

The Atonement - Adult SS - Lesson 8: The Glory of the Atonement

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[0:00] Let me pray and then we'll jump straight in. Let's pray.

Lord God, we've come from a busy week with lots on our minds, lots going on our minds, lots going on our minds, lots going on our minds, lots going on our minds.

The wonders of what Christ has done for us in how you have revealed yourself and made your glory known. And so we pray that we would just be able to take that in today, that we would wonder at the cross and just marvel at who you are, Lord.

In Jesus name. Amen. So we've been looking at the atonement this term. This is the second to last one. We've got one more after this, which means we've been looking at the cross.

That's the focus of this term. What Christ has done on the cross to make us at one with God again. So Christ, let's do a brief recap. Christ is our redemption.

[1:13] He paid the debt of sin that was on us. He took it on himself and he paid it with his life. Christ is our propitiation. Didn't even spell that right.

Propitiation. Propitiation. Propitiation. Is our propitiation.

So he satisfied the wrath of God. So as we saw last week, Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath for us. The cup that we should drink.

He drank it all on the cross. And so he ended God's wrath over us. It all fell on Christ on the cross. And so because of that, Christ reconciled us back to God.

So in sin, we've been separated. But in Christ, we are now forgiven and right with God and reconciled. Forever justified. So for the past time, we've really been zooming in on what the cross does for us.

[2:17] What Christ achieved for us on the cross. How it saves us. How we need it. All that Christ has done. And I hope we've all just, through this, just got a better appreciation of Christ and the atonement.

So if there's one thing that I hope that you leave with this term, is that I want you to know that in Christ, because of the cross, your sins really are forgiven.

It really is finished. If that's just one thing you get, please just take that away. But today, I want us to think about something a little bit different.

I want us to think about not what the cross does, but what the cross says. So I want us to think not about what Christ has done for us on the cross, but what Christ reveals about God on the cross. Because Christ did not only die to do something for you, which he did. He went to the cross for his people. That's the glory of what we've seen over the past few weeks.

[3:23] But also, he died to reveal something about God. He died so that we can look at the cross and know something about who God is.

And so today, I want us to find out what that is. I want us to listen carefully to what the cross says about God. So think of it like this. So on the cross, we've seen that Christ was a priest offering a sacrifice, wasn't he?

He was acting as a priest. But also, on the cross, he was acting as a prophet, telling us something, telling us something about God.

So the atonement doesn't only do something, it says something, reveals something about God. But the first thing I want us to see is how God reveals himself.

So I want to see what the cross reveals. But first, we need to see how God reveals himself. How can we know who God is? How does he communicate to us?

[4:25] So before we think about the atonement specifically, I want us to look into just generally how God reveals himself. That's the first point today, how God reveals himself. And we need to break out into groups, look up these verses, and just answer two questions about each verse.

How does God reveal who he is? As in, what way does he reveal himself? And what does that reveal about him? Okay? So how does he reveal who he is?

And what does he reveal? Go for it. Go for it. Go for it.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[6:02] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Try and do F. Okay.

[9:25] Okay. Let's bring it together. So, two questions. How does God reveal who he is? And what does it reveal about him?

So, Psalm 19. Marius, welcome back. Go for it. Through creation, yeah.

The heavens declare what? The glory of God, right? All creation speaks of God. You can think of all creation. It's just one big loudspeaker pumping out what God is like.

He is creator. He's designer. He is all-powerful sustainer, right? Reveals his glory. His handiwork.

His fingerprints are everywhere. How about Exodus 6? Yes. Alana?

Oh, sorry. If you lost your voice, I'll pick on someone else. Louisa. Louisa. He reveals himself through deliverance to rescue. Right. It shows that he is of God and people.

[10:27] I know you are. Excellent. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, this is something a bit different. He reveals himself through delivering Israel from Egypt. Saving them.

And it reveals that he is God and he is their God. Which is Exodus 14 as well. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.

How? When I have gotten glory over Pharaoh. Drowned them. Delivered Israel out. Defeated Egypt. How about Psalm 98?

Noah. How gracious he is. Okay. Yeah, yeah. His grace. His righteousness as well, it says. How has he revealed that? But he's made no salvation.

So he's saved. Yeah. Saved. Well, Israel is in sight here. But us as well, right? Yeah. It is through salvation he's revealed his righteousness and his grace.

[11:27] And it's in front of all the nations, right? So the whole world can see. That's the same for Psalm 111. He has shown his people the power of his works in giving them the inheritance of the nation.

So he's shown his power by saving Israel and making them better than the other nations. This is probably kind of the height of Israel. Making the nations their inheritance.

