

THE MEANING OF JESUS' DEATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
Produced by John C. Nugent on behalf of the After Class Podcast 10/21/20

- * This list strives to include all passages that discuss the suffering and death of Jesus
- * This list also includes passages about the persecution, suffering, and death of Christ followers

The Synoptic Gospels

Mark

Mark 6:14-29 John the Baptist is arrested and killed for rubbing Herod and his wife the wrong way. (cf. Matt 14:1-12)

Mark 8:31 After Peter's confession Jesus teaches that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes – and be killed and rise again after three days. (cf. Matt 16:21; Luke 9:21)

Mark 8:34-37 Those who want to follow Jesus must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. Those who want to save their life will lose it and those who lost their life for Jesus' sake and for the gospel will save it. (cf. Matt 10:38-39; 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-25)

Mark 9:9-10 Jesus tells his disciples not to talk about their ascension experience until after the son of Man has risen from the dead, but they kept wondering what he meant by rising from the dead. (cf. Matt 17:9)

Mark 9:12-13 Jesus answers questions about Elijah by saying that he must come first to restore all things, but also that it is written that the Son of Man would go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt – but Elijah has come and they did with him whatever they pleased. (cf. Matt 17:12, the same people who killed Elijah will cause Son of Man to suffer)

Mark 9:30-32 Jesus was teaching his disciples that the Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed he will rise again. But they didn't understand and were afraid to ask. (cf. Matt 17:22-23; Luke 9:44-45)

Mark 10:30 Jesus anticipates that people who leave everything to follow him will face persecutions

Mark 10:32-34 Jesus tells the twelve the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again. (cf. Matt 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-34)

Mark 10:35-40 James and John want to know who will be on Jesus' right and left, but he asks if they can drink the cup he will drink. They say yes and he tells them that they will drink what he drinks and be baptized in the baptism with which he is baptized. --- This indicated continuity between Jesus' death and that of his followers. (cf. Matt 20:22-23)

Mark 10:41-45 Disciples are ticked at James and John for wanting status and Jesus contrasts Gentile rulers with his followers. The great must serve, the first must be slave "For the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom (*lutron*) for many." (cf. Matt 20:28)

Mark 11:18 After Jesus cleansed the temple, the chief priests and scribes were looking for a way to kill him. (Luke 19:47)

Mark 12:1-12 Jesus tells parable of wicked tenants who kill all the servants the owner sends to collect from them, culminating in the owner's son. They thought that by killing the heir the inheritance would become theirs. So they killed and threw him out of the vineyard. Because of this the owner will destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. The stone the builders rejected becomes the cornerstone. When the chief priests, scribes, and elders realized this was about them, they wanted to arrest him (cf. Matt 21:37-42; Luke 20:9-19)

Mark 13:9-13 Jesus tells his disciples that they will be handed over to councils, beaten in synagogues, and made to stand before governors and kings. When they are brought to trial the HS will tell them what to say. Brother will betray brother to death, also father and child, children and parents will have them put to death – they will be hated because of Jesus' name. (cf. Matt 10:16-23, though Matthew places this in the context of sending the disciples out in mission; Luke 21:12-19)

Mark 13:14-23 Great suffering anticipated in the context of the desolating sacrilege (Matt 24:15- 28; Luke 21:20-24)

Mark 14:1 Two days before Passover, the chief priests and scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. (Matt 26:3-4; Luke 22:1-2)

Mark 14:3-9 The woman who anointed Jesus with oil has anointed his body beforehand for burial—the poor will always be with them, but they will not always have Jesus (cf. Matt 26:12)

Mark 14:17-21 Jesus predicts his betrayal and says that the Son of Man will go as it is written of him, but still woe to the one who betrays him. (cf. Matt 26:21-24)

Mark 14:22-25 Jesus breaks bread and says “this is my body” and then of the cup “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” – and Jesus will not drink of the fruit of the vine again until he does so new in the kingdom of God (cf. Matt 26:26-29, but Jesus adds that his blood of the covenant is poured out for many *for the forgiveness of sins*; Luke 22:14-23, but Luke frames the meal with Jesus anticipating his suffering and betrayal and adds that the cup is his blood poured out for them as the *new* covenant in his blood)

Mark 14:26-31 Jesus says it is written that when they strike the shepherd, the sheep will scatter, but after he is raised he will go before them to Galilee. Peter and the rest said they would not desert Jesus, but Jesus answers that they will that very night (cf. Matt 26:31-35)

Mark 14:36 Jesus prays that all things are possible for God and asks God to remove the cup, but only to do what God wants but not what he wants (cf. Matt 26:39, 42; Luke 22:42)

Mark 14:49 Jesus rebukes his arresters for coming after him with clubs instead of getting him while he was teaching in the temple – but allowed it so the Scriptures would be fulfilled. Then all of his disciples left him. (cf. Matt 26:54-56; Luke 22:53, but Luke doesn't mention the fulfillment of Scripture and instead emphasizes that for his arresters “this is your hour, and the power of darkness”)

Mark 15 They kill and bury Jesus – which is something they've wanted to do for a long time! (cf. Matt 26:25—27:56; Luke 22:54—23:56)

Matthew (but not Mark)

Matt 5:11 Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of Jesus, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets. (Luke 6:22)

Matt 6:13 Lord's prayer asks God not to bring us to the time of trial but to rescue us from evil (Luke 11:4)

Matt 10:26-28 Don't fear persecutors who can only kill the body, but not the soul (Luke 12:4-5)

Matt 12:14 After Jesus healed a withered hand on Sabbath and defended it, the Pharisees conspired against him how to destroy him (Luke 6:11)

Matt 12:40 Just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth.

Matt 23:34-36 Jesus says to scribes and Pharisees that he will send them prophets, sages, and scribes and they will kill and crucify some of them, flog some in their synagogues, and pursue them from town to town so that righteous blood comes upon them, the blood from Abel to Zechariah who they murdered between the sanctuary and altar. (Luke 11:47-52, though Jesus is talking with a lawyer)

Matt 24:9 Jesus tells the disciples they will be handed over to be tortured, put to death, and hated by all nations because of his name.

Matt 26:1-2 After teaching about the coming of the Son of Man Jesus tells his disciples that the Passover is coming after two days and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.

Luke (but not Mark or Matthew)

Luke 4:28-30 Those in the synagogue were enraged by Jesus' teaching and wanted to hurl him off a cliff

Luke 11:53 After Jesus tells a lawyer that his ancestors are responsible for the death of the prophets, scribes and Pharisees became hostile, cross-examined him, and began lying in wait to catch him in something he might say.

Luke 12:8-12 Whoever acknowledges Jesus before others will be acknowledged before God, and when they are brought before synagogues, rulers, and authorities the HS will give them words to say.

Luke 12:49-51 Jesus comes to bring fire and division to the earth, and he has a baptism with which to be baptized and is under stress until it is completed.

Luke 13:31 Some Pharisees tell Jesus to go away because Herod wants to kill him, Jesus says he's got a few more days to do things and then he will be on his way because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.

Luke 14:27 Whoever does not carry the cross and follow Jesus cannot be his disciple

Luke 17:25 Before the coming of the Son of man, he must endure much suffering and be rejected by this generation.

