

The Particular Gospel

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The heart of the gospel is the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture places all the responsibility and burden of our salvation on the shoulders of our Lord. If a man is to be saved God must save him and the good news is that the Lord Jesus Christ has 'saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began'.

If I am to be redeemed from the curse of the law it must be the Lord Jesus who redeems me. If I am to be delivered from captivity to my own sinful nature it must be the Lord Jesus who sets me free. To be released from the bondage of Satan, Christ must break the chains for by my own strength I can neither settle the claim of God's law, overthrow my inherited sinful nature or escape the devil's grasp.

The doctrine of particular redemption lays all the responsibility for salvation on the shoulders of the Saviour and gives Him all the glory. Christ's death accomplishes Jonah's confession that 'salvation is of the Lord'. It fulfils the apostle's statement, 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3). The doctrine of particular redemption recognises the efficacy of Christ's sacrificial death and acknowledges it is the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). Particular redemption gives praise where praise is due.

Christ's death was substitutionary and representative. We 'are justified by His blood', and though, 'we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son' (Romans 5:9, 10). Christ died to save, not to make salvation possible. He gave His blood to redeem, not to make redemption possible. He suffered to take away our sins. He did not create an environment for the removal of sin should a man decide he would like that to happen. God's gift of grace is much more certain than that.

If Christ's accomplishments on the cross were general and universal then praise and gratitude for salvation must reside with man since ultimately it is a man himself who makes Christ's general work personal and applicable to himself. But this cannot be since Paul tells us, no flesh can glory in the presence of God (1 Corinthians 1:29). By right the Lord Jesus must receive all the honour because it is He who accomplished our great salvation.

All whom God loved with everlasting love, chose by sovereign grace and

united to Himself in the covenant of peace will be saved and brought to a knowledge of the truth through faith and hearing the gospel. These are the blessed individuals redeemed by Christ. They will all be called to spiritual life and faith by God the Holy Spirit.

Trusting Christ does not actuate some dormant, provisional work of grace. Faith is God's spiritual gift. It hears and believes the truth of Christ's effectual work spiritually. Faith brings assurance. It relies upon a powerful Saviour and His completed work. It gives solid hope of eternal glory and justifiable confidence of acceptance with God. God's people always look away from themselves to the accomplishments of their Saviour on the cross.

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