

Vicarious Sacrifice:

1. This means that anyone who dies before reaching accountability is automatically saved as part of the doctrine of unlimited atonement. This doctrine explains how children are qualified to go to heaven.
2. David's response to the death of his first-born son with Bathsheba gives us the details. His servants were confused as to why David fasted and wept before the child died but, following his death, the king arose, bathed, put on royal attire, worshipped at the tabernacle, and then ordered his staff to prepare a meal. David's response is recorded in:

2 Samuel 12:22 - "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept for I said, 'Who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may live.'

v. 23 - "But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." (NASB)

3. The plan of salvation was so structured that all personal sins were never imputed to the individual, but to Jesus.
4. This does not ignore culpability on the part of the sinner. We are disciplined for our bad decisions and must also suffer the consequences associated with them including punishments imposed by human law and custom.
5. We are never judged for our sins. The judgment for our sins was taken away at the cross and imputed to Jesus Who was then judged in our place.
6. In eternity past, the wisdom of God recognizing our hopeless condition, devised a plan by which our sins were never imputed to us. This is documented in several passages:

2 Corinthians 5:19 - ... not imputing their sins to them ...

1 Peter 2:24 - He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - He [God] made Him [Jesus] Who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (NASB)

7. Since all men are condemned at birth, since all men's sins were imputed to Jesus on the cross, and then judged in Him, then we may conclude that atonement is unlimited.
8. In addition, the sacrifice that Jesus made was not through His physical death but His spiritual death during which He was imputed the sins of the world and judged for them.
9. The judgment of our sins in Christ resulted in the propitiation of the Father. No one's sins were withheld and imputed to any individual.
10. Therefore, under unlimited atonement, everyone may express personal faith in the Person and work of Christ for salvation.
11. Where five point Calvinists – or better stated, five-point Bèzaists – get off track is with the common and efficacious grace ministries of the Holy Spirit.

12. Common grace occurs at gospel hearing where the Holy Spirit acts as a human spirit. He interprets the supernatural information of the gospel and makes it clear to the spiritually dead unbeliever.
13. Efficacious grace occurs when the Holy Spirit, in response to the positive volition of the new believer, takes the faith of this spiritually dead person and makes it effective for salvation
14. Five-point Calvinists subscribe to an incorrect view of this process which they refer to as “irresistible grace.”
15. This rationale takes the erroneous position that the Holy Spirit’s efficacious grace works on the volition of the unbeliever rather than his faith.
16. In other words, the Holy Spirit is said to empower the volition of the individual to place his faith in Christ, whereas the correct idea is that the Holy Spirit responds to the faith expressed by the individual’s volition by saving him immediately.
17. Scripture has abundant passages informing us that salvation is the result of the unbeliever’s faith—a free will decision in response to the gospel:

Ephesians 2:8 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this salvation is not out from the source of yourselves, it is the free gift from the source of God;

v. 9 - not out from the source of works, so that no one should boast.

18. Because each member of the human race is spiritually dead when he hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit must take the person’s faith and make it effectual for salvation. He does not take his free will and manipulate it for the person to be saved.
19. Manipulation of a person’s free will instead of empowering his faith has led the five-point Calvinists to develop the erroneous doctrine of limited atonement.
20. Limitation applies only to those God chose in eternity past to receive the Holy Spirit’s empowerment of their volition to believe in Christ.
21. The rest are left in unbelief and characterized as “reprobate.”