



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Penal substitution disputed by many

Penal substitution disputed by many - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/1 11:42

I'm taking a look at theories and views of the atonement and find it interesting. In a very brief thumbnail sketch, the seven major theories of the atonement are as follows

Atonement Theories:

- 1) Satisfaction theory - God's was offended by sin and His honor needed to be restored, thus Calvary.
- 2) Ransom theory - Satan had a legitimate claim to the souls of men and the earth because of sin and Jesus offered Himself as a ransom to ransom men and the earth back to God.
- 3) Governmental theory - God had to punish sin to show that His rule and government were not to be disturbed.
- 4) Penal substitution - every breach of the law had to be punished and the necessary sacrifice to heal the breach had to be perfect. The shedding of blood was required.
- 5) Moral influence theory - God loved us so much He couldn't just let us go and Calvary was God's way of morally influencing us to return to Him.
- 6) Recapitulation - Christus Victor - God designed all with a established order and sin disrupted this order. Christ was the supreme victor over the sin that caused the interrupted order and died to re-establish this order to the glory of God.
- 7) Healing model - God was interested in more than just the salvation of souls. He was interested in the entire cosmos and at Calvary mankind and the entire created order were given the means to be eventually set free to be brought back to God.

Meanwhile, it's a sure fact that a large portion of the church over the centuries adopted the PENAL SUBSTITUTION theory which truth be told is not a theory but a fact. But my, in my study I now know many reject penal substitution for the other models and views. They say penal substitution speaks of a angry, wrathful and bloodthirsty God out for revenge which is a distortion of God's character which is love with a willingness to forgive. I wasn't really aware of the depth of the controversy.

5 But He was pierced through for our transgression, He was crushed for our iniquities, the chastening for our well being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But he Lord caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.

- PIERCED THROUGH for our transgressions
- CRUSHED for our iniquities
- CHASTENING for our well being
- by HIS SCOURGING we are healed
- the iniquity of us all FELL ON HIM

How is that not penal substitution? What do you think?

Through this penal substitution, I also think that the entire created order, the entire cosmos, will eventually be affected unto complete restoration and renewal. But yet, if the ATONEMENT has other benefits besides the salvation of our souls, it still does not seem to do away with the foundational penal substitution aspect of the event at Calvary. What do you think?

Re: Penal substitution disputed by many - posted by Martyr (), on: 2017/4/1 13:17

I personally haven't seen any of these words, including penal substitution, in the bible. Man has the need to put things in a nice convenient package that can be easily quoted, easily understood and that serve as a definitive "definition." By doing so they rob Christ of His power. Seek not the doctrines of men but the power of God and refrain from putting God in a box.

Re: Can't agree - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/1 14:11

/I personally haven't seen any of these words, including penal substitution, in the bible. Man has the need to put things in a nice convenient package that can be easily quoted, easily understood and that serve as a definitive "definition."/

So what's wrong with studying the things of the word so as to understand them in a better and more definitive way and come up with workable terms?

You may not see the words penal substitution in the Bible but we see,

- PIERCED THROUGH for our transgressions
 - CRUSHED for our iniquities
 - CHASTENING for our well being
 - by HIS SCOURGING we are healed
 - the iniquity of us all FELL ON HIM
- (Isaiah 53:5-6)

What's not penal substitution about that? The phrase does no violence or harm to the actual text. He bore the "penalty" I deserved by becoming a "substitute" in my place.

/By doing so they rob Christ of His power. Seek not the doctrines of men but the power of God and refrain from putting God in a box./

I didn't know Christ could be robbed of His power.

These "doctrines of men" like penal substitution are taken from the word itself such as Isaiah 53:5-6. Hardly an attempt to put God in a box.

/Seek not the doctrines of men but the power of God and refrain from putting God in a box./

"For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the POWER OF GOD." (1 Cor 1:18)

Re: , on: 2017/4/1 15:27

Hi David,

I think what Martyr is getting at, and I have sympathies with his position, is that men have a desperate need to systematize theology. Another favorite word of the scholars and academics is hermeneutics. The art and the science of studying the Bible. I am just not sure it is either an art or a science. I am not against art or science, but the instrument to truly understand the Word is not the head, it's the heart. If I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth then I am saved. No matter how low my IQ is, if I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth then I am saved if it is genuine.