Conclusions from Synoptic Gospels

* Jesus' suffering, rejection by Jewish leaders, death, and resurrection was something that must happen (Mark 8:31//Matt 16:21//Luke 9:21; Luke 17:25 he must suffer and be rejected by this generation)

* Jesus died because lots of people wanted to kill him: chief priests and scribes (Mark 11:18//Luke 19:47); elders (Mark 12:1-12); Pharisees (Matt 12:14//Luke 6:11); members of synagogue (Luke 4:28-30); Herod (Luke 13:31)

- * Jesus must die because that is what was written about him (Mark 14:17-21//Matt 26:21-24) – probably a reference to the servant songs of Isaiah (42:1-9; 52:13—53:2)
- * Jesus' cross and forfeiture of life is something that his followers must take up (Mark 8:34- 37//Matt 10:38-39//16:24-26//Luke 9:23-25; Matt 24:9) as well as his persecution and suffering (Mark 10:30; 10:35-40//Matt 20:22-23) as did the prophets of old (Matt 5:11//Luke 6:22)
- * Jesus' suffering and death is analogous to that of John the Baptist (Mark 9:12-13//Matt 17:12)
- * Jesus came to give his life as a ransom (*lutron*) for many (Mark 10:41-45//Matt 20:28)
- * Jesus' blood was poured out for many, for the forgiveness of sins, as part of the new covenant (Mark 14:22-25//Matt 26:26-29//Luke 22:14-23-echoing Exod 24:6-8)
- * Jesus wasn't eager to die, but went willingly because God willed it (Mark 14:36//Matt 26:39, 42//Luke 22:42)

Acts

* I bracket passages not about death but about resurrection and other summary statements of what message the apostles proclaimed. I also underline when resurrection appears even among the death passages because there appears to be a consistent theme in Acts that the people killed Jesus, but God raised him. All of this is helpful to put the death passages into perspective.

Acts 1:3 After his *suffering*, Jesus presented himself alive to the apostles with proofs

[Acts 1:21-22 Peter said it was necessary to replace Judas so there would be another to be a witness with them to the resurrection of Jesus]

Acts 2:23-28 Jesus was handed over to God's people by the plan and foreknowledge of God and they crucified and killed him by the hands of those outside the law, but God raised him and freed him from death because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. This fulfilled the saying of David that God's holy one would not be abandoned to and experience corruption.

Acts 2:29-36 David spoke of the resurrection and the apostles are witness to this event. Emphasizes that God did not abandon Jesus whom they crucified but raised him, exalted him to the heavens, and made him Lord and Messiah.

Acts 3:13-18 The Jews handed Jesus over and rejected him in the presence of Pilate, they asked that a murderer be released and killed the Author/originator of life whom God raised up. But they did this in ignorance as did their rulers and in this way God fulfilled what he foretold through the prophets that his Messiah would *suffer*.

[Acts 4:1-2 The priests, temple captain, and Sadducees were annoyed because the apostles were teaching the resurrection of the dead in Jesus]

Acts 4:10-11 Peter tells the Jewish rulers that he and John heal in the name of Jesus, whom they crucified and whom God raised from the dead – the stone they rejected has become the cornerstone.

Acts 4:23-31 The believers prayed to God and confessed that when Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and people of Israel gathered against Jesus, they fulfilled God's predestined plan in Psalm 2:1-2 about the Gentiles, kings, and rulers taking their stand against the Lord and his Messiah. And now the same people are threatening the followers of Jesus and so they pray for boldness.

[Acts 4:33 The apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus]

Acts 5:27-28 The Jewish council rebukes the apostles for teaching in Jesus' name and bringing his blood

upon them. To which the apostles say that God raised Jesus whom they killed and then God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. NOTE: forgiveness is connected to repentance and God exalting Jesus to his right hand.

Acts 5:33-39 The Jewish council wanted to kill the apostles, but Gamaliel convinces them not to because false Messiahs tend to die and go away by themselves and if they are from God then they would be fighting against God.

[Acts 5:42 The apostles continued to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.]

Acts 7:51-52 Stephen tells the Jewish people that their ancestors killed the prophets—those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One and now they have betrayed and murdered him. So they stoned and killed Stephen with Saul's approval (8:1).

[Acts 8:4 the scattered church went about proclaiming the word]

[Acts 8:5 Philip went to Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah]

[Acts 8:12 Philip was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ]

[Acts 8:25 Peter and John spoke the word of the Lord and proclaimed the good news]

[Acts 8:35 Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to the Eunuch]

[Acts 8:40 Philip proclaimed the good news to all the towns]

[Acts 9:15 Paul is commissioned to bring God's name before Gentiles]

[Acts 9:20 Paul proclaims Jesus in the synagogues]

[Acts 10:36 Peter preaches to Cornelius house peace by Jesus who is Lord of all]

[Acts 10:42-43 Peter says the disciples were commanded to preach and testify that Jesus is the one ordained by God to judge the living and dead and that those who believe in him receive forgiveness of sins through his name]

Acts 8:26-35 Ethiopian Eunuch is reading from Isaiah and wondering about Isa 53:7-8 about the sheep led to slaughter who didn't open his mouth and whose life was taken away from the earth. He's not sure whether the prophet is speaking about himself or someone else. Philip explains by proclaiming the good news of Jesus.

Acts 9:16 God tells Ananias that Paul will have to suffer for the sake of his name.

Acts 9:23-25 Jews in Damascus plot to kill Paul, so he escapes.

Acts 10:39-41 Peter tells Cornelius' house that the people killed Jesus but God raised him on the third day.
[Acts 11:19 Those who were scattered because of persecution spoke the word]

Acts 12:1-5 Early church persecuted, John's brother James is killed, and Peter is imprisoned

[Acts 12:24 The word of God continued to advance and gain adherents]

[Acts 13:4 Paul and Barnabas proclaimed the word of God]

Acts 13:26-41 Paul preaches the story of Israel and Jesus, that those who did not recognize the words of the prophets killed Jesus and when they carried out everything that was written about him God raised him from the dead, which fulfilled Ps 2:7, Isa 55:3, and Ps 16:10. In contrast with David who died and remains dead, God raised up Jesus.

[Acts 13:46 It was necessary for the word of God to be proclaimed to Jews first]

[Acts 13:48-49 The word of the Lord was proclaimed to Gentiles and spread throughout the region]

[Acts 14:3 Paul and Barnabas spoke the word of God's grace]

[Acts 14:7 Paul and Barnabas proclaimed the good news]

Acts 14:22 Paul and Barnabas strengthened the disciples saying that it is through many persecutions that they must enter the kingdom of God.

[Acts 14:25 Paul and Barnabas spoke the word in Perga]

[Acts 15:7 Peter testifies that God sent him to give the message of the good news to Gentiles]

[Acts 15:35 Paul and Barnabas proclaimed the word of the Lord in Antioch]

[Acts 15:36 Paul and Barnabas considered revisiting all the cities where they proclaimed the word of the Lord]

[Acts 16:6 The Spirit forbids Paul and Silas from speaking the word in Asia]

[Acts 16:10 Paul and Silas proclaimed the good news in Macedonia]

[Acts 16:17 A possessed slave girl cried out the Paul and Silas proclaim a way of salvation]

[Acts 16:32 Paul and Silas spoke the word of God to the Philippian jailer and his house]

Acts 17:1-3 Paul and Silas taught in synagogue that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and rise from the dead.

[Acts 17:13 Paul proclaimed the word of God in Beroea]

Acts 17:31 An altar to an unknown God sermon, Paul explains that God fixed a day to judge the world by an appointed man, and he assured us of this by raising him from the dead.

[Acts 18:5 In Corinth Paul was proclaiming the word in the synagogue, testifying that Jesus was the Messiah]

[Acts 18:11 Paul stayed in Corinth a year and six months teaching the word of God]

[Acts 18:28 Apollos refuted Jews and showed from Scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus]

[Acts 19:8 Paul argued persuasively about the kingdom of God in Ephesus]

[Acts 19:10 The residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord from Paul's lectures]

[Acts 19:20 The word of the Lord grew in Ephesus]

[Acts 20:24 Paul's tells Ephesian elders that his ministry was to testify to the good news of God's grace]

[Acts 20:25 Paul explains to the Ephesian elders that he went about proclaiming the kingdom]

Acts 25:19 Festus explains to King Agrippa that the Paul issue was a Jewish in-house debate about a Jesus who died and who Paul claimed to be alive.

