

# WHAT IS THE ATONEMENT?

by Richard D. Phillips

**TO THE READER:** A good learning technique is to answer the following questions BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, you can refine your answers based on your reading. Then, when your group gathers, each can discuss his or her view and you can either affirm or modify what you wrote.

1. Why did Jesus *have* to die? Was there no other way? (5-7)
2. How do you understand the word “atonement”? How important is the meaning of atonement to our salvation? (7-8)
3. Read Genesis 3:14-21. Where is the atonement most clearly seen here? (8-10)
4. What was the **first** thing Jesus’ atoning death had to accomplish? (10-13)
5. How do you explain God’s love for us if He is so angry at our sin? (10-13)
6. Read Leviticus 14:1-4. The Bible uses leprosy as a picture of how sin deteriorates us spiritually. What does each of these birds represent? (14-16)
7. In Psalm 103:12, why does God say “as far as the east is from the west,” and not, the north is from the south?
8. Define the word *redemption*. If you are older, you might have an interesting memory of “redeeming.” (16-20)

9. Another aspect of atonement is reconciliation – the restoring of relationships. At the Fall, in Genesis 3, there were five relationships that were broken:
- Spiritual – our relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ was broken
  - Psychological – our relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ was broken
  - Sociological – our relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ was broken
  - Ecological – our relationship with the \_\_\_\_\_ was broken
  - Physiological – our relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ was broken

10. If God is so loving and truly just, why couldn't He just forgive us without Jesus' sacrificial death? (21-30)

11. Did Jesus' death pay for **ALL** sin, or just some? (30-34)

After reading the booklet, do you still stand by your answer?

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

## APPLICATION

- As a church** – Dr. Phillips gives three very good and helpful ministry applications (34-43). Break into small groups and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of what your church is doing now. Then, make a plan how you can improve in each of these areas.
- Personal** – You have been reading the most wonderful message ever to be presented to mankind. From now on, when you pray, begin with thanking and praising God for doing everything you could not do to bring about your salvation and the wonderful relationship that developed as a result?

## For Further Study

*Atonement*, Gabriel N.E. Fluhrer, editor. P&R, 2010.

*Christ's Redemption*, Sandy Wilson (The Gospel Coalition Booklet Series). Crossway, 2011.

*Sin and the Fall*, Reddit Andrews, III (The Gospel Coalition Booklet Series). Crossway, 2011.

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