actively fulfill all of the aspects of the law that were required from feast days and sacrifices to the personal laws that governed everyday life. That falls into the category of "active obedience." Jesus' "passive obedience" deals primarily how Jesus suffered the effects of sin and then the judgment for sin — a judgment that he did not deserve.

Satisfaction of God and the Law: When a law is broken, the penalty of law must be satisfied before atonement can take place. So, for instance, if you receive a ticket for breaking the speed limit, you must pay the fine to satisfy the demands of the Law. God is a just judge and thus he demands that satisfaction be made according to the Law. This, Jesus did by his work on the cross, suffering the full punishment that each believer deserves (and hence the atonement of Jesus is a "definite" atonement and not a "potential" one as some Christian sects would teach).

A Ransom Payment: This ties in with the language of satisfying the demands of the Law. Not only is there a demand that a blood sacrifice

be made, but there also is a payment of a sense to be made — in this case, a payment of righteousness.

A Sacrifice: As noted above, punishment for sin demands a sacrifice.

Expiation and Propitiation: Expiation is the suffering that is associated with atonement while propitiation is the work that atonement requires. The Bible speaks of both aspects in connection to Christ's work of Atonement.

Substitution: Jesus substitutes himself in our place during his work of atonement — punishment that believers deserve is placed upon Christ's shoulders.

It is Vicarious in Nature: The simple explanation of this is that Jesus did all of the works and we gain all of the benefits — we contribute nothing to our salvation and reconciliation with God.

Righteousness is Imputed: "Impute" is a word that we do not normally use in conversation, but it is an important word in theological terms. What this word means is that we are clothed in something but that something does not become a part of our being — in the case of righteousness, we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, it does not become infused to our person. Sometimes we refer to this imputed righteousness as an "alien righteousness." We stand as righteous before God, but it is a righteousness that has been given to us, it is not made a part of us.

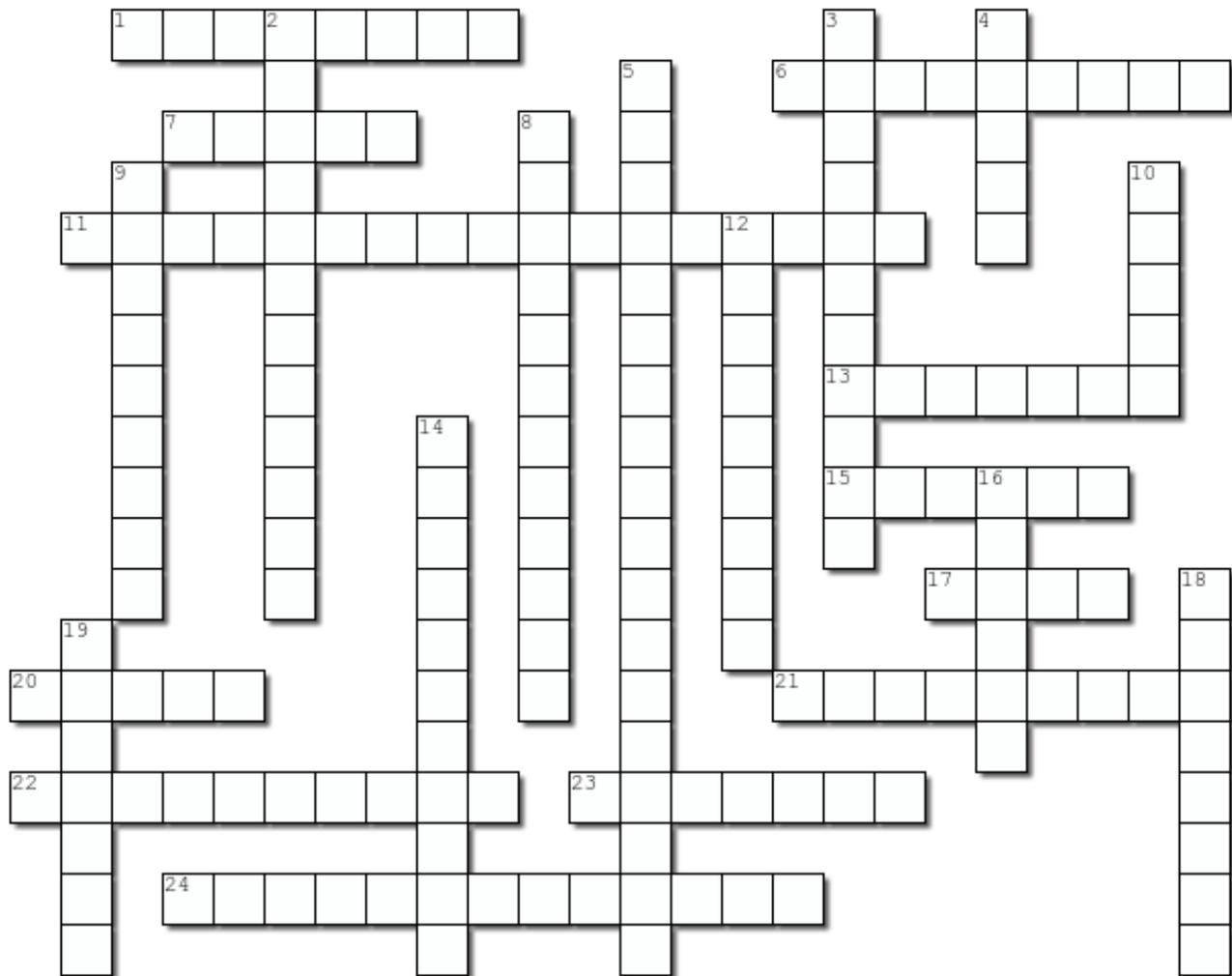
Destroys the Power of the Devil, Sin, and Death: The devil, sin, and death no longer have power over the life of the believer. They may try and test us at times, but they are powerless against us if we are in Christ.