Acts 26:22-23 Paul tells Agrippa that, according to the prophets and Moses, the Messiah must suffer and that by being the first to rise from the dead he would proclaim light to both Jews and Gentiles.

[Acts 28:23 In Rome Paul was testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus from the law of Moses and the prophets]

[Acts 28:30-31 Paul continued in Rome proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ]

Sin in Acts

Acts 2:38 Be baptized so your sins may be forgiven

Acts 3:19 Repent and turn to God so your sins may be wiped out

Acts 5:31 God exalted Jesus to his right hand so he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins

Acts 7:60 Stephen cries while dying, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them"

Acts 10:43 Prophets testify that all who believe in Jesus receive forgiveness of sins *through his name* [not his death!]

Acts 13:38-39 Through Jesus forgiveness of sins is proclaimed for those who believe are set free from those sins from which they could not be freed by the law of Moses

Acts 22:16 Paul recounts his calling when he was told "Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name"

Acts 26:18 People must turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, so they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those sanctified by faith in Jesus

Conclusions from Acts

* It was the people who killed Jesus, but God raised him (2:23-28; 2:29-36; 3:13-15; 4:10-11; 13:26-41)

* Though the Jews and others killed Jesus, it fulfilled the prophecies and other Scriptures that the Messiah would suffer (3:13-18; 4:23-31; 13:26-41; 26:22-23)

* It was necessary for the messiah to suffer and rise from the dead (17:1-3)

* The resurrection of Jesus from the dead accredited him as God's appointed one and the judge of the world (17:31) and enabled him to proclaim light to Jews and Gentiles (26:22-23)

* Jesus fulfills the suffering servant motif in Isaiah 53:7-8 (8:26-35)

* Jesus' followers participate in suffering, persecution, and death like Jesus (4:23-31; 12:1-5; 14:22)

* The unique witness of the Apostles revolved around the resurrection (1:21-22; 4:33)

* No passage about sin or forgiveness is connected to Jesus' death. Instead it is connected to baptism (2:38; 22:16), repentance (3:19; 5:3; 26:18), the intercession of the exalted Christ (5:31; 7:60), and calling on Jesus' name—which also ties into his exaltation (10:43).

* No passage that concisely summarized the proclamation or message of the apostles focused on his death.

Instead they focused on the word (8:4), the word of God (13:46), the word of the Lord (13:48-49), the gospel/the good news (8:25), the kingdom (20:25), the resurrection (4:33), Jesus (9:20), the messiahship of Jesus (5:42), the name of Jesus (8:12), peace through Jesus (10:36), judgement by and forgiveness through Jesus (10:42-43), and God's grace (14:3).

Big Picture Points from Synoptics and Acts

- * Jesus had to die, we're not often told why, but God saw it coming, Jesus saw it coming, and it fulfills the Scriptures, especially Isaiah's servant songs.
- * Jesus had to die because he upset the social-political-religious order. His kingdom posed a threat to the powers that be because it did an end-run around them and will ultimately demote and then supplant them. Jesus' followers will follow suit.
- * Jesus' blood inaugurated the new covenant, which involved forgiving Israel's sins of breaking the old covenant
- * Ransom language is used, but not in the traditional way
- * Acts most often speaks of Jesus' death to set up the fact that God raised Jesus and placed a lot more emphasis on what it means that Jesus is raised.
- * Nowhere do we read about Jesus' death taking our place, satisfying God's wrath, restoring an imbalanced moral order, doing away with everyone's sin, or referred to as a shorthand way of referring to the apostles and early church's proclamation or teaching.
- * Going forward we will pay attention to what other authors add to this tradition.

Gospel of John

John 1:29 Doesn't mention Jesus' death but calls him the "lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"

John 2:19-22 While cleansing the temple Jews asked Jesus for a sign and he told them if they destroy this temple, in three days he will raise it up, which John tells us was about his body and the disciples connected these dots after he rose from the dead.

John 3:14-15 Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, the Son of Man must be lifted up that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

John 3:16 God gave his only son so everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life

John 5:16-18 Jews started persecuting Jesus because he healed a man on the sabbath, but they sought to kill him all the more because he called God his own father, thereby making himself equal with God.

John 6:51 Jesus says that the bread that he will give for the life of the world is his flesh and then goes on to tell them to eat his flesh and drink his blood, though he never mentions his death

John 7:1 Jesus went to Galilee and avoided Judea because Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him

John 7:6 Jesus remarks that his time has not yet come in the context of why he should avoid Jerusalem where they are trying to kill him

John 7:19-20 Jesus asks the Jews in the temple why they are looking for an opportunity to kill him, then they ask who is trying to kill him and accuse him of having a demon

John 7:25 Crowds in Jerusalem ask if Jesus is the one they are trying to kill since he was speaking openly and no one was saying anything to him

John 7:30 As Jesus was teaching in the temple about the one who sent him, they were trying to arrest him but no one laid hands on him because his hour had not yet come

John 7:32-33 Pharisees and temple priests sent temple police to arrest Jesus and he tells the people that he will be with them a little longer and then he will go to the one who sent him and they will look for him but will not be able to find him because where he is going they cannot come

John 7:43-45 Crowds were debating who Jesus was and some wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, so the chief priests and Pharisees ask the temple police why they haven't arrested him and they say no one has spoken like this

John 8:20 Again Jesus taught about his unique connection to the Father in the temple, but no one arrested him since his hour had not yet come

John 8:28 Jesus says to the Pharisees that when they have lifted up the Son of Man, then they will realize that he is the one sent from the Father

John 8:37 Jesus tells certain Jews that they are looking for an opportunity to kill him because they reject his word

John 8:40 Jesus again tells the Jews that they are trying to kill him

John 8:58-59 After Jesus claimed to be before Abraham, the Jews picked up stones to throw at him

John 10:11, 15 Jesus says he is the good shepherd and lays down his life for the sheep

John 10:17-18 Jesus says the Father loves him because he lays down his life in order to take it up again, and no one takes it from him, but he lays it down of his own accord because he has the power to lay it down and take it up again – he has received this command from his Father

John 10:29-39 Jesus claimed to be one with the Father, so the Jews took up stones to stone him, then he talks them down and escapes from their hands before they can arrest him

John 11:45-53 After the Pharisees hear about the raising of Lazarus they call a council to discuss what to do with Jesus because if all the Jews come to believe the Romans will come and destroy their holy place and the nation. Caiaphas who was serving as HP said that it would be better for one man to die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed – this was a prophecy that Jesus would die for the nation and to gather the dispersed people into one – and from that day forward they planned to put him to death

John 11:57 As Passover drew near, the chief priests and Pharisees ordered that anyone who knew where Jesus was must tell them so they could arrest him

John 12:7 Jesus rebukes Judas for questioning Mary's oil on his feet and says she bought it for the day of his burial

John 12:9-10 Jews were trying to kill Lazarus because people believed Jesus on account of him

John 12:23 After the triumphal entry, Jesus says the hour has come for him to be glorified and that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it remains a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Then he declares that those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

John 12:27-33 Jesus indicates that his hour has come, that the ruler of this world will be driven out, that when he is lifted up from the earth he will draw all people to himself, which indicates the kind of death he would die.

John 13:1 Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father

John 13:3 Jesus knew that the father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God – so he washed the disciples' feet

John 14:30-31 Jesus tells his followers that he won't be with them much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he has no power over Jesus, and Jesus does what the Father has commanded so the world may know that he loves the Father

John 15:12-13 Jesus tells his disciples to love one another and there is no greater love than laying down one's life for one's friends

John 15:18—16:4 Jesus warns his disciples that the world will hate them because they hated him first and just as it persecuted him it will persecute them. The disciples will be thrown out of synagogues and an hour is coming when they will kill the disciples thinking they are worshipping God, but they don't know the Father – Jesus wanted to tell the disciples in advance before their persecutors' hour comes, so they might remember.

John 16:5-7 Disciples are sad that Jesus will leave them, but if he does not go away, then the advocate will not come; but if he goes he will send the advocate to them.