How about Joshua? Ethan, go for it. Did you? Showing he's mighty. Yeah. The hand of the Lord is mighty so that all the earth may know that.

And how does he make that known? Yeah. Again, salvation, right? So can you see a common theme here?

God reveals himself in his actions. Particularly, God reveals who he is and what he is like in salvation. So in his works of salvation.

[12:32] So think of the Exodus, the Passover, the Red Sea, the Jordan, giving Israel victory. All those actions are God revealing who he is. So if you want to know who God is and what he's like, he hasn't just given like a cold list of his characteristics to us and just kind of sent an email across and saying, this is what I'm like.

No, God says, look at what I've done in this world. Then you will know how great I really am. So yes, God reveals himself in creation all the time.

You can't escape that. We know who God is and what he's like in nature itself. But because of our sin, we don't hear it. So if all creation is like a speaker blaring out God's glory, it's like muffled in our ears because of sin.

We don't hear it or see it or recognize God in it. And so God reveals himself in clear and loud actions.

And it's not just any old actions. It is the action of salvation. And this is a big thing I just want from this point. So you can fill in that underline. So this is the big idea.

[13:48] God reveals himself in acts of salvation. God reveals himself in acts of salvation. So you can think of it like this.

So God reveals himself in all creation. But because of sin, it's kind of like watching a blurry TV. So we don't see God. We can't really say, oh, yes, of course, that's God.

But we don't really know who he is. Not because God isn't clear, but because of our sin. But when God acts in salvation and kind of and pots the Red Sea and hurls hailstones of the Canaanites, that is God showing himself in kind of ultra high definition 4K.

He's showing us this is who I really am. This is my greatness. And this is an important thing to realize about salvation overall. God saving sinners in this world isn't just about us getting something.

But it's also about God revealing something. Showing the world, the nations, what he's really like. In fact, look at Ezekiel 36.

[15:02] It shows us just that. So this passage, it's all about the world not thinking God is holy. Because of how Israel have been an unholy people.

And so God promises to act and to do something and save and give his people a new holy heart. And this is why.

This is the reason why he saves Israel. Ezekiel 36. It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act. But for the sake of my holy name.

And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God. When through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. And the nations will know that I am the Lord.

So why does God save? For the sake of his name. For his reputation. So that the world will know God is holy.

[16:00] So salvation is for us. Don't ever forget that. It is for us. God does save us. He shows us incredible grace. And our lives are transformed by it.

But that's not actually the primary reason why he acts. No, God saves to make known his holiness. To reveal to the world who he really is. So this is just a simple but a big thing we need to know. God reveals himself in acts of salvation.

And at this point, let's just think. If that is the case, and it is the case. What is God's central act of salvation in history?

What is the mightiest deed of redemption God has ever done in this world? It's the cross. It's the atonement.

[16:58] Which means that is where God reveals himself most gloriously. And that's what I want us to look at now. I want us to see God reveals his glory on the cross.

So if we know God best and most clearly in salvation in those acts. And because the cross is the center point of salvation.

That must mean that is when God is most clearly seen. So we can look at the cross. And we can know, oh, wow, that is what God is like.

Which is to say, his glory is revealed on the cross. And so glory, glory just means God's character. God's glory is his character. It's the weight and the greatness of what God is really like. And it's interesting. When Jesus speaks of the cross, he always links God's glory to the atonement.

[18:04] So look at John 12. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I've come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.

Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and I will glorify it again. Again, John 13. When he had gone out, Jesus said, now is the son of man glorified.

And God is glorified in him. This is as he's heading to the cross. On John 17. When Jesus had said these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify your son that the son may glorify you. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me today. So Jesus knew, yes, the cross was about saving his people. It was the shepherd coming to get his sheep. But it was first and foremost about glorifying God. Making God's glory, his character known to the world.

[19:10] And so I want us to see what exactly the atonement shows us then. So if the atonement shows us God's glory, what exactly is that showing us about God?

What is the glory Jesus is talking about here? So again, I want you to break out. So on page two, break out. Look up these verses and just answer two questions.

What does the cross show us about what God is like, about his character? And how does it show us that? Okay, how does the cross show us that character? Break out.

I'll give you five minutes to this. Go for it. Oh, and there's an extra question at the end if you get to it. Go for it. Go for it.

Go for it.

[21:08] Go for it.

Go for it. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Hands up if you're still going, if you need a bit more time. Okay, give you 30 more seconds. Okay.

[24:33] Right. Mark 14. This is what we thought about last week. Mark 14. What does Mark 14, particularly this cup, that's what I underline, what does that show us about what God is like?

David Faust. Yeah. Okay. So what does that show us about what God is like? It's like showing us some negotiations between Jesus and his Father.