If I want to see a beautiful sunset I use my eyes. If I want to hear a wonderful hymn I use my ears, to smell a rose I use my nose. If I want to understand God and His Word it must be first filtered through my heart. He has to speak to me through His still small voice and His Word and even when I read the Bible it is the Holy Spirit that teaches me. Men can be useful, and I am not against professors and academics, but the great truth of the Word are revealed to us by the Spirit. The Word of God is Inspiration, the understanding of Gods word is revelation.....bro Frank

Re: Christ kept the law to procure our righteousness disputed - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2017/4/1 15:53

Penal substitution is plainly evident in scripture. I would be surprised if anyone disputed the idea of it. They may call it something else, but it is surely there. I am told that Charles Finney did reject the idea of the substitutionary death of Christ being the payment for our sins. Finney had the worst soteriology of any theologian I know of.

Another "doctrine" which I had heard for years and accepted without much thinking is the idea that Christ kept the Old Testament Law and when he died, that earthly obedience was credited to us as our righteousness when we believed and were saved. I now think this doctrine is misguided. It sounds lovely and all, but I don't think it's true. I will say that if Jesus had not perfectly kept the Law, he would not have been in a position to save us. But I do not believe that the earthly obedience he performed while in the flesh on Earth is the righteousness we gain at salvation.

If you are interested in reading a fairly long essay on the subject by William Kelly, you can read it here:

<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/kelly/7subjects/righteous.html>

-Daniel

Re: Penal substitution disputed by many - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/4/1 19:57

When God created Adam and Eve, they were in right relationship with Him and all things were good. Through their sin they became estranged, alienated, from the life that was in God. But from before the foundation of the world God knew that His creation would sin, and He provided an atoning sacrifice and a covenant by which man could once again be restored to sonship, bear the image of God, and partake of His divine nature. This reconciliation came through the incarnation and sacrifice of Christ. God loved us that much! God loved ME that much! He desired right relationship with us. He desired for us to be empowered by His very spirit. He desired intimacy with us.

I personally think that forgiveness of sins is only the doorway, the entrance if you will, into all that God desires for us. Why stand and examine the construction of the door, the style of hinges, the placement of the knob, when the point is to walk through the door and experience that for which the door was created. I have peace with God through Christ. The enmity is gone. I now have access to the life of God, the mysteries of God, and the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2) through the power of the Holy Spirit. His LIFE lies behind that door. His SPIRIT lies behind that door. I am stepping through that door and never looking back. Hallelujah I am forgiven, but if that is all there is to it, I am missing God's entire plan. Christ in me, the hope of Glory. Greater things shall we do through His Holy Spirit. Being made partakers of the divine nature.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2017/4/1 20:43

English Standard Version

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Christ being our righteousness, is only possible if Christ was perfectly sinless, this was only possible if he kept the law and was perfectly righteous, so when we believed God the righteousness that is in Christ, is imputed to us, and we are declared righteous, in him, as Christ bore our sins, so also he bears our righteousness, in the same way that he became the spotless lamb of God, the perfect sacrifice, on our behalf, not blemished in any way, but was wholly acceptable to the Father, in both ways, as a propitiation, an appeasement towards God's perfect justice and wrath, and as a perfect righteousness that is accounted to us, that was required by God's perfect requirements....

Christ fulfilled all things according to the law

Re: Penal substitution disputed by many - posted by JFW (), on: 2017/4/1 20:51

Brother David,

Thanks for this thoughtful question and study, Lord willing it will prove profitable for (hyper)the cause of Christ in building up His body:)

Personally I do not subscribe to penal substitution, tho initially it made sense upon a cursory reading of scripture.

The reason my position changed was after discovering that there are more than one word translated as "for" and as you might suspect, they have different meanings.

The one in question is "hyper" which more often than not, I've found it to mean "for the benefit of" and not "instead of" tho further study revealed that some do include "instead" as a viable definition- (possibly to accommodate a penal substitute position?) but in reading the text and inserting either "instead of vs for the benefit of" the latter makes much more sense to me and makes for an overall consistent use of the word.

An easy example would be Romans 5:6 which is a relevant text-

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Now the first "for" is not the same root/Greek word as the second and it is the second "for" that we are concerned with as it's pivotal to our understanding of Christ's sacrifice.

I understand that one could (and some do) read this and interpret it as "instead of" tho when the same word appears a little later it would be a misuse of that definition as it would distort the text and render it senseless-

For example in Romans 14:15

But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

One can simply insert "instead of" when they read "for" (hyper) and see that wouldn't work nearly as well as "for the benefit of" does (at least to my me).

The "Hyper" term appears 170 times and there are other far better examples as well as alternative definitions such as "above, of," etc....