It is Given by Grace and Received through Faith: The application of Christ's work of atonement is given through the faith that comes to us in our spiritual re-birth (Regeneration). In other words, Christ's work made a way by which God's elect might be saved and when the Holy Spirit gives them faith, then the work of Christ is applied to the person.

It is all about Christ, who He is and what He has done: God did not atone with us because of something within us. He did so because of something in Christ. So God loves us *in Christ* and all of God's blessings to us are mediated through Him. Thus, God loves us because God loves Christ and Christ has redeemed us.

It is Limited/Definite in its Extent: People sometimes feel uncomfortable using the language of "limited" in the same sentence as with the work of Christ. Christ's atoning work is only limited in the extent that it is limited in application to the elect of God — hence it is also called a "Definite Atonement." Jesus says that a shepherd lays down his life for *His* sheep, not for all sheep. Jesus knew exactly for whom he died as those had been elected by the Father before the foundation of the earth — and he compels us to come in.

Week 23: Jesus' Atonement



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

1. 'He predestined us for _____ to himself as sons through Jesus Christ.'
6. This is an English word created from the words 'at' and 'one' with the suffix 'meant.'
7. 'The life of the flesh is in the _____.'
11. By the name of Jesus, this is preached. (3 words)
13. When John asked Jesus why he should baptize him, Jesus said it was to '_____ all righteousness.'
15. 'Truly no man may _____ another...' Hint: This is why Jesus needed to be God!.
17. God destroys those who speak these.
20. 'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me _____ him.'
21. 'I have been _____ with Christ...'
22. God does not delight in this.
23. 'For while we were weak, Christ died for the _____.'
24. It will be declared: 'The Lord is our _____.'

Down

2. Jesus is called the _____ for our sins by John.
3. Jesus says that this was prepared for the devil and his angels. (2 words)
4. The Messiah was to be given this name because he would save his people from their sins.
5. Jesus refers to the Wine of Communion as this. (4 words)
8. 'For Christ our _____ has been sacrificed.' (2 words)
9. 'Whoever believes in him is not _____.'
10. God will ransom a soul from the power of _____.
12. 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God unto _____.'
14. Offerings to the Lord were meant to be _____.
16. 'The _____ himself bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God.'
18. 'for it is appointed to die once and then _____.'
19. The heel of the Messiah, it is said, will be _____.