John 16:16-24 Jesus tells them that in a little while they will no longer see him, then after a little while more they will, but they didn't understand. So he explains that in a little while they will not see him and mourn like a woman in labor (when her hour comes), but then a while later they will rejoice like a woman who has given birth – after that time, when they ask the Father for anything in his name, it will be given and their joy will be complete.

John 17:1-5 The hour has come for the son to be glorified, but he clarifies that the Father will glorify him in his own presence with the glory he had in the Father's presence before the world existed.

John 18-19 The arrest and crucifixion of Jesus

John 18:11 Jesus tells Peter after he strikes a servant's ear that he will drink the cup the Father has given him.

John 18:14 Restatement that Caiaphas is the one who said it is better to have one person die for the people

John 19:7 The Jews tell Pilate that Jesus must die because they have a law that he ought to die because he claimed to be the Son of God.

John 19:12 Jews tell Pilate that if he releases Jesus he is no friend of the emperor because anyone who claims to be king sets himself against the emperor.

John 21:18 Jesus tells Peter about Peter's future death and how it will glorify God.

Conclusions from John's Gospel

- * Jesus' death for the people is the will of the Father (John 10:17-18; 18:11), it has an appointed time/hour (John 7:6), and Jesus voluntarily accepts it and makes decisions in light of it (John 10:17-18).
- * Jesus died for the nation and for dispersed Jews (John 11:45-53).
- * The Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus for two reasons: he claims a connection to God that they deem blasphemous (John 5:16-18; 8:58-59; 19:7), and they are concerned that if Jews come to believe him the Romans will feel threatened and come to smash the temple and nation (John 11:45-53; 19:12).
- * Jesus' followers can expect to experience the same kind of rejection and death that Jesus did (John 15:18—16:4; 21:18)
- * Jesus is called the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the *world*, but does not overtly mention his death (John 1:29); for God so loved the *world* he gave his son, no overt statement about his death (John 3:16); Jesus says that his flesh is for the *world*, no overt statement of his death (John 6:51); Jesus does what the Father has commanded so the world would know he loves the Father, but again no overt statement about his death (John 14:30-31)
- * Salvation/eternal life comes from belief that Jesus is God's messenger, the one Israel was expecting, and that he rose from the dead—and people will come to believe fully after he is “lifted up,” which refers sometimes to the crucifixion or the ascension or both. (John 3:14-16)
- * Though Jesus anticipates dying his focus is more on what happens after he dies than on what his death itself accomplishes (John 12:23) including his returning to the Father (John 13:1), being glorified (John 17:1-5), sending another Advocate to be with his followers (John 16:5-7), interceding on behalf of the disciples and completing their joy (John 16:16-24)
- * The ruler of this world is associated with Jesus' impending death (John 12:27-33; 14:30-31), but this ruler has no power over Jesus and is somehow driven out by what happens.

Romans

Rom 1:4 Jesus was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.

Rom 3:22b-26 “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.” [God's motive here is grace, gift to show forbearance as he passes over sins previously committed – nothing about wrath being satisfied or a debt paid to some creditor – this gift exchange is emphasized in 4:4-8 where Paul says works have to do with something due and are not reckoned as a gift, but God's salvation is a gift, iniquities are simply forgiven and sins covered so the Lord does not reckon sin where it is deserved]

Rom 4:24-25 “it will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to *death for our trespasses* and was *raised for our justification*”

Rom 5:4 “God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”
NOTE: this sounds like moral theory of atonement, but is tied to giving of Spirit not death of Jesus

Rom 5:6 “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”

Rom 5:8 “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us”

Rom 5:9-21 “Now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more

surely having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation, therefore just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned—sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned where there is no law...for if the man died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many...if, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Therefore, just as the one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous...so that just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." NOTE: The emphasis here is not on God's anger being appeased, but Jesus living a life of obedience and righteous on our behalf. We are saved by his righteous, obedient, life, not his substitutionary death. Because of Jesus we receive gift and grace. There is still a connection to the sacrificial system in v. 9. We are justified by his blood and saved from God's wrath. But wrath here appears to be end time judgment, which we deserve because of our sin. But like the pure animals of old, the righteous life of Jesus stands in for us. It doesn't say Jesus experienced God's wrath so we don't have to.

Rom 6:3-14 We who are baptized into Christ were baptized into his death, so we are buried into death so that as he was raised from the dead we might walk in newness of life. Being raised from the dead, death no longer has dominion over Jesus. He died to sin once and for all and so we like he must be dead to sin and alive to God in him such that sin has no dominion over us since we are under grace and not law.

Rom 6:23 Wages of sin is death; free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom 7:4 We died to the law through the body of Christ, so that we belong to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God.

Rom 8:3 The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh could not do, by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but the Spirit.

Rom 8:11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you"

Rom 8:16-17 "we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him"

Rom 8:32 "He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?"

Rom 8:32 "Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who did, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us"

Rom 10:9 "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." NOTE: nothing about his death! We don't believe that he died for our sins, we believe that he is the Lord accredited by God through resurrection and seated at God's right hand to rule over his kingdom!

Rom 13:7-9, 15 “We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living...[so] do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died.”

Romans Conclusions

- * As a gift of grace, God overlooks generations of sins and atones for them through the blood of Jesus. All that he requires of the recipients of his gift is faith. (3:22-26...4:4-8)
- * Jesus died *for our transgressions* and was raised *for our justification* (4:24-25). NOTE: many people collapse the accomplishments of the resurrection and ascension into the cross, where the NT appears to distinguish between them in various ways.
- * God demonstrates his love for us on the cross (5:8)
- * We were justified through the lifeblood of Jesus, which enables us to escape God’s wrath – it is not God’s wrath on Jesus, but what Jesus does to allow us to escape the wrath to come upon this world at the second coming (5:9-21)
- * It is Jesus’ obedience and righteousness that allows the gift of his life to deal with our transgressions as an act of God’s grace; God does not make him the epitome of our sin so that he can vent his wrath on Jesus instead of us. The logic, like that of the OT sacrificial system is that the offering represents the good, the right, the pure, the best, which serves as a deposit for the good life we fail to live for God (Rom 5:9-21)
- * Jesus’ death and resurrection serves a pattern for our transition from old life to new life (6:3-14)
- * In dying Jesus dealt a death blow to sin that we may walk in newness of life (8:3)
- * Jesus’ death led to his exaltation so he can intercede for us (8:32)

1 Corinthians

1 Cor 1:13 Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Cor 1:17-18 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power. For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Cor 1:23-29 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

1 Cor 2:5 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

1 Cor 2:7-8 We speak God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Cor 5:6-7 Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1 Cor 8:11 by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed

1 Cor 10:16 The cup or blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ.

1 Cor 11:23-28 This is my body that is for you, this cup is the new covenant in my blood...for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes

1 Cor 15:3-5 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

1 Cor 15:12-14 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. NOTE: their proclamation seems to rely on the resurrection and not so much on the death.

1 Cor 15:15-22 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those who have died in Christ have perished. IF for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. NOTE: the whole point here is that our coming to life is riding more on Christ being raised than on him dying for us. If salvation were all about him dying on our behalf and God accepting that trade, then our faith and death is not in vain. Something seems to be riding on his resurrection as the event that affects our resurrection and not his death. His death alone does not do it, so any atonement theory must incorporate what the resurrection contributes.

1 Cor 15:57 Thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ ☐ probably pointing to his resurrection (vv. 12-17, 20-22)

1 Corinthians Summary

- * Christ's death was "for" us (1:13; 8:11); for our sins (15:3-5)
- * The cross of Christ is part of a divine wisdom by which God overcomes the world (1:17-18, 23-29; 2:5)
- * Christ is described as the sacrificed paschal lamb (5:6-7)
- * Believers share (*koinonia*) in the body and blood of Christ (10:16) – not mere benefactors
- * Christ's blood enacted a new covenant (11:23-28)
- * Most of ch. 15 focuses on the nature of the resurrection, which builds on the fact of Jesus death. In fact, his death would not be enough were it not for his resurrection (15:12-14) – this at least requires more than a substitution to appease God's wrath because death would suffice.