In any case I hope this helps you dear brother in being a Berean:)

Re: appolus - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/2 8:40

I'm not trying to be contrary here bro but I can't go along totally with the views you have expressed.

/I think what Martyr is getting at, and I have sympathies with his position, is that men have a desperate need to systematize theology./

Maybe it's not so much a desperate need to systematize theology as a keen desire to understand the word of God and put its many symmetrical parts together in a logical, coherent and understandable way. The book of Romans for example is a masterpiece of logic and coherence written by Paul in a very systematic way.

/Another favorite word of the scholars and academics is hermeneutics. The art and the science of studying the Bible. I am just not sure it is either an art or a science./

How can a scholar dedicated to studying the Bible be a bad thing? Biblical hermeneutics is associated with biblical studies. Biblical scholars trained in exegesis and hermeneutics have produced many masterful and insightful works and writings on biblical subjects.

/I am not against art or science, but the instrument to truly understand the Word is not the head, it's the heart./

That goes without saying and is not even a subject for debate. Nothing even needs to be said. You somehow seem to be saying that biblical scholars and academics never reach the point of being touched in their heart by their studies. I do not believe this is so.

/If I want to understand God and His Word it must be first filtered through my heart./

Again, that goes without saying. Why wouldn't a truly saved biblical scholar not be aware of this?

/Men can be useful, and I am not against professors and academics, but the great truth of the Word are revealed to us by the Spirit. The Word of God is Inspiration, the understanding of Gods word is revelation./

Can a biblical professor minister and teach you something out of his heart that will touch your heart since the word of God is what he is teaching? In my time when I was taught by biblical professors and teachers I left many classes greatly edified because of the subject matter just taught. Many biblical scholars have written very good things because their hearts have been touched by their systematic studies. When our hearts are touched by the word of God most of the time affect our mind also. Like I said, I'm not trying to be contrary but there's no need to stack the deck against someone doing a systematic study of a biblical subject. How can revelation to the heart not follow if they are studying the word of the Lord?

Re: , on: 2017/4/2 12:15

Hi bro David,

I did not stack the deck I made a comment. We may disagree but what is that in the big scheme of things, we both know Jesus. Let each man be fully persuaded in what he believes, that is good enough for me.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by Martyr (), on: 2017/4/2 14:47

Quote:
-----/I personally haven't seen any of these words, including penal substitution, in the bible. Man has the need to put things in a nice convenient package that can be easily quoted, easily understood and that serve as a definitive "definition."/

So what's wrong with studying the things of the word so as to understand them in a better and more definitive way and come up with workable terms?

You may not see the words penal substitution in the Bible but we see,

- PIERCED THROUGH for our transgressions
- CRUSHED for our iniquities
- CHASTENING for our well being
- by HIS SCOURGING we are healed
- the iniquity of us all FELL ON HIM
(Isaiah 53:5-6)

What's not penal substitution about that? The phrase does no violence or harm to the actual text. He bore the "penalty" I deserved by becoming a "substitute" in my place.

/By doing so they rob Christ of His power. Seek not the doctrines of men but the power of God and refrain from putting God in a box./

I didn't know Christ could be robbed of His power.

These "doctrines of men" like penal substitution are taken from the word itself such as Isaiah 53:5-6. Hardly an attempt to put God in a box.

/Seek not the doctrines of men but the power of God and refrain from putting God in a box./

"For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the POWER OF GOD." (I Cor 1:18)

The danger and harm in doing so is you run the risk of falling into the same trap the pharisees did. You are taking the scriptures and from them and them alone attempting to connect the dots and make a nice packaged doctrine that ties all the strings together. Jesus upbraided the pharisees for seeking Him among the scriptures because He does not dwell in there (though he certainly uses it), He is the creator of the heavens and the earth and He is spirit.

I am not downplaying the bible but I will say that sometimes you need to lift your head out of the book and look around because THERE is Christ. In fact the very things we see are made from Him who cannot be seen.

In regards to not knowing Christ could be robbed of His power...Christ is no thief. He does not take what is not given to Him. If someone turns their heart towards something else or chooses to pursue something other than the Living Word then what is Christ to do? He will plead and remain faithful but he will not infringe on that person. That person has made their choice and Christ is no thief. Did you not read when Jesus could perform no miracles because of the peoples unbelief?

f? (Mark 6:5)

You should not have quoted 1 Corinthians 1:18. For if you look above it at verse 17 it reads "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void." Does not taking the Living Word and His work on the cross and making it into a doctrinal phrasing with everything neatly packaged fall under the heading of wisdom of speech? But Paul didn't share the Gospel in the wisdom of speech (that is words) but in POWER. Verse 18 hardly supports making a systematic teaching of it. Obviously Paul wasn't too concerned with it because he never outright spoke it because it was about walking in Christ. He didn't need to spell it out.

