



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Suffering Savior, Romans 8:32

"The Design of the Atonement: For Whom Did Christ Die?- I" TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Our subject for tonight is the first in a series of several messages on the Design of the Atonement, or "For Whom Did Christ Die?" We have finished our treatment of the nature of the atonement, and last time we considered the question, the purpose of the atonement. We pointed out particularly in our study of the nature of the atonement, remember that Jesus Christ's death was penal. That is, he suffered under the judgment of God for sinners. And then we pointed out that his death was a satisfaction rendered to divine justice. This necessary because we were under the judgment of God for our sins, but our Lord Jesus has paid that which we owed. And finally, we pointed out that he accomplished this by means of a substitutionary act.

So, acting as mediator, between man and God, he provided the satisfaction under the judgment of God, by suffering himself in our place, that we might have eternal life and justification. Expressed in the words of Scripture it is, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." And ultimately that text goes on to say that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Or expressed in another text, 2 Corinthians chapter 5, in verse 21, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

So we turn now to the consideration of the design of the atonement or the extent of the atonement. When we speak of the design of the atonement, we are looking at this question from the Godward side. When we say that we are going to study the extent of the atonement, we are looking at it from the human side. We could state this question in a couple of ways, but they are essentially the same thing. Did Christ die for the purpose of saving all men indiscriminately, or for the purpose of saving his elect seed, personally and definitely? Or did Christ die that his atonement might extend to all men indiscriminately or only to the elect? I like that first statement, but they mean the same thing.

The question is, did Christ die for the purpose of saving all men indiscriminately or for the purpose of saving his elect seed. The term seed derived from Isaiah chapter 53, "He shall see his seed." Or for the purpose of saving his elect seed personally and definitely, this raises the question of the [EXTENDED PAUSE] taught a definite atonement. That is, that the work of Jesus Christ was designed by the Godhead to save a certain, definite people; definite atonement. It is directed toward a definite people. Arminians are taught a universal atonement. In other words, the atonement which Jesus Christ rendered is for all men indiscriminately upon the condition of faith.

I think, in all fairness both to Arminians and to Calvinists, we must be sure that we avoid some misunderstandings. I hope that we can keep our discussions on a low plain, a cool plain rather than a heated plain. I don't think that this question really is so important that a person should get all excited over it to such an extent that he slanders his opponents. And I think we all should be fair to the Arminians if we are Calvinists and to the Calvinists if we are Arminians. We must avoid two misunderstandings if we are going to do that. And the first is that Arminians teach universalism. Arminians do not teach universalism. They do not teach that all men are going to be saved. They teach a universal atonement in the sense that they believe that Jesus Christ offered an atonement which was designed for all men. But they do not believe that that design was

accomplished. They teach that a certain number of people are saved who are not all men, so they teach only that a certain number of people will be saved, but they teach that the atonement was designed for all. So, they do not teach universalism. Now, we may say your doctrine tends to such a doctrine, but they do not teach it. So, we should not accuse them of teaching it.

On the other hand, I think it is also fair to say, regarding the Calvinists, that they do not teach, in their own words, a limited atonement. They do not accept the term limited atonement. Let me read a statement by one of the greatest of the Calvinists who preached constantly and probably was Great Britain's greatest preacher in the 19th century. This great preacher has said, "We are often told that we limit the atonement of Christ." This is Charles Haddon Spurgeon, of course, who was a believer in definite atonement. "We are often told that we limit the atonement of Christ, because we say that Christ has not made a satisfaction for all men or all men would be saved.