2 Corinthians

2 Cor 1:5 Just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so our consolation is abundant through Christ

2 Cor 4:8-12 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

2 Cor 5:14-15 For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

2 Cor 5:18-21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Cor 12:10 Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Cor 13:4 For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

2 Corinthians Summary

- * Strong connection between Christ's death and life being carried in our bodily life (4:8-12; cf. 12:10; 13:4)
- * Christ died for all so all might live for him, which should urge us on (5:14-15) moral influence
- * After saying that in Christ God does not hold our trespasses against us, Paul says, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (5:18-21) – I'm assuming the first use of sin is "sin offering"

Galatians

Gal 1:1-4 To the churches of Galatia: Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father

Gal 2:19—3:1 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do nothing to nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing. You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified!

Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"

Gal 3:27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ

Gal 6:12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

Gal 6:14-15 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but new creation is everything!

Gal 6:17 From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

Galatians Summary

- * Jesus gives himself for our sins to set us free from this present evil age (1:1-4)
- * Jesus' death justifies us in a way that the law could not (2:19—3:1)
- * Jesus redeems us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse and hanging on a tree (3:13)
- * Through the cross of Christ the world has been crucified to us and us to the world (6:14-15)

Ephesians

Eph 1:6-8 to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us.

Eph 1:20 God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

Eph 2:1-9 We were dead through sin...children of wrath...but God when we were dead through our trespasses made us alive together with Christ—by grace we were saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Eph 2:13-16 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility though it.

Eph 4:8-13 When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive and gave gifts to his people—which also involved him descending to the lower parts of the earth—so he ascended far above all the heavens so he may fill all things, giving the church various gifts/leaders to equip the saints for the work for ministry til we reach the measure of the full stature of Christ.

Eph 5:2 live in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands love wives like Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy by washing of water in the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle, etc.

Ephesians Summary

- * Through Jesus' blood we have redemption and forgiveness according to grace (1:6-8) – this echoes Romans which emphasizes that it is by grace the blood of Jesus does this for us as opposed to satisfying God's law (whether of the Torah type or some cosmic scales that need balanced). This grace economy is also emphasized in 2:1-9.
- * On the cross Christ broke down the wall between Jews and Gentiles, killed the enmity between them, and created a new humanity (2:13-16).
- * Christ gave himself up for us as a sacrifice (5:2) that makes us holy by washing of water in the word (5:25-27)
- * The ascension is also identified as the event by which Christ triumphs over all things (1:20-23), raises us up to be with him (2:1-9), and lavishes gifts upon the church (4:8-13).

Philippians

Phil 1:29 For he has granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well.

Phil 2:8-11 He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore, God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Phil 3:18 Some are enemies of the cross of Christ, but they are described not as being *against* atonement, but *for* a life of worldly ambition.

Philippians Summary

- * Christ's death demonstrated his obedience to the father, which is why God exalted him above all (2:8-11)
- * Enemies of the cross are not those who deny its atoning power but those who choose a life of worldly ambition. The cross thus represents a way of life to which God calls his people (Phil 3:18) – this builds on both 2:8-11 and 1:29, the latter of which calls us not just to believe in Christ but to suffer for him.

Colossians

Col 1:12—14 Giving thanks to the Father...he has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins [no mention of how, perhaps v. 20]

Col 1:20-23 Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven.

Col 1:24 I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.

Col 2:12-15 When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demand. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

Col 2:20 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations?

Col 3:1-5 So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly...

Col 3:9-10 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

Colossians Summary

- * Christ reconciled all things to himself and made peace through the cross, which includes reconciling to himself those who were estranged to present them as irreproachable before him as long as we remain faithful (1:20-23).
- * Paul's suffering completes what is lacking in Christ's afflictions (1:24)
- * God forgave us all our trespasses, erased the record that stood against us with its legal demand, and set it aside by nailing it to the cross. He also disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it (2:12-15).

1 Thessalonians

1 Thess 1:10 We “wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us [present tense] from the wrath that is coming” [This is not about Jesus death but his rescue of us is a present action not a past one in this passage]

1 Thess 2:14-15 These believers imitated other churches who suffered persecution from the Jews who killed Jesus and the prophets

1 Thess 3:3-4 Encouragement through persecutions that Christians are destined for

1 Thess 4:14 “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died”

1 Thess 5:9-10 “For God destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him”

2 Thessalonians *Nothing about the death of Jesus*

1 Timothy

1 Tim 2:5 “For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all—this was attested at the right time”

2 Timothy

2 Tim 1:8-12a “Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, *who saved us* and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but *according to his own purpose and grace*. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus *before the ages began*, but it has now been *revealed through the appearing* of our Savior Christ Jesus, *who abolished death and brought life and immortality* to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do.

2 Tim 2:3 “Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus”

2 Tim 2:8-9 “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship”

2 Tim 2:11-13 “If we have died with him, we will live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself”

2 Tim 3:12 “Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted”

Titus

Titus 2:11-14 “For the *grace of God has appeared*, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.”

Titus 3:5 God saved us “through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” [This is not about his death, but Jesus is the agent of our salvation by other means]

Philemon

Phlm 1:9 Paul refers to himself as a prisoner of Jesus Christ

Nothing about the death of Jesus

Hebrews

Heb 1:3 Talks about Jesus making purification for sins before sitting at God’s right hand. This anticipates a later passage that indicates that Jesus does this after dying and ascending and taking his blood into the heavenly tabernacle (9:11-14, 24-26)

Heb 2:9 Jesus was crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death so he might *taste* death for everyone. IMPT – he doesn’t face death for us, but tastes it for us, which we later see makes him sympathetic to our plight and thus able to serve as our ultimate high priest (2:17-18).

Heb 2:10 Jesus was made perfect through suffering, which establishes a oneness between us and him so he can pioneer the salvation path for us

Heb 2:14 Jesus shared flesh and blood with us so that through death he might (a) destroy the one who has the power of death, the devil, and (b) free us from the fear of death

Heb 2:17-18 Jesus became like us in every respect so he can be a merciful high priest on our behalf to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of people.

Heb 5:7 In his flesh Jesus cried out to the one who was able to save him from death and was heard because of his reverent submission

Heb 5:8 Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered and having been made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Heb 6:6 Those who tasted the goods of salvation and fall away can’t be restored since “on their own” they are crucifying again the Son of God and holding him up to contempt. HMM... they are not crucifying him again in the sense of sending him to die once more since they don’t get saved in this passage, he doesn’t die again for their sins... so it seems they crucify him again in the sense that they are walking back their experience of Christ, walking back his crucifixion as if he never died on their behalf. It’s like their faith is rewinding itself in such a way that Jesus leaves the heavenly throne, returns to the grave, and ends up on the cross all over again. This may make sense of the odd phrase “on their own.”

Heb 7:16 Jesus becomes priest through the power of an indestructible life; that is, from an ultimate perspective, death died that day, not Jesus!

Heb 7:23-25 Former priests are prevented by death from holding the priesthood permanently, but Jesus is the permanent priest because he continues forever and is always there to make intercession for them.

Heb 7:27-28 Jesus does not need to offer sacrifices daily first for his own sin and then for others because he did this once and for all when he offered himself.

Heb 9:11-14 Christ entered the perfect heavenly tent with the blood that he offered to God which purified our conscience from dead works to worship the living God

Heb 9:24-28 Christ entered heaven once and for all to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself, he offered himself once to bear the sins of many, so when he returns it will not be to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Heb 10:10 We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once and for all.

