

Doctrines Class
The Satisfaction of Christ
Lesson 5 The Atonement Defined
The Substitutionary Work

The Substitutionary Work:

When we look at the substitutionary work Jesus did we must also consider that work as vicarious. Vicarious suffering or punishment is more than suffering endured for the good of others. For example:

1. The suffering of martyrs for the good of their cause, of patriots for their country, of philanthropists for mankind, are not "vicarious," for they are not substitutionary.
 - a. Vicarious suffering is suffering endured not only on behalf of others, but in the stead of others, in the actual place of others. Is. 53:5; 1 Peter 3:18;
2. What a substitute does for the person whose place he fills, absolves that person from the need of himself doing or suffering the same thing.
3. Thus, when we affirm that the sufferings of Christ were vicarious" we mean:
 - a. That He substituted Himself in the place of sinners: Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14;
 - b. And satisfied the law in their behalf, and that, in such a way, the law can now make no claim whatever upon them. Romans 8:1; Gal. 5:1;
4. Christ's sufferings were "vicarious" in identically the same way that the death of animals in the Old Testament sacrifices was in lieu of the death of the transgressor offering them.

The Scriptures teach that Christ was in a strict and exact sense the Substitute of His people.

1. That means, by Divine appointment and of His own free will, Jesus assumed all our liabilities, He took our place, and bound Himself to do in our stead all that the law demanded: Gal. 3:13; Eph. 3:11; Heb. 2:9;

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2. And He rendered to the Law that obedience upon which our wellbeing depended, and He suffered its penalty which our sins deserved. John 14:31; 15:10; Is. 50:6; Heb. 2:10; 13:12;
 - a. So real was His substitution in our place, that what He did and suffered for us precluded any necessity that we would have to meet any demands of the law ourselves. John 3:18; Romans 8:1-2; 34; Gal. 5:18;

In becoming the Substitute of His people, in placing Himself under their liabilities, in engaging to discharge all their responsibilities, Christ was, necessarily, "made under the law" so that He might keep its statutes, fulfill its requirements, and thus "magnify" and render it "honorable." Ga 4:4 Is 42:21

1. It's important to note that the humanity of Christ, as such, was impersonal, and therefore owed no obedience to the law.
2. By that I mean the God-man is **not two persons** in one: He is **one person** with **two natures**.
 - a. As the Son of God, He was a person before He became incarnate. In becoming incarnate He took to Himself humanity, but not a second personality.
 - b. Therefore, because the **manhood of Christ** was united to the Son of God, He was not and could not be obligated to obey the law.
 - c. It was by a Divine constitution, by covenant agreement, that He was "made under the law," for the purpose of redeeming and justifying God's elect. Eph. 3:11

Now the moment Christ was "made under the law" He entered the place occupied by His people, considered as fallen creatures.

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1. This alone explains the experiences He encountered, the degradation He suffered, the injustice He met with at the hands of men, and the punishment He received from God Himself.
2. If we imagine for a moment that God would allow an innocent person (Jesus the man) or permit His Beloved Son to suffer unrighteously at the hands of evil men — we dishonor God.
 - a. In other words if Jesus had two personalities God would be unrighteous to allow the innocent one to suffer.
 - b. And Son of God didn't suffer personally, He suffered "Vicariously."
 - b. And we will never understand the necessity for the flight into Egypt, having nowhere to lay His head, the horrible indignities inflicted by His enemies, and the wicked treatment He received from those who condemned Him to die — until we recognize that from Bethlehem to Calvary Jesus was the **vicarious Victim of His people**. Throughout His life He bore their sins and suffered the due rewards of their iniquities.

Scripture paints a vivid picture of how the God-Man's life was identical to the people He suffered for.

1. As the descendants of fallen Adam, God's people in their unregenerate state disobeyed God's commandments and followed a course of self-will.
 - a. As a consequence God withheld good things from them. Jer. 5:25
 - b. Therefore, when Christ came here as the Sin bearer of His people, Divine justice required that He should be deprived of many "good things." Phil. 2:6;

Question #1: Does this verse apply to the 21st century Church? Discuss

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2. As a wanderer from the Father's house man has forfeited the right to an earthly abode. Luke 15:13
 - a. Likewise we find Christ taking the place of the homeless Stranger. Matt. 8:20;
3. In as much as fallen man prefers the "world" to anything that God sets before him, we find Christ carried down into Egypt (the biblical symbol of the world) and therefore did God call His Son out of Egypt. Matt. 2:15
4. In consequence of the Fall, God pronounced the following curse upon man: Gen. 3:19
 - a. Therefore Christ toiled for His bread. Mark 6:3
5. Because the elect in their unregenerate days failed to love their neighbors, we find Christ experiencing the hatred of men. Is. 53:3; John 15:18
6. Because we have been guilty of gluttony, He was made to hunger.
7. Because we have misused our money, He was penniless. Mt 17:27
8. Because we have denied Him, He was denied. Matt. 26:69-70