Look at verse 20 of that same chapter in 1 Corinthians. The wisdom of this world. Does the need to categorize and name things fit in with how this world does things or with how God does things? Who needs to know, the spirit or the flesh?

It's a shame really. Because of Paul's faith in the power of God we now have giant lists like the one posted here trying to figure out exactly what he believed and taught about certain things.

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/2 16:19

/The danger and harm in doing so is you run the risk of falling into the same trap the pharisees did. You are taking the scriptures and from them and them alone attempting to connect the dots and make a nice packaged doctrine that ties all the strings together./

And that's a bad thing? The Bible is coherent, consistent and unified in a divinely symmetrical way. Pointing this out and tying all the strings together is a bad thing?

/You are taking the scriptures and from them and them alone attempting to connect the dots...

How else should biblical exegesis be done except from the scriptures ALONE and tying together the various passages that shed light on a subject? I'm a firm believer in sola scriptura.

/You should not have quoted 1 Corinthians 1:18. For if you look above it at verse 17 it reads "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void." Does not taking the Living Word and His work on the cross and making it into a doctrinal phrasing with everything neatly packaged fall under the heading of wisdom of speech?/

No, it's not attempting wisdom of speech. We know more today about the atonement than the early Christians did and we now have the canon of the NT which is somewhat large and to be known cannot be casually studied. Nailing down a message in its specifics and comparing the relevant passages is an attempt to understand the words God would have you use.

/ But Paul didn't share the Gospel in the wisdom of speech (that is words) but in POWER. Verse 18 hardly supports making a systematic teaching of it./

But the entirety of the NT combined with 1 Cor 1:18 supports trying to tie all the passages together into a comprehensive and coherent message. Doing that doesn't mean you are casting aside reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit.

/Look at verse 20 of that same chapter in 1 Corinthians. The wisdom of this world. Does the need to categorize and name things fit in with how this world does things or with how God does things? Who needs to know, the spirit or the flesh?/

We're not talking about studying the wisdom of this world. We are speaking of studying the scriptures which are the inspired God-breathed word of God full of His wisdom. How can you make that to mean if we delve deeply into scripture and organize it a bit we are playing into the wisdom of the world? Where does this thinking come from? Worldly existentialism says that truth can't be organized or set down. Perhaps the notion that there is no need for systemization of biblical truth is in itself a product of worldly existentialist thinking.

We have a large NT canon today which the early church didn't have. Thus more study and comparison of passages is required. How that serves to nullify the power of God in gospel presentations is a mystery to me. But to each his own.

Meanwhile, I remain supportive of sola scriptura.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2017/4/2 16:29

Wow!

Brother Tyler you seem to take that another brother can hold/maintain a different perspective quite personally...

Am I misunderstanding your words and disposition?

Generally those who hold to a reformed grace (Calvinistic/Lutheran) position have historically also held fast to penal substitution, whereas others do not find the scriptures to teach either... do you feel it incumbent upon you to or compelled by the love of Christ to make an issue out of such things?

At the end of the day all we can really do (that's profitable) is to state our position and (if need be) why we hold to that position all while prayerfully and patiently persuading those whom oppose. Perhaps, in some cases, an individual just isn't "there" yet and we must give grace lest we fall into sin and cause another to stumble... Our Lord had strong words for those whom did so-

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2017/4/2 16:33

Many people object to the idea of penal satisfaction. Some accuse us of painting God in a negative light, as consumed with anger rather than filled with love. They assume that God can simply forgive us because He loves us unconditionally. But, they fail to realize that God is not obligated to forgive sin. He would be perfectly just to condemn all human beings for their sins. Moreover, they fail to realize that these righteous standards find their source in the very nature of God, who is inherently good and just. In other words, He acts in accordance with what He is. Since He is good, He must uphold what is good. Since He is just, He must uphold justice (Dt 32:4, Ps 11:7, Is 61:8, Heb 2:2). In fact, if He overlooked evil, He would cease to be good. If He overlooked injustice or the sins of human beings, He would cease to be just (Pr 17:15, Rm 3:4, Ps 92:15, Rev 16:7). That is why the atoning sacrifice of Jesus is so important. It was the only way to satisfy the demands of God's righteousness while showing mercy to His people (Rm 3:21-26). God can now reckon those who are in Christ as righteous because He is satisfied with the obedience and substitutionary sacrifice of His Servant, Jesus Christ (Is 52:13, 53:10-11). It was the only way to satisfy God's justice. In fact, Donald Macleod correctly stated that if the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was not necessary, it could never be an act of divine love, nor could it reveal the righteousness of God. For example, the moral influence theory makes the sacrifice of Christ superfluous and thus undermines the idea that it was an act of love. But, the truth is that because sin inherently deserves condemnation and because there was no other way to satisfy God's righteous requirements without condemning every human being, we can affirm that the sacrifice of Christ is both the ultimate act of God's love towards His people and the display of God's righteousness (Rm 1:17, 1 Jn 3:16, 4:10).

