

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Dr. Stephen Myers and Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 4:
CHRISTOLOGY

Lecture 7:
**THE NECESSITY OF
THE ATONEMENT**



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

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Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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Rev. Robert D. McCurley is minister of the Gospel at Greenville Presbyterian Church, in Taylors, South Carolina, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Presbytery of the United States of America.

greenvillepresbyterian.com

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STUDY GUIDE

Module 4

Christology

Lectures by Dr. Stephen Myers:

1. Introduction to Christology
2. The Divinity of Christ
3. The Humanity of Christ

Lectures by Robert D. McCurley, ThM:

4. The Hypostatic Union
5. The States of Christ
6. The Offices of Christ
- 7. The Necessity of the Atonement**
8. The Nature of the Atonement
9. The Extent of the Atonement
10. The Preeminence of Christ

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Module 4:

CHRISTOLOGY

Lecture 7:

The Necessity of the Atonement

Introduction

Everything revolves around and contributes to the purposes of the kingdom of God's Son. Consequently, the greatest period in history pertains to the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Most of the world even marks passage of time by the designations "BC"—before Christ; and "AD"—the year of our Lord, the years that follow Christ. He is the most important person the world has ever known. And the greatest event in history was Christ's work of atoning for the sins of his people. It is to Christ's work—his work of atonement—to which we now turn.

Theme: *The doctrine of the necessity of the Atonement.*

I. Scriptural Basis

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world he hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:26–28)

1. Sin brings defilement, guilt, and a curse, and the penalty of everlasting punishment.
2. Only God can provide the solution, which he does in sending his Son.
3. Christ offers himself as the sacrifice to bear the sins of his people.

Questions:

1. How does the passage in Hebrews 9:26–28 show us man's great need and the provision of God to fulfill this need?

2. How does God work out this solution to man's sin?

II. Doctrinal Overview

As summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 8, paragraph 5:

"The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience, and sacrifice of Himself, which He, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of His Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him."

1. "Atonement" pertains to the sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross.
 - a. It secures the remission of sin,
 - b. the removal of guilt,
 - c. the cleansing from defilement of sin,
 - d. satisfying God's wrath against sin,
 - e. the redemption of sinners.
2. Objective accomplishment of salvation—Christ's work for us.
3. Subjective application of redemption—Christ's work in us.
4. The necessity of the atonement.
 - a. The sinner's need.
 - b. Sin is the transgression of the law.
 - c. Sins of commission, and sins of omission.
 - d. Sin results in catastrophic misery. *"The way of the transgressor is hard."*
 - e. God's curse: *"The wages of sin is death."*

5. Three kinds of death sentences.

- a. Spiritual death—outside of Christ.
- b. Physical death—everyone dies.
- c. Eternal death—soul and body in hell for eternity.

6. God provides atonement in the sacrifice of his Son on the cross.

- a. Nothing outside of God required him to save.
- b. God shows us who he is through what he does.
- c. His provision of salvation must correspond to his own character.
- d. The atonement of Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the only answer.

Questions

1. What does the word, “atonement” mean? What all does it include?

2. What is the objective accomplishment of salvation, and what is the subjective application of redemption? What do we need regarding the relationship of these two things?

3. What is the bad news for the sinner? What are the three kinds and extent of death?

4. How does God respond to man's sin? What does this reveal about him?

5. Can a sinner be reconciled to God by his own power or merit? Why? What does that man need in order to be reconciled to God?

6. What is God's solution for man's need of reconciliation?

7. How does God's solution to man's sin correspond with God's own character? How do we see the harmony in this solution?

8. What part of God's solution to man's sin gives worth and efficacy to Christ's sufferings and death on the cross?

III. Polemical Exposition

1. Anyone who downplays the message about man's sin, downplays the glory of Christ's salvation.

2. Denial of the atonement is denial of the gospel, and therefore the rejection of all hope of salvation.
3. We cannot separate who God is from what God does.
4. There are those who wrongly say that the atonement of Christ was not necessary. That is not what the Bible teaches.

Questions:

1. For those who don't want to preach about sin; don't want to emphasize sin; don't want to talk about the lostness of man and the damnation that is deserved—what are they really saying?

2. How will you answer those who claim, “The shedding of blood is not necessary,” and, “We ought not to think about God’s wrath being poured out upon his Son”?

3. Why can't we separate who God is from what God does?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. All sin will be punished, either punished in you, or punished in him.
2. There is much comfort in realizing that the source of Christ's once-for-all and final sacrifice is found in the love of God for his people.
3. Christ crucified is at the center—it is the chief thing in all preaching, in all pastoring, in our personal experience, in our families, and in our lives.

Questions:

1. Why should the necessity of punishment for sin be included in all gospel preaching and sharing?

2. If we are soaking ourselves in this doctrine of the necessity of the atonement, what should it cause?

3. How do you see “Christ crucified” being kept at the center of your church life and personal life?

V. Self-Reflection

Do you or your church family have a balanced view about the objective accomplishment of salvation and the subjective application of redemption? Is it seen in the preaching, teaching, and thinking in your church? Why is this important? How does it help to understand God’s love? As in John 3:16, God’s sending his Son to save the world from condemnation is the greatest display of love in all of human history. Why should God’s love move sinners to trust in him?