"Now, our reply to this is, on the other hand, our opponents limit it. We do not. The Arminians say Christ died for all men. Ask them what they mean by it, did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men? They say, 'No, certainly not.' We ask them the next question. Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any man in particular? They answer, 'No,' they are obliged to admit this if they are consistent. They say, 'No, Christ has died that any man may be saved, if,' and then follow certain conditions of salvation. We say then, we will just go back to the old statement. Christ did not die so as beyond a doubt to secure the salvation of anybody, did he? You must say," you Arminians, he means, "No. You are obliged to say so, for you believe that even after a man has been pardoned, he may yet fall from grace and perish. Now who is it that limits the death of Christ, why you. You say that Christ did not die so as to infallibly secure the salvation of anybody. We beg your pardon when you say we limit Christ's death. We say, No my dear sir it is you that do it. We say that Christ so died that he infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, who through Christ's death not only

may be saved, but are saved, must be saved, and cannot by any possibility run the hazards of being anything but saved. You are welcome to your atonement. You may keep it. We will never renounce ours for the sake of it."

So, you can see that it is not really fair to a Calvinist to say that you believe in limited atonement. He does not believe in limited atonement, he believes in definite atonement. He believes in particular redemption. So, we should not speak of a Calvinist as believing in limited atonement. Now, I know that my word shall not prevent Arminians from saying that Calvinists believe in limited atonement, because of course, by so doing, they gain the jump on their adversaries right at the beginning and force them to start explaining themselves. Just as a good Calvinist who wants to take advantage of the Arminians will simply say, "Your doctrine leads to universalism. For if Christ died for all men, why do not all then go free?" He immediately must start explaining his position.

At any rate, we, if we are going to look at this question, I think, fairly we must remember that Arminians do not teach universalism, nor do Calvinists teach limited atonement in the sense in which their opponents speak of it. The Calvinist/ Arminian conflict arose in Holland out of the teaching of a Calvinistic pastor and professor. His name was Jacob Hermanson, and his Latin name was Jacobus Arminius or James Arminius, and that is the name by which this movement came to be known; Arminianism, because they were followers of James Arminius.

Now, in our studies, I'm still in my introduction, that's why I haven't shown you the outline. In our studies, we're going to look into the history of the question, probably in our next study. And so I will go into more details here about how this controversy arose and how it developed. But James Arminius was born in 1560 and died in 1609. He lived to be forty-nine years of age. He was an outstanding preacher in Holland, as a Calvinist, a member of the Calvinistic Reform Church. He then became professor at one of the universities of Holland, and it was while there, asked to refute a certain objection to Calvinistic teaching, when he began to study predestination, that led him into, ultimately,

that which came to be known as Arminian teaching. James Arminius died a Calvinist. That is, he died still a member of the Calvinistic Reformed Church. What has developed from Arminius' teaching, however, is classical Arminianism. It is very doubtful that Arminius would have accepted all of the Arminian teaching which later developed in his name. But nevertheless, he is the historical beginner of Arminianism. This conflict that took place in the Reformed Church in Holland in the earlier part of the 17th century finally reached its climax at the [Synod of Dordrecht](#) and you may perhaps have read of the [Synod of Dordrecht](#), for it impacted the political affairs and conditions of the land of Holland, as well as of Western Europe. The [Synod of Dordrecht](#) began in November of 1618 and concluded in 1619, and it had been convened largely to answer the five canons which the Remonstrants, the followers of James Arminius had brought before the Calvinistic church in Holland. And the [Synod of Dordrecht](#) had its meeting, set forth in opposition to the Remonstrants, or the Arminians five articles, their own five articles. And in the drafting of these five Calvinistic canons, Arminianism was declared to be heretical in the Calvinistic church of Holland. Now, of course these five canon, which were really answers of the Calvinists to the Arminians who raised the question, have come to be popularly summarized as, and in order that theological students might remember them, everyone knows of the little pneumonic device, in a theological seminary at least, of TULIP. Now, TULIP some enterprising theological student thought up some years past, by which he may remember these five points. They were rearranged in order to form this word TULIP; the "T" standing for total depravity, the "U" standing for unconditional election, the "L" standing for limited atonement, the "I" standing for irresistible grace, and the "P" standing for the perseverance of the saints, TULIP.