Heb 10:12-14, 18 Christ offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, then sat at the right hand of God, and since then has been waiting for his enemies to be made his footstool. And that single offering has perfected for all time those who are sanctified and where there is forgiveness of sins there is no longer any offering for sin.

Heb 10:19 The blood of Jesus gives us confidence to enter the sanctuary by the new and living way he made for us through his body, so we can approach God with full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with water.

Heb 10:26-29 Punishment awaits those who spurn the Son of God, profane the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outrage the Spirit of grace by willfully persisting in sin

Heb 10:32-34 In earlier days the Hebrews endured suffering and persecution

Heb 11:32-40 Great heroes of faith endured great suffering, persecution, and death with the hope of God ahead of them, but have not received the promise because they would not be made perfect apart from us.

Heb 12:2 For the sake of the joy that was set before him, Christ endured the cross, disregarded its shame, has taken his seat at God's right hand. NOTE: nothing here about enduring God's punishment or wrath. Rather he faced human means of shaming people for the good that awaited him on the other side.

Heb 12:22-24 We don't approach God at the trembling mountain of Sinai but the heavenly Jerusalem, with festive angels, etc and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant and the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. KEY: the sprinkled blood is the blood Moses sprinkled on the people when making the old covenant and Jesus sprinkled in the heavenly tabernacle to make a new covenant. This points to the function of the blood being what it does for us in the heavenly tabernacle and not how it satisfied God's wrath on the cross.

Heb 13:12-13 Jesus suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood, so let us go outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured.

Heb 13:20-21 May God by the blood of the eternal covenant make us complete in everything good so we may do his will

Conclusions from Hebrews

- * By offering his own life and blood Jesus made purification (1:3) and atonement for sin (2:17-18). These are big picture summary statements. But where, how, and by what logic? For this, we need other passages to provide details.
- * Jesus' death obviously happened on the cross, but Hebrews is explicit that the atonement happened somewhere else—in 9:11-14, 24—the heavenly tabernacle.
- * Jesus' atoning work accomplishing many things:
 - Removes, bears up, deals with sin (9:24-28)
 - Forgives sin (10:18)
 - Sanctifies and perfects us (10:10, 12-14)
 - Gives us confidence to approach God with a clean conscience (Heb 10:19)
 - Frees us from the fear of death and destroys the one who has the power of death (Heb 2:14)
 - Mediated a new covenant with his sprinkled blood – this alludes to the blood Moses sprinkled on the people when making the old covenant (Exod 24:6-8) and the blood Jesus sprinkled in the heavenly tabernacle to make a new covenant. This points to the function of the blood being what it does for us in the heavenly tabernacle, not how it satisfied God's wrath on the cross. (Heb 12:22-24)
 - Makes us complete in everything good so we may do God's will (Heb 13:20-21)
- * Jesus became flesh, learned obedience, suffered, and tasted death to become a perfect high priest by virtue of being able *to relate to us* in our suffering and death (Heb 2:9-10, 17-18; 5:8)
- * Jesus became priest through the power of an indestructible life, which means that “death” died on the cross more so than Jesus! (Heb 7:16)
- * Christ endured the cross for the joy set before him – nothing about facing God's wrath on our behalf (Heb 12:2)

James

Jas 1:2-4 Believers should consider trials a source of joy because it tests their faith and produces maturity

Jas 5:10 As an example of suffering a patience consider the prophets who spoke in God's name

Jas 5:15-20 The forgiveness of sins is tied to praying for one another and bringing sinners back from their wandering, which can save their souls from death and cover a multitude of sins

Conclusions from James

- * Death of Jesus not talked about, not even where forgiveness of sins is mentioned
- * For believers, suffering is not entirely negative (1:2-4)
- * Forgiveness of sins is tied to believers interceding for one another (5:15-20)

1 Peter

1 Pet 1:2 Exiled believers have been chosen by God and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus and sprinkled with his blood [Is this about incorporation into the new covenant?]

1 Pet 1:3 We have been given new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead

1 Pet 1:6-7 Rejoice in suffering trials because our faith will result in glory when Christ is revealed

1 Pet 1:10-11 Prophets inquired in advance into the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory

1 Pet 1:18-23 We were ransomed from our futile ways inherited from our ancestors “with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish...whom God raised from the dead and gave

glory so our faith and hope are set on God and our souls are purified by obedience to the truth so we may love one another truly from the heart.

1 Pet 2:21-23 Because Christ suffered for us, he left an example that we should follow in his steps – suffering for doing right, not for doing wrong—and so he entrusted himself to God.

1 Pet 2:24-25 Jesus bore our sins in his body on the cross. So that free from sins we might live for righteousness, by his wounds we have been healed (echoing Isa 53:5), for we were going astray like sheep but have returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls.

1 Pet 3:17-22 It is better to suffer for good than for evil, for Christ suffered for sins once and for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God...Baptism now saves us, not the removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus who ascended to heaven at God's right hand with all powers made subject to him.

1 Pet 4:1 Since Christ suffered in the flesh, have the same intention, for who has suffered in the flesh is finished with sin and can live the rest of their lives by the will of God, not human desires.

1 Pet 4:8 Love one another because love covers a multitude of sins

1 Pet 4:12-19 Don't be surprised by suffering, but rejoice in sharing in Christ's sufferings because we are blessed and glorified by God.

1 Pet 5:1 Peter was a witness to the sufferings of Christ

1 Pet 5:8-10 Resist the devil who seeks to devour us, but keep alert because believers around the world continue to suffer, and God will call all of us into his eternal glory

1 Peter Conclusions

- * Being sprinkled with Christ's blood is ambiguous, could be a new covenant thing (1:2)
- * Our new birth is tied to resurrection (1:2)
- * Sufferings and glorification of Christ anticipated in prophets (1:10-11)
- * Ransomed from our former life by the blood of Jesus coupled with his resurrection and purified by our obedience to the truth. (1:18-23)
- * Christ's suffering is a model for us (2:21-23)
- * On cross Jesus bore our sins, freed us from sin, and healed us (2:21-23; echoing Isa 53:5); NOTE: I am beginning to wonder whether the servant songs are the original category for processing the suffering of Jesus on our behalf rather than some forensic or substitutionary model – and this was grounded in an early church apologetic that sought to make sense of the Messiah's apparent failure, especially Acts. In other words, the early church's theologizing on the cross of Christ had less to do with atonement theory and more to do with God's approach to redeeming Israel's role in God's plan to direct the course of global salvation history.

2 Peter

Nothing about the death of Jesus, and when salvation is talked about, it is done in terms of divine power and human faithfulness (1:3-11).

Johannine Letters

1 John

1 John 1:7 If we walk in the light we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 2:1-2 If we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus, who is the atoning sacrifice for our sins and for the whole world.

1 John 3:4-8 Jesus was revealed to take away sin, all who sin are children of the devil, but Jesus was revealed to destroy the works of the devil. No mention of Jesus' death here, but this appears to presume 1:7 and 2:1-2, so this passage adds that what Jesus did to deal with sin is connected with his destroying the works of the devil

1 John 3:16 We know love because Jesus laid down his life for us and so we ought to lay down our lives for one another

1 John 4:10-11 In this is love, that God loved us and sent his son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Since God loves us in this way we should love one another.

2 John – n/a

3 John – n/a

Conclusions from John's Letters

* Jesus' blood cleanses us from sin (1 John 1:7)

* Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins and those of the world (1 John 2:1-2; 4:10)

* In dealing with sin, Jesus destroyed the works of the devil (1 John 3:4-8)

* The love God showed us by sending Jesus and the love Jesus showed in dying for our sins should compel Christians to love one another (1 John 3:16; 4:10-11)

*** We are not told how Jesus' death deals with our sins, but it is analogous to OT atonement

Jude

No mention of the death of Jesus – the closest we have is Jude 24-25 “Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord” [What stands out is the tense – it is present/future, not past – as if it is through Jesus' current work on our behalf, perhaps as mediator, that we can remain standing]

Revelation

Rev 1:5-6 Jesus freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests serving God – not clear here that the blood makes us a kingdom, but the parallel in 5:9-10 suggests that it did.

