

# THE BIG WORDS OF THE CROSS, 2

## Introduction

1. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
2. 1 John 2:1, 2
3. “. . . God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19).
4. “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

## I. “RECONCILIATION”

1. Salvation was and is by substitution but the object of substitution is reconciliation.
  1. Forgiveness & apology are “in” today, but repentance & reconciliation are not.
  2. Forgiveness is not Reconciliation.
  3. It only takes one to forgive
  4. It takes two to reconcile
  5. Unless forgiveness leads to reconciliation, forgiveness fails.
2. **LAWS OF FORGIVENESS**
  1. Shakespeare said, “To be, or not to be, that is the question.” (William Shakespeare Hamlet 3.1.56.); however, Scripture says, “To forgive, or not to forgive—that is the issue.”
  2. I must forgive.
  3. I must be forgiven.
  4. That is the big issue of life!
  5. “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).
3. **1ST LAW OF FORGIVENESS**
  1. The 1st law: The unforgiving cannot be forgiven.
  2. Read Jesus’ prayer: (Matthew 6:12–15; Mark 11:24–26; Luke 11:4; see also Matthew 18:35; 2 Corinthians 2:7; Luke 6:37).
  3. Do not just learn the theory—start the practice!
  4. Our paramount purpose must be to learn to forgive.
  5. Be the first to forgive!
4. **2ND LAW OF FORGIVENESS**
  1. The 2nd law: The offended must forgive, if only for sanity’s sake!
  2. Without forgiveness, one can become bitter, mean, and angry.
  3. Without forgiveness, one lives in chains.
  4. If you wait until the offender repents, you may waste your life waiting.
  5. Once you forgive in your heart, it ceases to be a primary issue—whether or not the offender repents.
5. **3RD LAW OF FORGIVENESS**
  1. The 3rd law: There cannot be forgiveness without repentance.
  2. The prodigal left home to sin; to be forgiven, he had to stop sinning and return home (Luke 15:11–24).
  3. You cannot have forgiveness while living in the far country and sinning.

4. The forgiveness was there—the unmerited yet conditional forgiveness of God.
  5. The father could not force the prodigal to return nor can God save us until we return.
  6. We are not innocent victims—we are sinners.
  7. We must own up to our sin (Psalm 51).
  8. Sin matters.
  9. When we are violated, then we rebuke; when there is repentance, we forgive (Luke 17:3, 4).
  10. Nothing is too big or too much to forgive (Matthew 18:21–35).
  11. Reconciliation is more than forgiveness.
6. **4TH LAW OF FORGIVENESS**
1. The 4th law: Forgiveness does not guarantee a painless future.
  2. Forgiven sin still has consequences.
  3. Time and forgetfulness are not forgiveness.
  4. God remembers our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17), but this is not “spiritual amnesia.”
  5. “My sin is ever before me” (Psalm 51:3b).
  6. Forgiveness is the most costly gift on earth (Romans 5:10).

## II. PROPITIATION

1. In Jesus’ time “propitiation” referred to appeasing the anger of an idol by making a blood sacrifice.
2. God did not appease Himself but created a salvation by which He was justified.
3. God Himself justified Himself.
4. Jesus provided this propitiation through His personal sacrifice.
5. In this way, He can be just and still save sinners.
6. Jesus became the final, perfect sacrifice for us.
7. He took upon Himself first our flesh, then our sin.
8. He is both our sacrifice and our High Priest (Hebrews 2:14–18).
9. He is both our Lord and our Savior (Acts 2:36).
10. He is our vicarious sacrifice—the fulfillment of all Jewish sacrifices.
11. He was not made guilty; He was made to be sin as our substitute for our sin (2 Corinthians 5:17–21).
12. Propitiation enforces the enormity of sin.
13. Love without wrath is sentimentality.
14. Divine grace satisfied divine wrath by a divine self-sacrifice.

## III. EXPIATION

1. Propitiation (reconciliation) is made possible by expiation (making atonement).
2. Propitiation & expiation are so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them.
3. You expiate a sin, but you propitiate a person.
4. Expiation is a doctrinal truth; propitiation is a personal application of a doctrinal truth.
5. Expiation is the removal of guilt; propitiation is the removal of the divine wrath that has come because of the sin.
6. Jesus is our “mercy seat” (Romans 3:25, 26).
7. The blood of Jesus is our expiatory sacrifice.
8. To expiate is to pay the penalty, the price (1 John 2:1, 2); to propitiate is to satisfy the justice

of God.

9. Jesus is our “Passover” (1 Corinthians 5:7).
10. He covered our sins, allowing God to put them behind His back (Romans 8:1, 2; see Isaiah 38:17).
11. God cannot and will not forgive and accept us except through the cross.

#### IV. **IMPUTATION**

1. Sinful man cannot be righteous; therefore, imputed righteousness is the only kind of righteousness he can have.
2. Justification has been called “the supreme paradox of the gospel.”
3. Through forgiveness, God makes sinners just, or righteous (Romans 8:1, 2).
4. Our sins are imputed to Christ, and His righteousness is imputed to us (Isaiah 53:5, 6, 10, 11; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 4:11; 14:9).
5. Read and reread Philippians 3:7–11.
6. Tragically, we would prefer to merit grace, but grace cannot be merited!
7. “Nothing that man could ever do in a million years of righteous living could ever earn the tiniest fraction of the salvation God gives to men in Christ” (James Burton Coffman, *Commentary on Romans* (Austin, Tex.: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1973), 122.).
8. Furthermore, imputed righteousness eliminates human pride.

#### V. **RANSOM**

1. The best known and most misunderstood facet of atonement is “ransom.”
2. A ransom is the purchase price for freeing slaves, and sinners are the servants of sin.
3. God forever silenced Satan at the cross (Matthew 20:28; Galatians 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6; Titus 2:14, 15), where the blood of the Lamb was given to redeem us.
4. Our sins will either be paid for at the cross, or they will be paid for in hell.
5. We make the choice.
6. Jesus died for us—as a price for our sin and a substitute for our death.
7. He did not die as a martyr for a cause, but He freely gave His life as a ransom for us.
8. Jesus made sin forgivable & man savable.
9. To whom was this ransom paid?
10. God did not buy sinners back from Satan.
11. We are “sold under sin” (Romans 7:14; NKJV), but we are not sold to Satan.
12. God, not Satan, was satisfied at the cross (1 John 2:1, 2).
13. Satan is the “accuser” (Revelation 12:9, 10).
14. God cannot be holy without punishing sin.
15. The ransom was paid in order to satisfy the justice and holiness of God.
16. A ransom is satisfaction for the insult of sin.
17. The penalty of law (Romans 6:23) is paid, and its sanctity is vindicated.
18. The ransom reveals the seriousness, sheer depth, and horror of sin.
19. Salvation is given to us as a gift when we believe and obey.
20. Jesus not only dethroned Satan, but He also dealt with sin.
21. In overcoming sin, Jesus overcame death.
22. The sin-debt is unpayable except through the marvel of His grace.
23. The redeemed must never forget what redemption is!

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1.** What is society's view of sin and personal responsibility?
- 2.** Discuss the various definitions of sin proposed by the author: (a) the supreme choice of self, (b) thinking that one knows better than God, (c) cosmic treason, (d) man's decision to become his own God. Give examples of how these definitions are appropriate.
- 3.** What is said to be the only way to handle sin? Find the verses in Romans 6 which support this idea.
- 4.** What is reconciliation?
- 5.** What is the difference between an apology and repentance.
- 6.** Forgiveness is dependent on what actions on the part of the offender and the offended?