I have a friend, she is not now a high school student, but about three years ago she was in high school or just beginning college, and one day she came up to me as she said, "Dr. Johnson," she said, "the Calvinists have their TULIP, but the Arminians also have a flower." And I looked at her a little puzzled, and she said, "They have their daisy, he

loves me. He loves me not. He loves me. He loves me not." [Laughter] In order to express the fact that in Arminianism it is taught that there is no such thing as the perseverance of the saints.

Now, this issue of Arminianism versus Calvinism is a very serious issue in some ways, but it is not a serious issue in other ways. And I think that we should recognize the areas in which it is serious and the areas in which it is not. I'm going to read a paragraph which is from an article by James Packer entitled *Arminianisms*. An excellent little article, and in the course of it, he writes these words, "Within the churches of the Reformation, the terms Calvinism and Arminianism are traditionally used as a pair, expressing an antithesis like black and white or Whig and Tory or Roman and Protestant. The words are defined in terms of the antithesis, and the point is pressed that no Christian can avoid being on one side or the other.

Among evangelicals this issue, though now three hundred and fifty years old if not indeed nineteen hundred years old, remains live and sometimes explosive. Calvinism and Arminianism are still spouted out by some as anathematizing swear words, like fundamentalism on the lips of the liberal. And there are still places where you forfeit both fellowship and respect by professing either. There remain Presbyterian churches which ordain only Calvinists and Methodists and Nazarene bodies which ordain only Arminians. And the division between general Arminian and particular Calvinistic still splits the English Baptist community. In evangelism cooperation between the evangelicals is sometimes hindered by disagreement and mistrust over this matter, just as in the 18th century the Calvinistic evangelicals and John Wesley's party found it hard to work together. Nor is it any wonder that tension should exist when each position sees the other as misrepresenting the saving love of God." Now, this I think is the issue that is probably important. "Each position sees the other as misrepresenting the saving love of God. The wonder is, rather, that so many Christians that profess a serious concern for theology should treat this debate as one in which they have no stakes, and need not get involved."

Well, that's Professor Packer on the question. I think there is one other thing that we need to remember before we launch into our study tonight. And that is this, that this question of the extent or better, the design of the atonement is a Soteriological question. That is, it is a question that touches the doctrines of Christ's saving work. It does not touch other areas of theology. It does not touch, for example, Ecclesiology. It does not touch Eschatology. There is a sense in which, of course, all the truth touches all of the other truth, but the area in which this issue is really an issue is the doctrine of Soteriology. It is not an issue in the doctrines of Ecclesiology, Pneumatology, or Eschatology. And the reason I mention this is to point out that it is entirely possible that a Calvinist may be entirely right in this matter, but not necessarily right in all his doctrines. The fact that we may that a Calvinist is right here, does not mean, thereby, we are followers of Calvinists in every sphere of the biblical theology.

Now, that I think is important. I do not think that there are many Calvinists who have a right doctrine of the church. There are very few of them, as a matter of fact, in churches somewhat similar to Believers Chapel, in which there is a fairly close approximation to New Testament teaching on the church, there is a positive antipathy to this Calvinistic teaching, which is a rather striking thing; because in the area of Ecclesiology these churches approach the truth rather closely. In areas of Soteriology, they are far from, I think, a correct understanding of this particular issue. The same holds true with other groups with other sections of the New Testament doctrine. So, the fact that we follow John Calvin's followers, Calvin's position in this question is in debate, the fact that we may follow the interpretation of Calvin's followers in this Soteriological issue, does not mean that we necessarily follow them in other issues.

As a matter of fact, I do not follow them in areas of Ecclesiology, Pneumatology, and Eschatology. The doctrine of the definite atonement of Christ, ordinarily, is held by men who are amillennial, ordinarily, not always. There is a good section of them that are premillennial, but nevertheless ordinarily they are amillennial in their doctrine of

eschatology. They do not understand the doctrine of spiritual gifts at all, generally speaking. And of course, in connection with Ecclesiology, as I mentioned, they do not understand the doctrines, many of the doctrines of the local church. Some they do, of course.

