

and thus remains primary, since we are "redeemed" by the payment of the precious blood of Christ, and since God must first be reconciled to the sinner by Christ's death before the sinner can be reconciled to God.

"Hear the story from God's Word
That kings and priests and prophets heard;
There would be a sacrifice
And blood would flow to pay sin's price.
Precious Lamb of glory,
Love's most wondrous story.
Heart of God's redemption of man;
Worship the Lamb of glory.

On the cross God loved the world
While all the pow'rs of hell were hurled;
No one there could understand
The One they saw was Christ the Lamb.
Precious Lamb of glory,
Love's most wondrous story.
Heart of God's redemption of man;
Worship the Lamb of glory."

(Greg Nelson and Phill McHugh)

(3) The Atonement includes both obedience and suffering

- (a) Christ not only assumed the guilt and penalty of the transgressed Law of God by becoming a perfect sacrifice for sin; He also perfectly fulfilled the demands of the Law of God in their entirety (In both His character and conduct).
- (b) Both Christ's passive obedience (His sacrificial death) and His active obedience (His life of righteousness) are necessary to the Atonement.

On the one hand, if only Christ's passive obedience (His sacrificial death) constitutes the Atonement, then our guilt and penalty (eternal death) are removed, but we still lack positive righteousness and eternal life. On the other hand, if only Christ's active obedience (His righteous life) constitutes the Atonement, then we are still guilty and liable to the penalty of eternal death. Both aspects are necessary to the Atonement!

- (c) This necessity may be clearly seen in the doctrine of justification, as it pertains to the Atonement, specifically in the twofold imputation of sin and righteousness. On the one hand, our guilt was imputed to Christ and our penalty laid on Him; this removes our guilt and penalty. On the other hand, Christ's righteousness is imputed to us and the purchased reward of eternal life graciously bestowed (as a gift) on us; this provides us with (legal) righteousness and eternal life. Both aspects are necessary to our justification, and both aspects are necessary to the atoning work of Christ, which forms the ground of our justification.