John Murray has also pointed out the contrast between this doctrine and the Roman Catholic teaching that the work of Christ "does not relieve the faithful of the necessity of making satisfaction for sins which they have committed" after their baptism. Murray answered that there is no penal liability left for the believer because the satisfaction that Christ achieved by His active and passive obedience is perfect and final. Turretin held the same position and affirmed that Christ both removed our sins by His sacrifice and fulfilled the righteous requirements of God's law on our behalf. This is not a denial of the fact that God still chastens believers for their sins (Heb 12:5-10). But we recognize that God disciplines believers as His children, rather than as those who are still under the condemnation of the law because of their sins (Rm 8:1). In fact, the Scriptures teach us that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was sufficient to atone for the sins of His people. Unlike the sacrifices of the Old Testament which could never fully satisfy God's justice or remove the sins of His people, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was enough to cover the sins of God's elect because it completely satisfied His justice, being sufficient to justify their forgiveness and account them as righteous (Heb 1:3, 9:12, 25-28, 10:1-14).

Re: , on: 2017/4/2 21:05

...Meanwhile, the thread is about penal substitution and why some people may not hold this view. Comments welcome in that context and subject...

David respectfully. I almost want to say, who cares. Is it not enough that Paul declares in First Corinthians 15:3-4,

...For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for sins, according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures...

Was it penal, or was it otherwise? I honestly don't care. What I do care about is that Christ died for my sins. And simply I will leave it at that.

Bro Blaine

Re: do or don't - posted by savannah, on: 2017/4/2 22:03

If you don't care to discuss these things, why not allow those who do to do so?

Carry on...

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2017/4/3 7:08

To me its about the gospel and penal is the gospel ...

does any one no off hand what was preached in the major reviles weather it was one of the other gospels

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2017/4/3 8:42

Hey brother Gary:)

I think I am following you and it was different at different times, with each preacher being true to his understanding and walking in the light he was given. Edwards of course was penal while Finney (as Tyler pointed out) was not and makes a rather overt point regarding the atonement.

It's interesting that Finney was an attorney and did not find the penal aspect in the scriptures but rather a much different thing being taught.

What's even more interesting (to me) is that in spite of these men's differences in doctrine and theology the Lord was able to use them both mightily to reach the lost and turn souls from hell!

So while I appreciate studies like this at the end of the day history proves this matters less than whether we are willing to go all in and become a living sacrifice for Christ... if not we are a poor waste of His blood that purchased us and are cheating Him out of that which He bought.

Re: Penal substitution disputed by many - posted by yuehan, on: 2017/4/3 15:02

Hi Docs,

I agree that this is an important question. Once the theological terminology is removed, this question is simply about the meaning of the atonement.

God wants us to know this. Let's not dismiss this as high-brow theology; rather, it is Christianity 101.

The atoning work of Christ is central to the gospel, and how we understand it has tremendous ramifications for practical living. I speak from my own experience.

Given that this thread has gone off the rails, you might find this old discussion thread on "Atonement Views" to be helpful :

http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?forum=36&topic_id=13871&post_id=109452

Note in particular Philologos' responses. He writes from a penal substitution perspective.

Re: Thank you yuehan - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/3 16:01

I'm a might bewildered here. I was just casually looking over theories and views of the atonement and thought I might mention in a small way on the forum. Suddenly out of the sea came a many headed something voicing things one thousand light years away from any iota of anything I was thinking of or intended. I was told,

- I need to quit studying the Bible so much
- Any theologian who attempted to present a view of the atonement bought into the ways of the world
- Any theologian who has attempted to organize a portion of biblical truth was profoundly misguided and operating outside of the Spirit
- Those interested in doctrine have left their first love
- Any and all theologians have been captive to the thoughts of their own mind instead of the revelation from scripture
- Protestants cling to the Word out of fear because they are afraid to admit it is something less than the living Word of God.