Rev 1:7 When Jesus returns, those who pierced him will see him

Rev 1:9 John shares with his audience—in Jesus—persecution, and kingdom, and endurance

Rev 1:17-18 In John's vision, Jesus tells him that he was dead, but now lives forever and has the keys of Death and Hades – perhaps suggests that he took hold of these keys by dying and rising

Rev 2:9-11 The church in Smyrna will suffer persecution and are called to be faithful until death so they may receive the crown of life; and those who conquer in this way will not be harmed by the second death.

Rev 5:6-10 The slaughtered lamb was worthy to open the scroll because he was slaughtered, and by his blood he ransomed for God saints from every tribe, tongue, and nation and made them a kingdom and priests serving God. IMPT: Jesus' death inaugurated our priestly service, like the Levites' act on the gold calf worshippers made them God's priests.

Rev 5:11-12 Myriad angels surrounding God's throne sang, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." NOTE: Revelation places more emphasis on the death of Jesus than on his resurrection and ascension as in the Gospels. Probably to encourage some to be martyrs.

Rev 5:9-12 The souls of those slaughtered for the word of God cried to know how long until God avenges their blood on the earth's inhabitants and they are told to wait until the number to be killed is complete.

Rev 7:9-10, 13-17 Surrounding God's throne and before the Lamb are people from all tribes, nations, and languages wearing white robes singing about salvation belonging to God and the Lamb – these are those who came through the great ordeal and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, which made them white. IMPT: Jesus' blood whitens the robes of the martyrs who then receive a privileged place in God's throne room. It doesn't seem like it cleanses them from sin as much as anoints them with glory because they embraced death for his sake.

Rev 11:7-12 God's two witnesses prophesy 1260 days, the beast rises and kills them in the streets where their Lord was crucified, their bodies lay their exposed for 3 ½ days until a voice from heaven summons them up to heaven.

Rev 12:11 By the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony, the believers have conquered the great dragon/ancient serpent/devil/satan/deceiver of the world.

Rev 13:8 The book of life—filled with the names of those who did not worship the beast— belongs to the Lamb that was slaughtered.

Rev 13:10 If you are taken captive, go; if you kill with the sword [or are to be killed with the sword, diff GK, but the latter fits parallels in Jer 15:2 and 43:11 and is more likely as represented by NIV], you will be killed by it – this is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

Rev 16:4-6 An angel turns rivers into blood so those who shed the blood of the prophets and saints would be forced to drink blood because that is what they deserve.

Rev 17:5-6 Babylon the great, mother of whores and the earth's abominations, was drunk with the blood of the saints and the witnesses to Jesus

Rev 18:24 In Babylon the great was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slaughtered on the earth

Rev 19:1-2 A great multitude in heaven praises God for judging the great whore and avenging the blood of his servants.

Rev 19:11-16 The rider on the white horse is called Faith and True, the Word of God, King of kings and Lord of lords – he is clothed in a robe dipped in blood.

Rev 20:4-6 Those who were beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and didn't sell out come to life, reign with Christ a thousand years, and the second death has no power over them.

Rev 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes so they will have the right to the tree of life and the glorious city that descends from heaven.

Conclusions from Revelation

- * Jesus' blood frees us from our sins (Rev 1:5-6) – this is the only passage in Revelation connecting Jesus' death to sin
- * Through his death, Jesus gained the keys to Death and Hades (Rev 1:17-18)
- * Jesus' death made him worthy to receive all power and honor (Rev 5:11-12) – this book emphasizes his death and not his resurrection or ascension, perhaps because it is striving to inspire faithfulness in Christians that are dying for their faith and will be rewarded for it.
- * By his blood Jesus ransomed (*agorazo*) for God saints from every tribe, tongue, and nation (Rev 5:6-10) – we are not told who or what they were ransomed from, only that they are freed (*luw* or *louw*) for kingdom citizenship and priestly service (Rev 1:5-6). The word for ransom can simply mean to acquire or purchase. He could simply be recruiting or enlisting us from our old way of life and service to the kingdoms of this world.
- * By the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony, the believers conquer the great dragon/ancient serpent/devil/satan/deceiver of the world. (Rev 12:11)
- * Jesus' blood whitens the robes of the martyrs who participate in his persecution (Rev 1:9; 2:9- 11) and then receive a privileged place in God's throne room and coming kingdom. Here his blood does not cleanse them from sin as much as anoint them with glory because they embraced death for his sake. This is perhaps THE major theme of the book (Rev 7:9-10, 13-17; 20:4-6; 22:14)

SEVEN BIG PICTURE OBSERVATIONS ABOUT CHRIST'S DEATH
(based on a study of every NT passage)

1. Not an Isolated Event

- * Tied to the suffering of prophets of old
- * Tied to Christians going forward
- * Tied to Jesus' whole life, suffering, resurrection, and ascension
- * Tied to the Jews and the powers' rejection of and desire to kill Jesus
- * Tied to God's OT plan and thus fulfilled the prophecies of Scripture - Servant Songs
 - New Covenant
 - Day of Atonement
 - Sin Offering
 - Peace Offering
 - Passover Lamb
 - Exodus
 - Messianic Hope

2. God's Premeditated Gift

- * Demonstrates God's love
- * Showcases Christ's obedience
- * Displays God's grace
- * Transcends our unworthiness

3. Accredited Jesus

- * As judge of the world
- * As priest who mediates on our behalf
- * As Lord over all creation
- * As savior of all

4. God's Wisdom, Power, and Triumph Over All Oppositional Forces

- * Heavenly and earthly rulers and authorities
- * Sin and Death
- * The legal demands that condemn us
- * The present evil age
- * Worldly wisdom

5. Accomplishes for Believers/Israel/World

- * Forgiveness of sins
- * Purification from sins
- * Justification/Righteousness
- * Ransom (from our old lives and futile ways, for service to God)
- * Redemption (from iniquity, curse of the law)
- * Sanctification/Perfection
- * Healing
- * Freedom from death
- * Irreproachability
- * Anointing for glory
- * Reconciliation of all things to God
- * Breakdown walls between Jews and Gentiles
- * Peace with those once estranged from God

6. Enables Believers

- * To walk in newness of life
- * To be free from this world
- * To escape the wrath to come
- * To do God's will
- * To have a clean conscience before God

7. Compels Believers

- * To live for God
- * To love one another
- * To lay down our own lives for one another
- * To be zealous to do good deeds

EVALUATION OF ATONEMENT THEORIES

Christus Victor (Early Church; Anabaptist, popularized in 20th century by Gustaf Aulen)

- * Stresses the theme of Victory within a cosmic battle between good and evil, God and Satan
- * The cross was a struggle between Jesus and his enemies--Jesus appeared to have lost the battle.
- * The victory in this struggle is not simply that Christ died but that he also raised from the dead
- * This gained God's control over the universe and freed humans from the power of sin and Satan
- ** Evaluation: the victory and triumph over all forces in opposition to God is very strong, but it is not usually presented in dualistic terms as if there are two sides with two captains (God and Satan) and that God is constantly winning the battle. Rather God's victory is over all the negative forces that we face in this world due to sin (rulers, satan, sin, death, division, fear, etc.)

Ransom Theory: Irenaeus (dominated 2nd- 11th century, Anselm; Chronicles of Narnia)

- * Satan gained mastery over humanity when the first couple chose the path of sin in the garden.
- * Through death, Jesus' innocent life became the ransom price that was acceptable
- * Jesus outwitted the devil. The inherent injustice of taking an innocent life as a ransom is the basis on which Christ defeats Satan.
- ** Evaluation: Ransom language is used several times, but never in the context of Satan. Rather we were ransomed from our old way of life and futile ways and we were ransomed for service to God. The emphasis is our newfound freedom in Christ.

