

# Major Bible Themes

## 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scriptures Simplified and Explained

Adapted from the book *Major Bible Themes*  
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### God the Son: His Substitutionary Death

- Introduction
  - Although “substitute” is not a biblical word, the idea that Christ is the sinner’s substitute is constantly affirmed.
  - By His substitutionary death, the unmeasured, righteous judgments of God against a sinner were borne in Christ.
  - In receiving the salvation which God offers, men are asked to believe this good news, recognizing that Jesus Christ died for their sins and thereby claiming Him as their personal Savior.
  - The word “substitution” only partially expresses all that is accomplished by the death of Christ.
  - The word “atonement” is actually an Old Testament term which means that sins are covered over in anticipation of the coming of the Christ.
- What the Son’s Death Accomplishes
  - The death of Christ assures us of the love of God toward the sinner (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9).
  - The death of Christ is a ransom paid to the holy demands of God for the sinner (Matt 20:28; 1 Tim 2:6), a necessary penalty which He bore (Rom 4:25; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 1:4; Heb 9:28).
  - Three important Greek words express this idea...
    - ✦ ἀγοράζω (agorazō) – man is under the sentence of death (John 3:18-19; Rom 6:23), but purchased by Christ through the shedding of His blood (1 Cor 6:20; 7:23; 2 Pet 2:1; Rev 5:9; 14:3-4).
    - ✦ ἐξαγοράζω (exagorazō) – purchased and removed from sale indicating once for all redemption (Gal 3:13; 4:5).
    - ✦ λυτρόω (lutrōō) – set free (Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 1:18).
  - In His sacrifice Christ bore our sins forever (Isa 53:7-12; John 1:29; Eph 5:2; Heb 9:22, 26; 10:14).
  - Christ’s death constitutes a propitiation (satisfaction) of all of God’s righteous demands against the sinner (1 John 2:2; 4:10).
  - The death of Christ provided the basis by which the world is reconciled to God (Rom 5:10-11; 2 Cor 5:18-20; Col 1:20-22).

- The death of Christ removed any barrier to God being just in freely accepting anyone who believes in Christ (Rom 3:26).
- Faith in Jesus Christ is more than a general belief that that He died for the sins of the world; a personal conviction that one's own sin has been perfectly borne by Christ the Substitute is required.
- Fallacies Concerning the Son's Death
  - It is claimed that the doctrine of substitution is immoral because God could not, in righteousness, lay the sins of the guilty on an innocent victim. This is wrong because...
    - ✦ Christ willingly gave Himself for us (John 13:1; Heb 10:7).
    - ✦ God was in Christ reconciling us to Himself (2 Cor 5:19).
  - It is claimed that Christ was merely a martyr and an example of courage and loyalty. This is wrong because man did not take His life from Him (John 10:18; 19:30).
  - It is claimed that Christ died to create a moral effect. In considering the cross, men will be motivated to turn from sin. This is wrong because the cross is the basis of *regeneration* of men, not the *reformation* of men.
- Questions
  - What is meant by the assertion that Christ is the sinner's substitute?
  - What is the O.T. doctrine of atonement?
  - How is the death of Christ related to the love of God?
  - What are the three basic concepts included in the doctrine of redemption?
  - Define the doctrine of propitiation and explain what is accomplished by it.
  - Define the doctrine of reconciliation and explain what is accomplished by it.
  - If the entire world is reconciled to God, why are some lost?
  - How do redemption, propitiation, and reconciliation free God to save the sinner?
  - Why does the N.T. emphasize that salvation is by faith alone?
  - Name some of the wrong interpretations of the death of Christ and explain why they are wrong.