

Focus on the Cross (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] And so let's jump right in to tonight. So if you have your green book, you're going to see that we're on page 39, chapter 2.

! And the theme of this chapter, so we'll be in this chapter for a few weeks, is Focus on the Cross.

Now, does anybody remember what the theme of chapter 1 was?

What we just finished going over the last few weeks? Something about the gospel, yeah? Yeah, put the gospel first. That's right. And do you remember, let's see, I...

Okay, so not yet. Alright, so this is a review. Alright, so put the gospel first. Do you remember, D.A. Carson had maybe four points about how do we put the gospel first in various areas of our life?

By way of remembrance? Do you happen to remember any of those? Prayer at the center of your life. That's right. So that's the second one, right? Put the priorities of the gospel at the center of your prayer life.

[1 : 05] Alright, so that was his second point. What's that mean in your words, Mark? What's it mean? What's it look like when we put priorities of the gospel at the center of your prayer life? So, I mean, if you look at the priority of the gospel, it's spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Yep. So, taking those priorities. And as you pray each and every day, praying back into that and asking however that would look.

Yeah. That is giving you more opportunities to take advantage of those opportunities to preach the word. Bingo. So, put the priorities of the gospel at the center of your prayer life.

So, as you think about your prayer life, the content, right? The substance of your prayers, are you regularly putting the gospel at the center of your prayers?

Or are you praying about earthly things all the time? I need this. And yeah, I need this, or I need that, or I wish it would be warmer, wish it would be colder. You know, and again, many of those are legitimate, right?

[2 : 11] Again, we've talked for weeks now about praying for Jeff. And when there's, you know, health issues, when we have brothers and sisters who are traveling. Anyway, those are worthy. Those are worthy prayer.

But the focus of what D.A. Carson was encouraging us to do was look how Paul prayed. And how Paul put the priority of the gospel in so many of his prayers.

And so, that was one thing that we, just again, by way of review, putting the gospel first. One of the ways we do that is in our prayer life, put the priorities of the gospel into our prayer life.

All right. Any of the other three? Anybody want to guess one of the other three points that he made in the last chapter? Fellowship.

Yep, fellowship. There's another word for fellowship in some of the Bible translations. Your partnership, right? So, put the fellowship or the partnership of the gospel at the center of your, remember?

[3 : 07] Relationships with believers, right? And so, and that was the first point that D.A. Carson had. Put the fellowship or the partnership of the gospel, the fellowship of the gospel, at the center of your relationships with believers.

And so, again, what does that look like, right? When we look at our relationships with believers, when we look at how we relate to one another, right? Are we, when we gather, what common priority should we be gathering around?

And then maybe compare that with what we actually gather around, right? And so, that's a good challenge. Again, it's a good challenge or a sober reminder that we are to put the fellowship of the gospel.

What's the one thing that we have in common as believers? Yeah, Christ. Right. Think about it. We have Christ in common. We have the gospel in common. So, when we come together in fellowship, when we come together in partnership with that gospel, you know, what would an outsider look like when we get together?

Are we just another social club, right? Rallying around a common sport or a common hobby? You know, what would, what would someone looking into our fellowship, whether it be as a church or when you all get together one-on-one, you know, for coffee or together, you know, for whatever, would they see as you're gathering together in your relationships with your brothers and sisters in Christ, would they see you all putting a priority?

[4 : 33] Not to the exclusion of other things of interest, but would they see you putting the priority of the gospel in those relationships? All right. So, that's two of the points that the D.A. Carson challenged us with.

You may be already enough. No more challenging. That's enough for one night. We haven't even gotten to chapter two yet. So, any, the third and the fourth point. Anybody remember the other two points? So, the fourth point, the last one, is putting the converts of the gospel.

Putting the converts of the gospel at the center of what? Basically, you're self-denial. Yeah. So, putting the others, brothers and sisters, before you. Right. Thinking of them and not everything. Yeah, yeah, that's a good point. Yeah, so, the fourth point, put the converts of the gospel. So, that was, who are the converts of the gospel? You just said it, Mark. Believers in Christ.

Yeah, brothers and sisters in Christ will put other believers at the center of your principled self-denial. So, again, Carson challenged us through what we read in Philippians 1.

[5 : 34] That when you make decisions, day-to-day decisions, how you spend your time, how you spend your money, how you spend other resources, are you putting your brothers and sisters in Christ at the center of that?

Converts of the gospel. Brothers and sisters in Christ. Or, is it all about self? Or is it all about something else? And so, again, we were challenged as we look at Paul.

What was Paul's example as he was writing Philippians? He's in prison. Right? He's writing this letter and he's denying himself. He's denying any wants or preferences or wishes that he wants because he has only one thing.

Well, he has one priority in mind. And that's bringing glory to God and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. And so, what a great example of Paul where he is putting converts of the gospel at the center of his own self-denial.

And the last one, which was the third point in chapter 1, put the advance of the gospel, remember, the advance of the gospel, the furtherance of the gospel, at the center of your aspirations.