Nothing about any discussion revolving around penal substitution.

Anyway, I'm surprised and a bit perplexed where all this came from but if I find time I will take a look at the link you recommended. Thanks for taking the time.

Re: - posted by Martyr (), on: 2017/4/3 19:21

None of those are accurate but they do prove you have missed the point of everything I've been trying to say

Re: Brother appolus - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/5 8:16

I want to apologize if I may have rubbed your feelings or intent the wrong way by bringing up stacking the deck. Hindsight sure can be valuable as I know from having to take advantage of it so many times. If I said anything wrong or in the wrong way I offer apologies.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/4/5 11:43

I wanted to comment on this topic early on, but felt that I should not. However, I feel free now to give my two cents worth.

Paul admonished Timothy to study to show himself approved, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Paul admonished both Titus and Timothy about the importance of sound doctrine. I don't think anyone with even a cursory knowledge of scripture would denigrate a systematic study of scripture. It is an important discipline in the life of a believer.

But on the other hand, Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 2 that he is coming, not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of power in the Spirit of God. In Galatians 1, Paul tells us that his revelation of the gospel did not come from any teaching of man, but rather by revelation by the Spirit of God. In other words, Paul did not get his doctrine from systematic study, but as direct revelation by the Holy Spirit.

One thing I notice about Paul's writings are the great number of quotes from the Old Testament. Paul was a student of Gamaliel and most likely had the law and most of the prophets committed to memory. This served as great raw material for the Holy Spirit to quicken to Paul, but it took the quickening of the Holy Spirit to bring the truth out of the knowledge.

In 1 Cor. 8, Paul makes an interesting statement. He says that knowledge puffs up, but charity edifies. Knowledge, apart from intimacy with God, leads us to thinking we have all of our intellectually derived, doctrinal ducks in a row, and causes us to approach the word of God from an argumentative or debating mentality. But knowledge that is gained in the context of intimacy and relationship comes by revelation and is profitable for growth and edification.

It takes the Holy Spirit to correctly interpret scripture. He is the one who breathes life into the written pages. There is a huge difference between knowing part of the word on a purely intellectual level and having the Holy Spirit drop the truth of that thing into your spirit in such a way as to make it a living reality. The word of God was never meant to be studied and dissected, but rather to be received as a living, breathing reality that transforms our lives so that we become partakers of the divine nature. The ultimate goal is spiritual life and godliness.

Let's look at the atonement as an example. We can look at it seven ways from Sunday and devise all sorts of systematic ways to define it. We can then debate our various viewpoints. And, there might be a valid place for doing so (I will leave at least that much room). But what was the purpose of the atonement? Why was the price paid? The purpose was to bring many sons to glory. The purpose was to break down the wall of enmity between me and God so that I could enter once again into relationship with Him, unhindered by the law of commandments. This is reconciliation. It was so that God, through the Holy Spirit, could make me a partaker of the divine nature. It is so I might be made the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus.

When the reality of the purpose is dropped into me by the Holy Spirit, it makes the topic of the atonement become the reality of relationship through Christ. To me, these are two very different things.

We cannot divorce the study of the word and the revelation of the Holy Spirit. With one comes knowledge. With the other comes divine empowerment at every level of my life.

Just my perspective.

Re: - posted by Yana2 (), on: 2017/4/5 12:01

What a wonderful word, brother Travis! I completely agree - it's not either the Bible or the Spirit - it's both!

Also, with regards to the OP - I never actually considered that there were so many different explanations of the atonement, and I find I hold to a few of them simultaneously. But I find it hard to question that penal substitution is vital to understanding the atonement. I will quote a verse that philologos also mentioned in the thread that was linked to:

From Romans 3

... Christ Jesus 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

The point is that God "passed over former sins", and for Him to be just and righteous, those sins had to be punished and borne by Jesus. I don't see how this passage can be understood apart from a penal perspective. Although as I mentioned, I don't necessarily believe that was the only thing that the atonement did. What's your take on this?

Re: Thank you twayneb - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/6 8:42

That is a excellent post.

I'm a little short of time but among other things, this is what struck me.

- But what was the purpose of the atonement?
- Why was the price paid?
- The purpose was to bring many sons to glory.
- The purpose was to break down the wall of enmity between me and God so that I could enter once again into relationship with Him, unhindered by the law of commandments.
- This is reconciliation.
- It was so that God, through the Holy Spirit, could make me a partaker of the divine nature.
- It is so I might be made the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus.