Therefore, I want to make that plain, the fact that we may follow the Calvinists in this issue, does not mean that we follow them in all issues. And we are not glorifying the Calvinists. We are interested, and I am sure that everyone in this room would admit this, whether it's true or not, you are interested in following what Scripture teaches. Now, if it happens to be what Calvin taught, or his followers taught, well, that's incidental. If it happens to be what Arminius taught, and his followers taught, that also is incidental. We are interested in what the Scriptures have to say on the question.

Well, let's come now to the state of the question. I think it's important right at the beginning that we outline the various positions on the question and state the real issue exactly. Now, we will not, I think, be able to solve this question if we do not know right at the beginning what the real issue is, the various positions. There are differing positions in connection with this question of the design of the atonement. And I am going to suggest to you three major positions, the Wesleyan position, the Lutheran position, and the Reform position. If we were taking a lot of time in the study of this, we could further subdivide some of these headings, but I don't think for our purposes it would be necessary to do that. So, let's plunge in and let's talk first about the Wesleyan position.

Now, remember the Wesleyan position is the position of John Wesley, the evangelical Arminianism, not the rationalizing Arminianism that developed out of James Arminius. But Wesley was greatly influenced by Arminianism, was really an Arminian, by nevertheless his views are of an evangelical character. He did not accept a great deal of the rationalistic Arminianism that developed out of the Dutch Arminianism is that then of evangelic Arminianism. The Methodist churches hold to this. As a matter of fact, even though I'm singling out the Lutherans for special treatment, they are very similar to the

Wesleyans here. The Pentecostal groups, as a rule, hold to this kind of Wesleyanism. The Wesleyan position is that Christ's death paid the price for the sins of every son of Adam, and that he died with the purpose of saving all men indiscriminately on the condition of faith. Christ's death paid the price for the sins of every son of Adam, and that he died with the purpose of saving all men indiscriminately on the condition of faith.

Now, as you can see from this, and possibly it would be necessary to go into a little more detail to see all of this, but as you can see from this, the destiny of all men depends upon one's use of the divine grace that is given to them. Wesley never really understood Calvinism, I am sorry to have to confess, but he never did. At times he made statements in which he seemed to imply, or he seemed to suggest that he understood aspects of Calvinism, but to the end of his days he was a very, very strong opponent of Calvinism. I am going to read another section from Packer's article. "Yet Wesley would never let the world forget that he wanted his teaching taken in an Arminian sense, because Calvinism in all of its form was anathema to him.

And this caused him much trouble, mostly unnecessary and of his own making. He always caricatured Calvinism in the same three ways, as antinomian, making holiness needless; as restricting the preaching of God's love to the world, for some reason he was always sure that according to Calvinism only 'one in twenty' is elect; and as fatalistic, destroying moral responsibility and denying the connection between means and ends in the spiritual realm. At the end of his life he wrote, 'Question seventy-four, what is the direct antidote to Methodism, the doctrine of heart holiness. Answer: (in his catechism) Calvinism.' That's the direct antidote to Methodism, Calvinism. All the devices of Satan for these fifty years have done far less toward stopping the work of God than that single doctrine." Now, mind you that he said this in spite of the fact that the greatest evangelist of that day was George Whitfield, who was his own personal friend and who gave Wesley his start as an evangelist by turning over his work to Wesley that he might go to the

United States. It shows you that great men have their feelings too. So, you will probably find one or two in me.