[6 : 41] And so, again, if you were to go back and read in chapter 1, again, D.A. Carson challenges us to identify, well, what are your aspirations? What are your life goals?

What are your things that you want to accomplish in life that are meaningful or significant to you? And compare those aspirations with, where does the advance of the gospel fit into those aspirations?

Are they center? Are they on the periphery? Your aspiration may be, you may have a bucket list of things you want to do. Or your aspiration may be to achieve a certain level in your job.

Or whatever. D.A. Carson had a lot of good examples. Most of the examples he gave were more sort of worldly, but they're things that are familiar. And we would all say, yeah, I have some of those aspirations.

And again, the encouragement is, just as Paul's aspiration, again, was to further the gospel, we are challenged and encouraged to put the advance of the gospel, sharing the good news.

[7 : 44] That's the only thing that's eternal, right? Is making a priority and making a focus on that. So that was the review of the last three weeks in chapter one.

So let me quickly move to chapter two. So the gospel was chapter one. So now we're going to move and talk about the cross, right? And so we're going to camp out the next few weeks on the focus on the cross.

And what's that mean? And what's that look like? And so here's one of the questions. If you were to go to page 41, we're going to read our passage in just a minute. But if you go to page 41, right below the quote, which is the reference in Philippians 1 and 2, the very first thing he says, right at that top paragraph, what does the cross achieve?

And then secondly, the second question, why does it occupy so central a place in the minds of the New Testament writers? Now remember, what's the name of this book? Basics for Believers.

So you may be sitting here going, Greg, seriously? I mean, what does the cross achieve? What a puffball question, right? I've been studying that and reading that every time we come together on Sunday and growing up in Sunday school.

[8 : 56] And like this is really basic. And I would say, absolutely. These are basic truths that we're going over. That's why we're doing this book. So for those of you who are a little bit more mature in the faith, who have been believers for several years and you sort of you think you got down and maybe you do have down a solid understanding of the cross and what the cross achieves.

As we go through tonight and the next few weeks, I would just challenge you to, this is an equipping, right? We are, this is a teaching, equipping moment. And so as we go through this, put yourself not as a recipient of this teaching, although you are, but put yourself in situations where you're now needing to teach others or you're sitting across the table drinking coffee with an immature believer or maybe a non-believer and they're probing and they're asking, they're wondering about these things.

What is this about the cross, right? Christians always talk about the cross, cross, cross, cross, cross. What's, you know, crosses are in every church. There's necklaces, there's, you know, bumper stickers.

You know, help me understand what does Christianity mean? What does the cross, is that a symbol or what? So whatever your context, you know, be ready to give an explanation for the hope that you have, right?

And so as we go through this tonight, if battle the pride in like, yeah, this is so basic. I don't even know why I'm here. Because I confess, the reason I'm saying this is because I would probably feel in this way a little bit.

[10 : 25] Like, ah, I'm ready to get into some meaty content, right? And so I could probably at a weak moment say, ah, this is so basic, I'm going to tune out. Don't tune out.

If anything, tune in as we read through Scripture and let it be an equipping opportunity as we go through this. And we may be able to answer a question or two that you hadn't thought of. All right, so what does the cross achieve?

That's the question that we'll be answering tonight in the next few weeks. And what D.A. Carson does is he, before he gets into the actual verses in Philippians, he'll take, and this is just right out of the book, right out of chapter 2, he looks at five, he wants to take a perspective of different viewpoints on the cross.

And so you can see that on the slide, and it starts on the bottom of page 41, he wants to look at God's perspective. Like, what's God's view of the cross? And then he'll go here in a couple of pages on down the line, he wants to look at Christ's perspective, then Satan's perspective, and then sin's perspective of the cross, and then what's our own as believers?

What's our perspective of the cross? And so D.A. Carson does this as sort of, as an introductory way to frame his teaching in the verses in the latter part of chapter 1 and chapter 2 in Philippians.

[11 : 47] All right, so I'm going over this. I didn't assume that you've read chapter 2, but it's important because we're going to go off, and it's going to feel like we're going to chase some tangents down, but if I can keep my thoughts about me, we're going to come back around because the goal is to answer, what does the cross achieve?

And in chapter 2 of Carson's book, and then he's going to focus, and this is what we're going to do tonight, he's going to focus on that first point of God's perspective.

He uses a third of chapter 2 in the book just to talk about God's perspective. And so if he's going to spend a third of this chapter going through that, then we're going to camp on that tonight, and then we'll hit the other points in the next couple of Wednesdays.

So what is God's perspective of the cross? What does the cross look like to God? Y'all want to hazard a sort of, this is interactive time, you want to hazard an answer to what does the cross look like to God?

Propitiation. All right, that's on the slide. That's good. Propitiation. I may say propitiation like 30 times tonight because we're going to camp out on that a little bit. So what do you mean by propitiation? Atoning.

[13 : 03] Atoning for sin. All right. Basically covering. So as you look at the Ark of the Covenant and what it did, the atoning cover that it had with the cherubim.