Under the enlightening of the Holy Spirit, those things are understood from examination of the scriptures which are the written and living word of God as if God Himself was speaking to you. Yes, God may speak to us during our devotions or prayer times but nothing there will ever contradict the things found in His living word. I'm not saying you don't believe this but more than a casual investigation of the scriptures is and should be a normal practice for us who are redeemed. The truth of God in the atonement of Christ is laid out for us in His word.

Thank you bro for excellent thoughts expressed in your post.

Re: Martyr's perspective - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/4/8 7:08

I felt I should add a note in regard to Martyr's comments and perspective. Based on what I've read, I think I had a similar experience growing up. My family was a part of largely mainline, conservative churches. The largely cessationist views contrasted with my parents experience of being born of the Spirit and teaching. My parents never pushed us kids to be born again or seek being filled with Spirit but they did tell us about their experience.

When I entered into the fullness, the Lord gave me a couple years of intense instruction. So many things were opened to me that were clearly not understood or taught in the churches I had been a part of, I was sure that the promise of the Holy Spirit leading into all truth could simply mean direct, divine revelation. I thought I didn't need any teachers or leaders, I just needed to abide. That was only partly right.

The vision God gave me included building up the Church but to do that you need to teach, preach which I had been denying the need of in my life. God used Sermon Index to introduce me to preachers who have revelation on things I sorely needed but He had not chosen to reveal directly to me.

I encourage you to watch some of the God's Foretold Work that often includes "Doc" Winter, Reggie Kelly and other Spirit taught brethren. I'm sure it will be a great blessing for your soul and spirit.

Blessings on you dear brother

Re: The living word of God - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/8 10:53

Question: "What is the living Word? What does it mean that the Bible is the living Word of God?"

Answer: According to Hebrews 4:12, "the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." The "word of God" here is the written or spoken Word, not the Logos of John 1. The ESV says that the Bible is "living" and active.

The description of the Bible as "living" means that it has a vital power inherent to itself. The written Word of God a

accomplishes God's purposes (Isaiah 55:11); the preaching of the Holy Scriptures brings about God's desired effects. The Bible is unlike other books, whatever emotional or social effects they may produce, in that it brings about lasting, supernatural change within a person. Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ (Romans 10:17).

Jesus likened the Word of God to seed in His parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-23). Seed, like the Bible, is not dead, but living, and it has the ability to bring forth more life abundantly. Seeds produce a crop (verse 23).

The Bible, as the living Word of God, is not inert or powerless, as seen in the actions attributed to the Word in the rest of Hebrews 4:12: the Bible penetrates deep within us and judges our hearts and motivations. It is active, not passive. The Bible is resisted or ignored to our own peril (Hebrews 2:1-3).

We see the living Word of God in action in the pages of the Bible. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter preached the Word of God, and his audience were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Three thousand people were saved that day (verse 41). Later, as the apostles continued to preach, the number in the church grew to five thousand, because many of those who had heard the word believed (Acts 4:4, ESV). God's Word, living and active, does not return to Him void.

The Bible is the living Word of God because it is the message given to us from the living God (Hebrews 3:12). The God who is alive works in this world through His living Word in conjunction with the Holy Spirit (see Ephesians 6:17). Jesus spoke of the life-giving property of His words: "The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life" (John 6:63). The word of our Lord is efficacious for our salvation and sanctification (Acts 13:48; John 17:17).

Other indications that the Word of God is alive include the facts that it sustains man (Luke 4:4), it brings faith (Romans 10:17), it has freedom to accomplish God's will (2 Timothy 2:9), it can be maligned (Titus 2:5), it gives spiritual birth (1 Peter 1:23), and it abides within believers (1 John 2:14).

We see the living Word of God in action every time a sinner repents and turns to Christ for eternal life. The believer's changed life bears testimony to the living, active power of the Bible. Commentator Matthew Henry wrote of the Bible that it convinces powerfully, converts powerfully, and comforts powerfully. It makes a soul that has long been proud, to be humble; and a perverse spirit, to be meek and obedient. Sinful habits, that are become as it were natural to the soul, and rooted deeply in it, are separated and cut off by this sword. It will discover to men their thoughts and purposes, the vileness of many, the bad principles they are moved by, the sinful ends they act to (Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible, Hebrews 4:11-16).

The living Word is active in the lives of those who receive it. According to the psalmist, the person who meditates on and delights in the Word will be like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither (Psalm 1:2-3). The Scriptures today are often downplayed in favor of manmade philosophies, personal experiences, or a renewed word from God. But the Bible cannot be ignored as if it were dead or obsolete. The Word of God is still powerful and very much alive. "We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2017/4/8 14:29

Bro.David,
What a blessed, good word....
I agree !