"It strikes," he continues, "at the root of salvation from sin previous to glory, putting the matter on quiet another issue. That is, Wesley takes Calvinism to say that men may be saved without holiness without virtue of their election. No Calvinist ever taught that. Next question in the catechism, but wherein lie the charms of this doctrine? What makes men swallow it so greedily? Answer: It seems to magnify Christ, although in reality it supposes him to have died in vain. For the absolutely elect must have been saved without him, and the non-elect cannot be saved by him." Now, Packer continues, "Misrepresentations like this from a godly man, who over fifty years had had many Calvinistic friends and abundant opportunity to read Calvinistic books, argue a degree of prejudice and closed-mindedness which is almost pathological. Perhaps John's invincible ignorance, shared by Charles, as to what Calvinism really was should be seen as a lifelong haunting by the ghost of Susanna." That was his mother. "At all events, it became a rod for his back, and for the backs of many others too." In contrast, I am not trying to show up Wesley, as over against Whitfield, because there are many things about Whitfield that, of course, would not be favorable, and many great things about John Wesley, whom I appreciate very much.

But George Whitefield was once asked about the spiritual condition of John Wesley. There is a story current that some Calvinist who was exceedingly wrathful of Wesley once said to Whitefield, "Do you think that we shall ever see John Wesley in heaven?" Whitefield stopped and said, "Do I think that I shall ever see John Wesley in heaven? Well, I do not think that we shall." So, then his friend thought that Whitefield quite agreed with him in his bitterness. "But," added Whitefield, "the reason why we shall not see him is this; I am afraid that you and I will be so far off the throne of Christ and Wesley will be so near that he will be lost in the brightness of his Savior, and I hardly think that you and I will be able to see him." [Laughter] Well, that was Whitefield on

Wesley's salvation and, of course, we all would agree that John Wesley was a great man, a great preacher, and the work the he did in Britain changed the course of English history for some generations. That's the Wesleyan position.

Now, second, the Lutheran position, the Lutheran position regard the atonement as universal, as do the Arminians, or the Wesleyans, but they do lay a great deal of stress upon the election, which they regard as limited. So, the Lutheran on one hand hold that Jesus Christ died for all men. He died with the purpose of saving all men indifferently on the condition of faith, although the Lutherans do not hold to free will as most Arminians do. At the same time, the Lutherans also affirm that there is a limited number, the elect. And only they shall be saved. Now, the Lutherans do not resolve these issues, which are somewhat contradictory. As a matter of fact, the Lutherans publicly and in their theological literature take pride in the fact that they do not attempt to solve the problem. They call it a mystery, but they feel that we are being scriptural in holding to universal atonement and at the same time limited election.

Third, the Reform position; the Reform position, the Calvinistic position is that Jesus Christ died to make satisfaction in behalf of his elect, thereby securing their salvation for all eternity. So, Jesus Christ died for the elect, intending through his death to secure the salvation of the elect for all eternity. So, the design of the atonement for the reformed me is that the elect might be saved. Now, there are variations within the Calvinistic camp, just as there are variations in the other, and I'm going to mention one particular variation, because this variation is quite common. Most people don't know where it comes from, and I'll say something about that when we discuss history. But this view is that Jesus Christ died for all, that is, he died with the intention of saving all, but God, knowing that all would not be saved, even though Christ died to save all, has by a secret election elected some, and sends the Holy Spirit in order to bring the "some" to faith in Christ.

Now, this is Amyraldianism. It is the teaching which was initially given by John Cameron, a Scot who went to the School of Saumur in France, and taught theology there. And one of his pupils was a man by the name of [Moses Amyraut](#), and Amyraut's Latin name was Amyraldus. And those days, theologians had two names. They had their own name, and they had a Latin name, because everybody wrote in Latin just like Arminius' name was Hermanson, but his Latin name was Arminius. So, Amyraut's French name was Amyraut, but his Latin name was Amyraldus, and so Amyraldianism became the name for the teaching that Christ died for all. The atonement has a general reference, but there is a secret election by which God elects a certain number, and through the Holy Spirit brings only that special number to Jesus Christ. As you can see, this is four point Calvinism, and it is traceable to the school at Saumur, a rather insignificant school in history, and whose doctrine was condemned by the Swiss Protestants back in the 17th century. But it's quite popular, and many people hold this form of doctrine not realizing exactly where it came from. That's where it came from.