Okay. Yeah. He knows it's going to be hard, but he also wants to work in a world as part of that.

Okay. So what does that show us about what God is like?

You could say Trinity, Father and Son. That's part of it. What about his character? Okay, there's a unity, there's a coherence within God.

What about the cup? Did you think about the cup? It's just that God's wrath. Exactly, okay, yeah, that's great, that's great.

[25:33] Yeah, his wrath is revealed on the cross, isn't it? As Christ dies for sin and as the sky goes dark, God shows that he is wrathful, angry at sin.

How about Romans 5? Romans 5. Matthew, Thorne. Love, yes, God shows his love for us on the cross.

Right? And how do we see his love? Okay, it's one thing just saying, oh, it shows his love. But how? Right, yeah.

Yeah, no, no, that's great, that's great. That's exactly it. It shows a desire to save his people, doesn't it? Bring them home, bring them into his family and care for them and send his son.

Love them enough to send his son to die for them. It shows, we can look at the cross, see, that is love. How about Titus 3? Rory.

[26:38] It shows he's merciful and particularly merciful, not because, or because he wants to save us, not because of any of the, you know, our own righteousness, but entirely because of that mercy.

And that love. Exactly. Christ dying for sinners, of all people, that shows we are completely unworthy. And so that love shown toward us, what kind of love?

That is a merciful love. That is mercy. Right. Romans 3. There's quite a few things in Romans 3.

Toby, did you get into that?

What does Romans 3 show us about what God is like? Don't have to do all the things. You can phone a friend if you like.

It's kind of a thing to pass over with the Israelites in Egypt. That he stares the Israelites from death.

[28:01] Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Jesus is doing this through his officiation. Right. Yeah.

So he passed over former sins. So that's referring to the sins of God's people in the past. So what does that show us about God? His character.

He has the, has it in himself to forgive. Okay. So he's a forgiving God. Right. Sam, you got your hand up as well? I was going to say, yeah.

If you look at the Passover and that door, just like at the Passover, the 10th plague, it shows that there's actually almost like the act of justice at the cross and the act of mercy are one.

But it shows that God has been forbearing, tolerating, in some way, sin up until that point. But it also shows that his attitude towards sin isn't just, don't worry, it's fine.

[29:04] It actually is. It shows his righteousness. Because until that point, he's been forbearing. But it shows that he will not always forbear. There will be a judgment.

It's fallen on Jesus. Exactly. There is so much kind of like converging here. Right. So it shows that he is patient and merciful.

He passed over from sins. He didn't just throw down judgment straight away. Yeah. Go on, Toby. That he's also a just God. Yeah. That somehow these sins have to be faithful.

Exactly. Yeah. And that our sins have been faithful by the Jesus. Exactly. Right. He did pass over them, but he can't just let that go forever. He can't just sweep sin under the rug.

He is a just God. And so he must show his righteousness that he cares about sin and show his justice that he can't just let it slide. And verse 26, he shows his righteousness at the present time in Christ's death so that he might be just.

[30:06] He's shown to be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. So it shows his justice, his righteousness, his patience. Also, we've thought about propitiation.

Again, it shows us wrath again. Right. Got a crisis, the propitiation for that wrath. Shows his grace. Do you see that first line? We are justified by his grace as a gift that all this is just the undeserved kindness of God.

How about 1 Corinthians 1? What have I picked on? Pratik. The last one in your group.

I don't know anything. I don't know if we skipped that. All right. Classic. Classic. Andy. Andy. Yeah. Yeah.

Power of wisdom. Yeah.

[31:08] Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Again, both those things perfectly displayed on the cross. He's got the power. He's in charge. He has the power to defeat evil, overcome sin, execute this plan.

And also shows he has a plan, this wise, perfect plan to end sin, take away sin from his people. And if you think about the cross, if you think about all that we've been looking at this term, it really is wisdom on display.

He knows perfectly how to save us from sin. What did we need? It had to be this of all things. Right. So we needed a savior who's truly man and truly God, someone to deal with God's wrath through a death.

We needed human blood. We needed to be forgiven. We need payment to be paid. We need to be reconciled. We need blood. And it all perfectly happens on the cross.

But that is God's wisdom on display. It's a bit like this may not be the best comparison, but, you know, in Avengers Infinity War, anyone seeing that?

[32:32] And Doctor Strange, like they're facing Thanos, who's like this just impossible enemy. And Doctor Strange, he's got the time zone, so he can look at different options, different realities, alternate universes.

And he looks through millions of different options of how they're going to defeat Thanos. And he just says, I've looked at like three million different realities and only one works.