A W Pink has written: "Not one throb of pain did He feel, not one pang of sorrow did He experience, not one sigh of anguish did He heave, not one tear of grief did He shed, for Himself. **All were for men; all were for us.** If not one of His sufferings was personal, it follows that they were all substitutionary, that they were all, of course, included in the matter or substance of His atoning sacrifice.

1. The point is, during the whole period of His mortal life the victim was being slain. At the moment of His birth, the sword of justice was unsheathed against the God-Man and was not returned to its scabbard until it had been bathed in the blood of Calvary.

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One last note that is important in understanding the substitutionary work of Christ is His innocence and guilt.

1. As the Substitute of His sinful people, Christ had to be found innocent and yet pronounced guilty! Though personally spotless, Divine justice required that He should be dealt with as officially deserving of condemnation. 1 Peter 1:18-20

2. The sentence pronounced by the human judges of our Savior was the announcement of the sentence which had already been passed **by the Divine Judge** upon the Sin-bearer. Acts 4:27-28

3. We should note that Christ didn't hide His face from the sham and spitting. Why? Because as guilty criminals, as convicted outlaws, that's what our sins deserved.
 - a. When He stood before His accusers He was "dumb" He didn't reply to the charges brought against Him. Why? Because although He was personally innocent — He stood in the place of guilty sinners: Therefore, there was nothing that He could say. Matt. 26:60; 1 Peter 2:21-24

 - b. The charge which was brought against Christ as He stood before the Sanhedrin was a charge against those whom He represented and it wasn't a false charge!
 1. That's because we've all been guilty of blasphemy against God.
 2. Therefore, as the official Representative of His sinful people, the Lord Jesus stood silent, putting in no plea to stop His judgment.

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So, we see that the earthly court, dealing with the charge of blasphemy, or dishonor done to the Name and Word of God, and in sentencing to death our Surety, was the pronouncement on our sins, much in the same way as the shadow on the sundial registers the movements which are taking place in another sphere!

1. Christ's holy Person was there in the room of guilty persons, and the human judge only expressed the verdict the Divine Judge had already decreed.
2. It was the Sinner who was arraigned for sentence. At the beginning, the Judge of all the earth had formally pronounced sentence, "Thou shalt surely die," and that sentence was now fully and finally executed, vicariously, on elect sinners.

It was no innocent person that stood before Caiaphas and Pilate; instead, it was the sinner who was on trial — there in the person of his sinless and immaculate Substitute.

1. The earthly court of judgment was but the foreground; in reality, it was the Bearer of sin making a real appearance before the Bar of God!
2. Hence, there could only be one decision possible: though personally sinless He was **officially guilty**, and nothing remained but sentence of condemnation and the prompt execution of it.
3. Thus we, should admire the over-ruling providence of God, which caused the lower court on earth to shadow forth so clearly the action of the Supreme Court on High.

The passages of Scripture which expressly set forth the vicarious character of Christ's atoning work are numerous.

1. He was wounded for our transgression: Is. 53:5;
2. He is a ransom for many and a Good Shepherd: Matt. 20:28; John 10:11

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3. And from the writings of the Apostles we find:
- a. He died for the lost: Romans 5:6;
 - b. He suffered for the unjust: 1 Peter 3:18;
 - c. He was our propitiation: 1 John 4:10;
 - d. His sacrifice made us righteous: 2 Cor. 5:21

The sufferings to which the Lord Jesus was exposed, from the hour of His birth until He committed His spirit into the hands of the Father, were strictly and definitely vicarious, borne as the Substitute of His people-not only for their advantage, but actually in their room and stead.

1. Because of all this the benefits of Christ's satisfaction is not made dependent on their fulfilling any conditions.
2. Repentance and faith were purchased by Christ for everyone for whom He obeyed and suffered.
3. Divine justice requires that Christ shall see of the work of His soul and be satisfied. And the law of God demands that its reward should be bestowed on all for whom Christ obeyed it.
4. The very righteousness and faithfulness of God insist that, because the Captain of their salvation was made perfect through suffering, He shall bring the many sons to glory."

In our next lesson, we'll look at the "Punishment" side of the "Satisfaction of Christ."