Now, let's come to the real issue states exactly. I want to spend the rest of the time tonight trying to state this issue exactly, so that we will know exactly what we are trying to solve. The first thing that we have to do is to exactly define the issue. Otherwise, we will not understand all of these things that people say. By so doing, I hope we will dissipate as irrelevant the vast mass of objections that are made the doctrines of grace, as taught by the Calvinists, because here there is a great deal of misunderstanding. At the same time, I think we shall try to dissipate, and will dissipate some objections that have been raised against the Arminian teaching, which are not really on the point. I find that this is really the greatest problem.

I sat down the other day with a man in the city, who knows theology, and this question came up. And he immediately launched into a short little talk, a brief sermonette, on why he did not accept the Calvinistic teaching, and essentially, he was directing the sermon towards me of course. He was essentially saying that the reason he

does not accept the Calvinistic teaching is because he thinks the gospel should go to all men. And he launched into a long, as I say, a long discussion on this point. Little realizing, evidently, that that is precisely what the Calvinist believes, that the offer of salvation is a universal offer of salvation. There is no dispute over this question at all. That is not really the issue, whether the gospel should go to all men. Both of these view points teach that the gospel should go to all men. No Calvinist believes that the gospel should go only to the elect. No one knows who the elect are. We shall talk about that later on.

This past week, this past weekend, as I mentioned to you last Wednesday night, I went to Edmonton, Canada. That is a beautiful city. That's one city in Canada that I would like to bring back into the United States. That is a beautiful spot. And Ms. McCray, I would just as soon have Toronto, too. But Edmonton is a beautiful city; I really enjoyed my weekend there. The weather was just like it is here today, nice, cool, perhaps five or six degrees cooler than it was here today. The sun was out. The city was clean. It has a nice river that runs down through the center of it, the Saskatchewan River. And the city, its flat country about, very much like the country around Dallas, but everything's clean-looking. But this river that comes down means that you frequently are driving alongside the river.

But the city is up above and it sits on a slight hill, but its location is such that it makes it look as if it is on a much higher hill than it really is, clean, modern buildings. I enjoyed my stay in Edmonton, Alberta. I would like to stay up there the months of July and August. I don't want to stay up there any other time, really, because they told me that they had already had one snow, and it's only October 15. And that when November comes, they don't expect to see anything but snow, and the temperatures are frequently between forty and sixty degrees below zero, and that lasts until late in the spring. I said, "When do the snows stop?" They said, "Oh, well we can have snows in late June." So, I'm willing to go up there and live July and August, but I don't think I

would want to live beyond those times. I would get a little nervous when September comes up there.

Anyway, I sat down with one of the Bible teachers, I didn't ask to do this, he asked to sit down with me. He said, "I would like to talk with you." He said, "I understand you hold strong views on the sovereignty of God." I said, "Yes, I do hold strong views on the sovereignty of God." But I also said, "I don't believe that everything that I believe about the atonement is established on the same grounds. There are certain questions about the atonement over which I have questions." He said, "I would like to talk to you for about twenty minutes some time." Later on, he caught me and I sat down and he talked to me for twenty minutes, and he launched into this long discussion over the reasons why he did not accept this teaching that he thought I held. So, I listened to him, a very nice man. I grew to like him very much. I hope to see him again many times.

But he launched into this long discussion. He said, "I cannot accept that doctrine, because," and then he said, "Because I believe the gospel ought to go to everybody. Because," and so on, and he listed five or six things, and finally he said, "Because I do not think that we are totally unable to respond to the gospel message." And I said to him with a smile, I said, "Well, I'm glad you mentioned that, because that's the only thing that we disagree over. I agree with everything else you've said." And he looked a little surprised, and I had a few minutes to simply say to him that all of those things that he was talking about were things that I fully believed just as much as he believed. But I did not agree with him that we are able to respond to the message of the gospel. I do believe in total inability to respond to the message of the gospel. Well, that of course, was not the issue at all with reference to the atonement, so this is the kind of thing that we must bear with. Therefore, it's important that we be sure that we understand exactly what the issue is.

