

Pastor-teacher Don Hargrove

Faith Bible Church

<http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

August 31, 2011

DAILY DOCTRINE: Need for Jesus Christ as Mediator

<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/need4-JC-mediator.pdf>



1. Adam and Eve (innocent) were in perfect environment in the garden in fellowship with God, Gen. 1:28-2:25. They enjoyed fellowship with the second person of the Trinity (who later became Jesus Christ) as He walked and talked with Adam and Eve. We are not told what form the second person took.
2. Sin (negative volition) separated them from God, Gen. 3:7-8, 10. The instant they sinned they died spiritually and lost fellowship with God. Hiding from God is a natural result of sin. There are a multitude of ways of hiding—this is usually done by rationalizing and making excuses for negative volition. It is amazing to me how blind people can be to their own negative volition. Negative volition is characterized by complaining and a refusal to change one's mind—i.e. repent (cf. the churches in Rev. 2-3).
3. Sin separates man from God: **Isaiah 59:2**, *But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.*
4. The first act of legalism was when Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, Gen. 3:7. In legalism man attempts to cover up his own sinfulness with his works. What a waste considering that God provides cleansing from and power over sin.
5. First act of grace was when God came to them, Gen. 3:8.
6. First promise of salvation was in Genesis 3:15. The seed of the woman would be the Mediator who would bridge the gap between sinful man and Holy God. Man and God cannot have a relationship apart from a Mediator who is equal to both God and man. This was fulfilled in Christ, the Seed of the woman.
7. The Mediator provided salvation not only for the believer, the elect, but also for the unbeliever. This is under the rubric of unlimited atonement.

8. However, the doctrine of limited atonement teaches that Christ died only for the elect. This is an attack on the righteousness of God and His love. God loves all! Christ died for each and every person who has ever and will ever live.
9. The teaching of limited atonement has become more popularized and is promoted in the MacArthur Study Bible. Consider Hebrews 2:9 and his notes.

Hebrews 2:9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

[His notes] **taste death for everyone.** Everyone who believes, that is. The death of Christ can only be applied in its efficacy to those who come to God repentantly in faith, asking for saving grace and forgiveness of sins (page, 1899).

10. Response to John MacArthur's limited atonement.
 - a. If the writer of Hebrews mean what MacArthur says he meant, why did he not say so? What MacArthur says here about the efficacy of the death of Christ being applied to those who respond in faith is true. But this statement does not reflect the text's statement "taste death for everyone." There simply are no limitations expressed in the verse. Neither does the verse say anything about the application of the finished work of Christ. The notes do not explain what the text says but rather what MacArthur believes about the extent of atonement. It does not say "for everyone who believes."
 - b. The adjective translated "everyone" is singular and refers to "each" and every one—no exceptions! The Greek is very powerful on this point. It is not a general "all" but each individual. God loves all only because He loves each and every single individual. Because He loves every each individual, He loves all. What grace!
11. Because God loves and has provided salvation for each person, the invitation of "whosoever" really means something. If limited atonement were true you could neither say "whosoever" or tell every person that God loves them. To be honest you would have to say God loves the elect, and maybe you are, and if you are not then God does not love you, and Christ did not die for you. What a horrible corruption of the true nature and grace of God. Doctrine matters!

In the Logos,

Pastor Don