

Saved By Grace VIII - Limited Atonement/Universal Evangelism

Introduction – Election and the atonement are particular. God elected particular individuals. The death of Christ was a true atonement for the sins of particular people. These people, elect before the foundation of the world, have names that are written in a book, contained in the secret things of God. But we are called to preach the gospel to all the nations – to everyone. Is God inconsistent in this? Are we inconsistent in this?

A Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14) – Jesus illustrates for us in this parable the work of the evangelist, the free response of moral agents, and the necessity of the atonement

The Contemporary Context (vv 1-7) – Certainly, Christ has the rejection of Himself by the Jews in His day, and the impending destruction of the city of Jerusalem in mind.

To the Gentiles (vv 8-9) – The invitation to the wedding goes to the ends of the earth.

An Invitation with Requirements (vv 11-14) – Just as the city was condemned for its unbelief, so every man will be condemned in his unbelief. If he is not wearing the garment of Christ's righteousness, the work of the atonement, he will be cast out.

Why Preach? (Rom 10:14-17) – Remember, God has not only predestined the end (who will be saved, or, for whom Christ died) but also the means (the works God will use to bring each person to conversion). Those who will be saved, will be saved by means of the preaching of the Word.

Why Preach to Them? – Even though there are the non-elect, those for whom Christ did not die, we preach the gospel to all men. That is because *God and His glory* is central, and not men. All men are required to obey God's law. All men are required to repent and believe. All men are free moral agents, doing as they will. All men will be called to account for their sin. God saw no contradiction in sending Moses to call Pharaoh to obedience even though He knew "*that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go...*" (Exod 3:18). He saw no contradiction in sending Jesus to Jerusalem, even though Jerusalem killed the prophets, rejected the message, and would crucify His Son, the Preacher of the gospel (Matt 23:31-38).

A Strengthened Gospel – Rather than a polite offer that "Jesus loves you", or that if you would like to 'give Jesus a chance', He would be pleased to forgive Your sins and be Your Lord, we are commanded to preach Christ crucified. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world for sinners. You are a sinner in need of salvation. If you are to be saved it will only be by grace through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Repent of your sin and believe in the gospel, and you will be saved.

The Gospel Invitation (Is 55:1-2, Matt 11:28-30) – In one sense, the gospel is more a command than an invitation. But that is not to say it is not an invitation. Like the man in the parable found without his wedding garment, we must make sure our gospel is clothed properly.

God's Relationship to Man: the Covenant (Gen 2:16-17) – God's relationship with us is not automatic, but rather according to His covenant, the terms of which He made clear to Adam. We have all broken covenant with God in Adam, because in Adam we have all died a spiritual death.

God's Wrath Upon Sinners (Rev 6:16-17, 19:15-16) – Because of the holiness of God, His anger upon sinners is a holy wrath, but it is a terrible wrath. When we truly understand that we must be saved, we understand that we must be saved *from God*.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1 Tim 3:16) – Jesus is the Christ (the promised anointed one) of God, the Son of God, and those who recognize this truth are born of God (1 John 5:1).

The Death of Christ (Gal 2:20) – In Adam, we die to life. In Christ, we die to death. In Adam, all of His descendants died. In Christ, all of His descendants died in Him, and in His resurrection, we live in Him. Just as in Adam there was not simply a possibility of condemnation, but real condemnation, so in Christ, there is not simply the possibility of salvation, but real salvation (Rom 5:18-19).

The Resurrection of Christ (Acts 17:30-31) – The scriptures do not talk of the resurrection as something that needs to be proved. The resurrection proves something. It proves that Jesus Christ will judge the world. It proves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Rom 1:3-4). It is the basis of a new, right standing before God (Rom 4:23-25).

Only Hungry People Eat – but sin tangles us up in this message. We have to turn from our spiritual dung-heap where we thought we could find life, and believe the promises of this God-man offering us eternal food, eternal life.

The Invitation – The invitation is real and freely offered to all. The response requires you to come and to come as one who is weary and hungry, for only those will come wearing the appropriate garment.

The Command – The command, like the invitation, is to all who hear – 'repent and believe'. God will be Lord over all His creation.

The Preacher's Plea (2 Cor 5:20) – This invitation/command is not coming from a man while God waits outside for your decision. Through His Word preached through His messenger, God is addressing you here and now.