So, what is the question? And I want to try to state what it is not, and then what it is. And I hope that I am able to do this in our fifteen minutes that are left. Maybe I can do it in ten. What is the question and what it is not? It does not relate to the sufficiency of the satisfaction of Christ for all men's salvation. We are not saying that the work of Jesus Christ is not sufficient for the salvation of all men. No man will ever perish for lack of an atonement. The satisfaction of Jesus Christ has infinite intrinsic value. It has infinite intrinsic value in the sight of the law of God. So, we are not talking about the sufficiency of Jesus Christ's saving work. Because he is the divine Son of God, the atonement that he offered has value to cover the sins of all men without exception. So, we do not say, if we are Calvinists, we do not say that Jesus Christ's death is only sufficient to save the elect. We only say it is designed to save the elect. It is sufficient for all.

Second, it does not relate to the applicability of that satisfaction to each man's need. Now, what I mean by this is that every man has a certain need before God, whether elect or non-elect. And the atoning work of Jesus Christ does not relate, this question of the purpose of the atonement does not relate to the applicability of the satisfaction to each man's needs. All legal obstacles are removed out of the way of God saving any man he pleases by the atonement of Jesus Christ. In other words, as far as legal obstacles, man's sin is concerned. Every obstacle is out of the way by the death of Christ, and God may, by the atonement, save anyone he pleases. He did make the salvation of all men possible by what he did.

Third, it does not relate to the actual application of the satisfaction. The question does not relate to the actual application of the benefits of Christ's death. Now, let me show you what I mean by this. Those who believe in a universal redemption make a great deal of claim that their doctrine is much more liberal than the Calvinistic doctrine. Because they say God intended to save all men, and Christ died so that the result is his death is designed to save all men. That gives the impression of being a very liberal kind of doctrine. Now, this doctrine of universal redemption cannot be shown, after all of their

parade to its superior liberality, to extend the benefits of the redemption to one single soul beyond those embraced by definite atonement. The man who says, being a good Arminian, the man who says Jesus Christ died to save all men on condition of faith, admits that not one more soul is saved by his atonement than is saved by the Calvinistic definite atonement. Do you understand that? When the final number of the redeemed is counted, they will be exactly the same, according to the Arminian interpretation and the Calvinistic interpretation. They say this is a great benefit that Christ died for all men, but it's not so liberal when the final roll is called up yonder. The same number are saved.

So, this does not relate to the actual application of the satisfaction. It is only a provision. It is only a possibility. The actual application of the redemption, according to the Calvinists, is to the elect. The actual application, according to the Arminians, is to the ones we call the elect, the same number. As Charles Hodge's son said, "We believe that Christ died with the intention of saving all those whom he actually does save. They hold that the large majority of those whose salvation Christ designed to effect by his death finally perish. This certainly fails to convey any advantage to those that perish, while it materially detracts from the value of Christ's death and from the efficacy of his purpose to save." So, it doesn't help the man who goes to hell to be told Christ died for all men. It doesn't get him to heaven. At the same time, it casts some questions over the ability of God to accomplish his own purposes, if he purposed that Christ should die that all men be saved, on the condition of faith.

Fourth, the question is not, it does not relate to the universal offer, in good faith, of salvation. We've talked about that. Thus, the salvation of each sinner is legally and morally possible to God if he wills. That is, if the sinner wills, and the atonement is objectively available to all upon the condition of faith. We'll talk about this question of condition later, but I'll use that statement then. So, do not say that if we believe that Christ died to secure the salvation of the elect. Do not say that that doctrine means that you do not, and cannot preach a universal gospel. It does not mean that. This is why

some of our greatest evangelists have been strong Calvinists, such as George Whitfield and the Apostle Paul. [Laughter] Just kidding you. Don't take that seriously. Delete that from the records.

