

Vicarious Sacrifice: The Principle of Unlimited Atonement: The Calvinist Interpretation of the Pronoun “Whoever” in John 3:15 & 16; Ministries of the Holy Spirit at Salvation: Common & Efficacious Grace; Book of Life & Books of Works, Rev 20:11–12; Language of Accommodation.

26. The combat that defines human history is the struggle between the plan of God for salvation and the counterattack led by the satanic lie.
27. Jesus informs us that all that is required to acquire salvation is faith alone in Him:

John 3:16 - “God loved the world so much He gave [this is grace, no gift can be a gift that requires something on the part of the recipient] His uniquely-born Son, so that [ἵνα, *hina*: introduces both purpose and result] whoever believes in Him [this is the necessary condition to achieve the purpose and the result] shall not perish [purpose of believing: Nicodemus would be delivered from the lake of fire when he dies] but have eternal life [result of believing: Nicodemus would be imputed eternal life and would go to heaven when he dies].

28. This verse seems to be clear enough unless you imagine that the word “whoever,” the masculine singular of *πᾶς (pás)*, applies only to those whom God elected in eternity past while all the rest remain “reprobate.”
29. This is the position held by Calvinists and it is called “limited atonement.” They call those who believe in unlimited atonement Arminians.
30. Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) was a Dutch theologian that studied under Bèza, but later came to question some of Calvin’s teachings. However, most of his major points of departure are not those held by our theology.
31. The question under discussion is whether salvation is made available to every person that ever lives or is only applicable to a predetermined few which God selected in eternity past?
32. The lengths to which five-point Calvinists go to justify their idea of limited atonement is expressed in the following excerpt from Randolph O. Yeager.
33. Yeager is addressing the use of the phrase *ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν (hina pás ha pisteúōn eis autón)*: “that whoever believes in Him”:

The Arminian exploitation of “whoever,” with its implication that the decision whether to believe on or to reject Christ is left to the individual is corrected by a correct translation of *pás ha pisteúōn* – “every believer.”

We are **enabled to believe** by means of the Holy Spirit. To support the view that the elect believe upon Christ through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3; John 16:7–11.¹ That we are powerless to come to Christ without the enabling of the Holy Spirit is clear from John 6:44; Ephesians 3:1–3.² That all who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4) do in fact come to him is clear from John 6:36; Acts 13:48.^{3 4}

34. The difference between the position to which we actually subscribe and that of the five-point Calvinists may be explained by the doctrines of common and efficacious grace.
35. Under **common grace**, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel message clear to the spiritually dead person. This is referred to in some evangelistic passages by the word “call.”
36. If this spiritually dead person believes in Christ, the Holy Spirit makes that expression of faith effectual for salvation; this is called **efficacious grace**.
37. We contend that although election did occur in eternity past, that event consisted of the omniscience of God discerning those individuals who would express faith in Christ in time and declaring them the elect.
38. During human history, those who do not believe are allowed to remain in unbelief, yet Christ was judged for their sins as well as those of the elect.
39. That atonement was provided for the unbeliever is established by the fact that sin is not the issue and therefore not mentioned at the Great White Throne Judgment:

Revelation 20:11 - Then I saw a great white throne and Him [**Jesus Christ, John 5:22**] who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away [**2 Peter 3:10–12**], and no place was found for them.

v. 12 - And I [**John**] saw the dead [**unbelievers transferred from Torments**], the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life [**registry of all believers**], and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books [**volumes containing the names of unbelievers**], according to their deeds [**tabulation of their efforts of human viewpoint, human good, good works, & evil**].

40. If sin is not the issue, then the sins of the “reprobate” must have been judged at the cross. The indictment at the Great White Throne is from the “the books according to their deeds”: **ἔργον (érgon)**: malevolent works of unbelievers are ineffectual for salvation.
41. The Supreme Court of Heaven will find the works of unbelievers insufficient compared with the work of Jesus on the cross which each had rejected.
42. The Court’s argument is that each unbeliever rejected the love of God which offered eternal life to everyone by the simple expression of faith in the Person and work of Jesus.

¹ These two passages are directed toward those who are already believers in Christ. They are not directed to the lost and therefore are not evangelistic in context.

² The Holy Spirit is not mentioned in either paragraph in which these two verses appear.

³ Yeager implies that those chosen by God in eternity past do “come to Christ.”

⁴ Randolph O. Yeager “John 3:15,” in *The Renaissance New Testament* (Woodbridge, Va.: Renaissance Press, 1979), 4:413.

43. Unlimited atonement is compatible with the central issue of the angelic conflict. The resolution of Satan's appeal depends on how Homo sapiens respond to the divine provision of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.
44. As did Adam following the fall, man, in his inherited status of condemnation, must use his free will to respond to the gospel or not.
45. In human history, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man must coexist by divine decree.
46. The fallen angels were offered a means of restoration to fellowship following their rebellion. We are not privy to what it was, but a just God, Who offered it to man, must also have done so for the demons.
47. All the fallen angels had equal opportunity to become elect in eternity past. Likewise, every person in human history has the same equal opportunity to become elect in time.
48. The unilateral decision by God in eternity past was to elect anyone His omniscience determined would make the free-will decision to believe in Christ.

Ephesians 1:4 - He has elected us in Him [**Jesus Christ: current positional truth**] before the foundation of the world, for the purpose that we should keep on being set apart, even blameless in His presence. (EXT)