As I read His Word,desiring Him to teach me,...we can just feel The Spirit of / in, his Words.

His Words,they are Spirit,and they are Life,....
(IF,...we do not throw them to the ground,...and use our word.)

elizabeth

Re: , on: 2017/4/8 15:43

Revelation 19:13

He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God.

John 1:1-2

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

The living word of God is a Person. And His name is Jesus.

Bro Blaine

Re: Jesus and His writtren word - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/8 16:23

And the written word of Jesus is every bit a living word as He is.

Re: David, on: 2017/4/8 17:35

...And the written word of Jesus ie every bit as living as He is...

I don't think so. There is no power on the words of the Bible. There is no power in the Bible. The printed word is simply that. The printed word. The Bible is simply words on paper. It is simply a book like any other book.

UNLESS. UNLESS. Those words are quickened by the Holy Spirit to one's heart. Jesus says in John 6:63,

... It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh. profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Paul fleshes this thought out in 2 Corinthians 2:2-3,

You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; being manifested that you are a letter of Christ care d for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts

In Hebrews 8 in the new covenant we are told that God writes his laws upon our minds and hearts. This is done by the Holy Spirit, testifying of those laws into our hearts and minds. Or rather writing those laws into our hearts and minds.

We often quote Hebrews 4:12 regarding the word of God being living and active and sharper than any 2 edged sword as meaning the book or the Bible. The printed book if you will. But the early readers would not have understood this passage as referring to a book. They would have understood the word of God as referring to a person.

For Hebrews, 4:13 says,

... And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do...

The passage above has reference to the Lord Jesus Christ as the word of God. The early Hebrew believers would have understood the Word of God who had power to be the Lord Jesus Christ.

In and of itself, the Bible has no power. In and of itself, the Bible is simply a book like any other book. It is only when one meets the Author of the book and has a personal relationship with Him. Then the book becomes meaningful.

It is not the words in the book that give life. It is the Spirit who gives life. Only by the Spirit breathing in the word of God into our hearts. Do His words become spirit and life.

Simply my thoughts.

Bro Blaine

Re: , on: 2017/4/8 17:39

Brothers and sisters.

The Triune Godhead is not Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Bible.

But the Triune Godhead is Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit.

Bro Blaine

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/8 18:04

Why don't you give us a break bear?

/The Triune Godhead is not Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Bible./

Whoever came close to saying that? If you aren't going to exercise a little more mental astuteness than this why don't you just let it be.

Re: it is written - posted by savannah, on: 2017/4/8 18:48

The wife who loves her husband, who has gone on a long, long journey, far, far away, loves the letters she receives from him each and every week.

Even though the letters are not him, they're as though they are. She may not be able to hold him and hug him physically, but nevertheless, she feels his presence strongly as she reads his letters, to the point of being brought to tears.

He tells her all that's on his heart, and she is drawn so close to him as she reads, and is so comforted by his words.

She longs to see him face to face, but for now, this is how their love is kept strong.

"It is written...!"

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2017/4/8 19:08

Bro.Bear,

Yes, ' In the beginning was The Word,The Word was with God,and The Word was God.'

God,is Spirit / Word,..He is invisible,..the Word says.

We know, that God,this Voice, this Breath, this Wisdom,,spoke,and brought the world into existence. He did the same speaking,and brought His Word / Seed, into the womb of Mary,..that produced His only begotten Son.

The Son,Jesus Christ,..We know,that He, Jesus only spoke The Words of His Father,God, showed \ gave Him.

We know that we cannot believe in a Jesus / or have a Jesus, without The Word,...or else we would have / believe in,...' another Jesus' ,...and not The Jesus of the Bible.

It is such a blessing,to us all that we have His Words wrote down for us to read,...

2 Tim 3:16,

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God,and is profitable for doctrine,for reproof,for correction,for instruction in righteousness: vs.(17) That the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

A great mystery here.....we confirm it through the written word.

Always,

elizabeth

Re: His Name / The Word - posted by Elibeth, on: 2017/4/8 19:29

We know that God, The Father's Name is 'The Word'
and ,...concerning the scripture you gave Bear,...

Rev.19:13,

"And He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood:and His Name is called The Word of God."

God' Name is the whole Word of God,...all His righteous judgements in all maters,...that is His Name.

Jesus' Name is the whole Word of God,...

elizabeth