Fifth, it does not relate the design of Christ to provide, in his death, benefits for all men. We do not say, if we hold to definite atonement, we do not say that Jesus Christ did not in any way die for all men. We only say that his atonement was designed to save the elect. There are many incidental benefits that come to men. In fact, some men have attempted to explain the texts of Scripture, "Christ died for all," on the basis of the fact that there are many ancillary benefits that come to men as a result of what Christ did. Now, that, of course, is true. As a matter of fact, when man sinned in the Garden of Eden and God gave the promise of the redeemer who would come and who would crush the head of the serpent that was the promise of redemption.

Now, everything that transpired in Genesis from the time of the fall to the time of the cross was a manifestation of the longsuffering of God. That is specifically how Paul describes it. And everything that has transpired since the time of the cross to the present day has been the manifestation of that same longsuffering of God. In other words, the whole of the divine program is concerned with the completion, in all of its aspects, of the work of redemption. And incidentally, many benefits have come to men, because God has preserved us men here down through the centuries, because of what he is doing in connection with his elect, many kinds of benefits.

In fact, some have called this time, from the fall in the Garden of Eden to the present, a dispensation of forbearance, in which many blessings physical and moral accrue to the reprobate, as well as to the elect; both to the refined, as well as to the uneducated. Many of the benefits of modern society are traceable purely to the fact that God has a program which he intends to carry out over a long period of time, and it is necessary for him to uphold the society in which we live, apart from the redemptive aspect of it, uphold the society in which we live in order to accomplish his redemptive

purposes. If we have rains from heaven, if we have blessing from God, if we such things as common grace, if we have civil government, if we have many ways in which God restrains the out-breaking of chaotic evil in our midst, it's all traceable to the fact that Jesus Christ is engaged in an atoning work. So, there are many benefits that have come to men as a result of what Christ did. We do not then say, we say that this question does not relate to the design of Christ to provide, in his death, benefits for all men. In that sense you can say, Christ dies for all men. In that sense, you can there've been many benefits, aside from salvation, that have been conferred upon all men.

Finally, what's the question? It does relate, and only relates, to the intention of the Godhead in the saving work. What is the intention of the Godhead in the saving work? Universal redemptionists hold that Christ died to make the salvation of all men possible and nothing more. Reformed men, or definite redemptionists, hold that Christ died to actually, and certainly, save his elect people. That is, for the purpose of actually saving those whom he does actually save. In other words, there is an agreement between the purpose of God and the result of the atonement. I think that if you were to just discuss these little points, these heads, you would exhaust the subject. It's essential nature, the atonement; it's exactly adapted to the legal needs of all men. It's intrinsic sufficiency. It is sufficient for all. Three, it is offered to all in good faith. Both of these viewpoints accept all three of those. It's actual application, it's applied only to the elect, both agree. The only difference between the evangelical Arminian and the Calvinists, with reference to the question, "For whom did Christ die?" is its intended application, its intended application.

Now, that's the question. For whom did Christ die? What was the intent of the Godhead in the work of Jesus Christ in atonement? That's the issue. Now, next time we want to discuss the history and perhaps begin to get into the theological and scriptural answers to the question. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the opportunity to study the theology of the word of God. And again, we ask that Thou will guide our thinking, so that we understand the issues that are before us in this question. And we pray, too, Lord that we shall not be so disturbed and wrought up by this issue that we fail to remember that we are to walk in the light as Thou art in the light, with love and with genuine Christian affection for those who may disagree with us concerning certain of the teachings of the word of God.

Deliver us, Lord, from pride for we surely do not understand everything that is to be understood in Thy word. We pray that Thou will guide us to truth, but help us to remember there is much that we do not know, and much that we know that we have not put into practice. And that often, those with whom we may disagree have actually attained to a deeper spirituality than we have attained.

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]