Substitutionary View: Anselm (11-12th century; Reformed/Calvinist)

- * Sin is humanity's failure to render to God what is rightfully due him, thus dishonoring God
- * Humans must restore to God what they have robbed him of and make reparations—but can't!
- * God has two options: punish humanity as they deserve or accept satisfaction on their behalf.
- * The predicament: no mere human has the resources to make satisfaction for the race.
- * So God became human to make satisfaction; as man, his satisfaction can be made on our behalf.
- ** Human sin is definitely the main problem and Jesus is central to the solution. But the logic is not that God requires someone to suffer for our sin and that Jesus endures God's deadly punishment on our behalf. The logic is more that Jesus deliberately joined in our suffering by becoming human, experienced this fallen reality with all of its negative dimensions alongside us, allowed sin to do its best to take him out, and won victory by rising above it in every way and being raised and exalted by God. Jesus' is our substitute insofar as he accomplished in his flesh what Israel and the church fail to accomplish in the fight against sin. God then accepts his victory on our behalf and allows us to share in his reward. But we don't merely accept his accomplishment; we enter into and participate in his suffering, death, and victory. There is thus mutual participation – Christ in our humiliation and death and us in his humiliation and glorification.

Moral Influence Theory: Peter Abelard (11th-12th century; Liberal/Schleiermacher)

- * Christ's work consists of demonstrating the amazing depth of God's love for sinful humanity.
- * There is nothing inherent in God that must be appeased before he is willing to forgive.
- * The problem lies in the sinful, hardened human heart, with its fear and ignorance of God. Humanity refuses to turn to God to be reconciled.
- * Through the incarnation and death of Jesus, the love of God shines like a beacon, beckoning humanity to come and fellowship.
- ** Evaluation: This is not a major theme, but there are a few verses that state that God's love for us should motivate us (e.g., 2 Cor 5:14-15). This view is right that it is not clear that God's must somehow be appeased before he is willing to forgive us, but it remains the case that God nonetheless chose to act decisively to vanquish sin and death in us and in the world.

Moral Government Theory: Hugo Grotius (16th-17th century; Wesleyan/Arminian)

- * God is both loving Creator and moral governor of the universe.
- * As loving Creator, God has no intrinsic need to punish us before forgiving us.
- * As just moral Governor, God cannot simply pass over human sins as if they were nothing.
- * In Christ's death, God shows us the seriousness of violating his law, which deters us from sin.
- * As long as sinners are deterred from sin, God has justly upheld his governing role.
- * Rather than punish humanity, God's hatred of sin is demonstrated by the suffering of Christ.
- ** Evaluation: This view is accurate in much of what it affirms, but the legal logic behind it does not appear to have strong NT support. It is not that God had to demonstrate his hatred of sin by making Jesus suffer; it is that God chose to overcome sin through the superior power of the suffering of Christ. The operative logic appears to be God's generosity and grace in the face of human rebellion. God wants good things for his creation and so he accomplishes them, which appears to satisfy his persistent loving intentions for his creation in the face of all obstacles.

Kaleidoscope View: Joel B. Green (*The Scandal of the Cross*, 2001)

- * The NT does not give us one view, but a variety of angles that provides something valuable
- ** Undeniably true, helpfully dethrones Penal Substitution, does not offer a tangibly new handle.

Narrative Christus Victor: J. Denny Weaver (*The Nonviolent Atonement*, 2001)

- * Locates the work of Christ in the wider arc of the Bible's story of establishing God's reign
- * Replaces a focus on Satan as the main enemy to all the brokenness of this world as the object of divine atonement
- * The cross was not God punishing Jesus to make the world right with God, but the powers killing Jesus for triumphing over them in the process of making the world right with God
- ** Evaluation: Does a good job of refining the Christus Victor theme, a major one in the NT

New Covenant Theory: Michael J. Gorman (*The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant*, 2014)

- * Distinguishes between the ultimate or comprehensive view of atonement and more familiar penultimate or partial views, which convey only snippets of the full view. Traditional theories focus too much on the mechanics of how Jesus' death atones for us and not the true nature of what his atonement accomplishes.
- * "Christ's death effects the new covenant, meaning specifically the creation of a new-covenant community of forgiven and reconciled disciples, inhabited and empowered by the Spirit to embody a new-covenant spirituality of cruciform loyalty to God and love for others, thereby participating in the life of God and in God's forgiving, reconciling, and covenanting mission to the world." (232)
- ** Evaluation: Does a good job of encompassing more of the various things Christ's death accomplished. Though "new covenant" language is used only a few times in relation to Jesus' death, it is the presumed context of the NT writings as a whole and so is always in the background.

Kingdom and Cross Theory: Jeremy R. Treat (*The Crucified King*, 2014)

- * Main goal is to bring together two concepts that have been kept separate to the detriment of atonement theories: kingdom (Jesus) and cross (Paul). The Bible is the story of a crucified Messiah who brings the kingdom through his atoning death on the cross.
- * The OT is the proper framework for understanding kingdom and cross – the OT promises find their fulfillment in the NT cross.
- * Kingdom and cross need not compete. They play complementary roles. Kingdom provides the *telos*, cross provides the center, cause, and critical turning point in the coming of the kingdom.
- ** Evaluation: Has many of the strengths of narrative Christus Victor insofar as it locates the cross in the wider biblical story of salvation. However, kingdom language is seldom used in conversations about the meaning of Jesus' death.

Themes that Require More Attention in Atonement Conversations

- * The suffering servant theme is prominent in the gospels and Acts, and when read contextually in light of the agenda of Isaiah it would highlight that the suffering and cross are central to how God advanced his kingdom purpose in unexpected ways through the power of weakness and gift rather than strength and coercion. This is part of what Paul highlights when contrasting the wisdom of the cross and the wisdom of the world. It encapsulates Jesus' ministry and life and the calling into which he invites us to participate first hand. Such participation is absent in many atonement theories, with the exception perhaps of Gorman's New Covenant approach.
- * There is an atonement logic at work in the OT sacrificial system that appears to be at work in several NT passages, but does not feature prominently in atonement conversations. That is, there is a sense in which the offering of a life lived rightly is able to purify and cleanse what has been soiled by sin in a variety of ways. As a blemishless animal's blood is able to cleanse the priest, tabernacle, and camp, so Jesus' perfect life is able to cleanse and even perfect Israel, the believer, the church, and the world so they may participate in God's salvation and newness of life. Older theories dabbled in this concept, but newer ones seem to migrate away from it.
- * The connection between the accomplishments of the cross and other events of Christ's life requires further elaboration. What some passages attribute to the death of Jesus others attribute to his suffering, resurrection, and/or ascension without mentioning the death. In other words, atonement theories should perhaps stop attempting to focus on the meaning of Jesus' death and begin to focus on the meaning of his life's work—beginning with his condescension or incarnation and ending with his ascension or exaltation above all at God's right hand. It is not clear that his death has a meaning independent of those other events such that we can isolate it from them and talk about its unique contributions to soteriology.
- * More refinement needs to be done with penal substitutionary theories of atonement. Whereas other theories may give only part of the story, this one may actually give inaccurate information that stands in tension with key components of the story. For instance, several of Paul's letters frame the work of Christ on our behalf with a logic of God's generous gift of grace. Yet this theory frames it as meeting a legal demand that somehow remains in effect in the universe. Paul makes clear that Christ nailed to the cross—along with sin, death, and enmity—alleged legal demands and our poor record of meeting them. Yet the notion of a substitute still has merit. Christ did what Israel, the church, and believers cannot do and he did so in order that we may share and participate in the victory he won in doing so. His life therefore stands in for ours in a positive way, not *to take the beating* for us but *to overcome* on behalf of us – as our champion, akin to how God fought Israel's battles for Israel in the OT.