There is only one way to defeat Thanos of all these million different ways. And you kind of say that about the cross. But you can kind of say that about the cross. There is only one way and this is it.

And God did it. It's his wisdom.

How about Luke 22? Ethan, I think you know Luke 22. Go for it. What does that show us about God? The last bit in particular shows how God's promises, what's been written and built.

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Right. So Christ's death was the fulfillment of the scripture. So all of God's promises, all the plans that he made, all that God said, Christ came and said, all that must be fulfilled.

[33:40] And it was fulfilled. All these promises were kept. It shows God's faithfulness. You can look to the cross and know God is faithful. The scripture, he died according to the scriptures.

And so last question. Why do you think Jesus prays glorify your son that the son may glorify you? It's because of all this, because the cross reveals the glory of the father. God is glorified on the cross. His glory revealed in 4K, ultra high definition.

So if you want to know what God is like, just look to the cross. Look, God is holy. God is love. God is wrathful. God is gracious. God is merciful. Look at the cross. God is powerful and wise. God is faithful.

And so as we see that, as that all converges and happens and is clearly seen on the cross, we can see that on the cross, all these characteristics, all these characteristics of God aren't in conflict.

[34:52] So you might have heard people ask, well, if God is all loving, how can he be angry at people? We might have heard people say, well, how can God be wrathful and merciful at the same time?

Or no, God can't be angry at humanity because he's a loving God. So you might have heard that as if these things are kind of in conflict. Well, how can that be? Well, the answer is look to the cross. Look at the fullness of God's glory displayed. And you can see how it's all of these things perfectly and harmoniously working with each other. Because if you think about it, you see all these things interlink, right?

All these things that we picked up about God, they all require each other, right? So if you see his love on the cross, then you see his mercy, right? It is a merciful love.

And if we see his mercy, then we see his wrath. He's merciful because he doesn't give us his wrath.

And if we see his wrath, then we see his justice.

[35:59] He can't let sin go unanswered. And if we see his justice, then we see his righteousness. And if we see his righteousness, then we see his holiness. If we see his holiness, then we see his perfection, right?

It is all the one glory of God being revealed. But it's kind of revealed in all these different aspects. And so you can think of it like this. We'll just finish with this. So God is just God, right? Think back to our doctrine of God from last year.

God is just God. So there aren't... It's not this, okay? I'm going to draw it. It's not this. It's not like God is made up of different personalities and parts, right?

So he's holy. He's a bit holy. He's a bit wise. He's a bit powerful. He's a bit just. Good.

[37:00] What's the other one? What else can you say? Righteous. Tess, Tess. So I'm going to turn that down. Finish it. And the back there, you'll see a volume switch just to the right of the black box.

So it's not like he's these different parts. These aren't kind of like different... All these characteristics are different sections of God, like a cake.

It's not like he's a bit wrathful, a bit holy. And they're all kind of competing. And it's not like he's got a split personality where he's sometimes loving and he switches that off. And then sometimes he's angry.

And then he kind of like turns the cake around and these different parts. It's not that, right? That's not how we think of God. God is just God.

God is just God. You can kind of say he's all of those things fully. But when God acts in time, it's a bit like light going through a prison.

[38:07] When God acts in time, so this is in eternity, in himself. When God acts in time, it's as if, it's like light going through a prison that disperses.

And we see different aspects of just the one God. So we see he's holy. Wise.

Powerful. Just. Good. Right? It's like the light disperses like that. But these aren't kind of different personalities or emotions of God.

No, we are just seeing different aspects of the one God. And sometimes we are more aware of his anger when in time God responds to evil.

And sometimes we're more aware of his love. When the word is preached and we just hear his forgiveness, like Psalm 103 tonight. We are just so aware that God is love.

[39:11] But on the cross, we see all his attributes most clearly come together.

We can say his glory is displayed on the cross. And it's not that God, at times, when he's being holy, he's not being done with other things.

He is all of them, which we're more aware of one of them sometimes. But it's at the cross we see them most clearly converge and come together. And we see his glory.

And this is why Christ died. Yes, he died to take away our sins. He died for us. But actually, first and foremost, Christ died for God's sake.

It was to glorify God and make his glory known to the world, to the nations in full, ultra high definition. And so there is no better way to show someone what your God is really like than showing them the cross.

[40:22] If you want someone to know about God, bring them to a Good Friday service. But bring them to church. Let them hear about the cross. Because that is where God reveals who he is most clearly.

It reveals his glory. And so we see all his attributes perfectly come together on the cross, which is why we sing, when I survey, see from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down.

O church, rise, come see the cross where love and mercy meet as the son of God is stripping. And that is God revealing his glory. We've got a few minutes for questions.

Thank you.