So looking at it as a relationship to that, it's a covering. All right, covering. So your sins are being covered by the work of the cross.

All right. So when God looks at the cross, he sees that as a propitiating, as an atoning, as a covering for our sins. Yeah. He doesn't see you. He sees his son's righteousness.

Okay. And I'm sort of repeating what you're saying for the recording. So, okay. All right. Anybody want to add on to that or offer a different perspective on that? Like when God looks at the cross, what does he see?

What does he think? And again, I prefer that you would answer from what you know from Scripture. Anything else? That's the question we're going to answer tonight.

[14 : 11] How does God view the cross? It's important for us to understand. It's so important for us to understand. I didn't realize how important it was for us to understand until studying this chapter. So I hope to bring you along with me in my studies as well.

All right. So let's read chapter 1. We're going to read the, starting on verse 27. So we're going to pick up where we left off last week. And we're going to read verse 27, you know, the last few verses of chapter 1.

Then we're going to read through chapter 2 through verse 18. Now, again, we're going to read that just to sort of set a foundational context. But we're not going to, we're not going to be in Philippians for the rest of the night tonight because we're going to explore.

We got to sort of do some preliminary work here in exploring, just as D.A. Carson does, what is God's perspective on the cross? It'll all come together. It'll all come together. So be patient. And trust me and just trust.

If you've read through chapter 2, then you already know where we're going. So can someone, would someone mind reading that all, I don't know, it's like 20 or so verses total. But starting on verse 27 through chapter 2, verse 18.

[15 : 20] only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or remain absent I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind fighting together for the faith of the gospel in no way a harm by your opponents which is a sign of destruction for you but a salvation for you and that too from God for to you it has been granted for Christ's sake not only to believe in him but also to suffer for his sake experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me and now fear to be in him therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ if there is any consolation of love if there is any fellowship of the spirit if any affection and compassion make my joy complete by being of the same mind maintaining the same love united in spirit intent on one purpose do nothing from selfishness or impugnancy but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves do not merely look out for your own personal interest but also for the interest of others have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ's Jesus who although he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God and came to be great but emptied himself taking the form of a body and being made in the likeness of him being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the form of death even death on the cross for this reason also

God highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every one so that in the name of Jesus every knee will bow of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord through the glory of God the Father so then my beloved just as you have already lived not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence work out your salvation with fear and trouble for it is God who is at work with you both to will and to work for his good pleasure do all things without rumbling or disputing so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent children of God above and church in the midst of a crooked and diverse generation among whom you appear as lights in the world hold fast to the word of life so that in the day of Christ

I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain or pull in vain but even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith I rejoice and share my joy with you all you too I hope you rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me alright thank you Jeremy thank you thank you for reading that so the way Carson has organized chapter 2 and chapter 3 is that we're going to be in that section that Jeremy just read right from verse 27 in chapter 1 all the way through verse 18 in chapter 2 of Philippians and you've let me read on page 41 sort of what his approach is and how he's going to separate his chapter 2 and his book versus his chapter 3 again just for a way that you'll understand how we're going so again I read the first

couple of questions there on the main paragraph in 41 so what does the cross achieve why does it occupy so central a place in the minds of the New Testament writers the Bible gives many wonderfully rich answers to such questions and I would like to begin this chapter by sketching a few of them it will be helpful to think about the cross from various perspectives before we examine exactly what the passage before us has to contribute to a comprehensive theology of the cross so that that's what we're after the next couple of weeks

I don't want to use I didn't want to use the term theology of the cross make it sound like this is a seminary class but that's what we're doing we're going to be sort of nibbling away at our theology the biblical theology of the cross focus on the cross that's the chapter title the examination of the passage itself will occupy us both in this chapter and in the next in this chapter we will reflect on chapter 2 verses 5 through 11 alright so you catch that so as you're studying from here the next couple of weeks in rereading chapter 2 just know that what he's done he's sort of grabbed the middle section of these verses verses 5 through 11 and that's sort of the focus for the next few weeks and that's just chapter 2 in this book and then in the next chapter chapter 3 we'll reflect on what precedes and follows this section and so that's again chapter 1 verses 27 through 30 through verse 2 of chapter 2 and then you skip down in verses 12 through 18 but first let's survey some diverse perspectives on the cross culled from New Testament theology alright so you know where we're going

I sort of broke down chapter 2 there on the screen this is what chapter 2 is but that's why he's jumping in the middle looking at verses 8 through 11 and now are those familiar as I was reading chapter 2 I was just telling Marie V on the way here chapter 2 is so familiar there's so many verses that I'm sure have been the topic of studies and sermons and scripture memory and verses 5 through 11 is sort of the quintessential section if you would on the cross and Christ what he did on the cross and so hopefully it's familiar to you but hey if it's new to you then all the better because this is some rich, rich, rich, rich truth so that's where we're going so we're going to try to understand again going back to how does what does the cross look like to God and just in a bit of a preview we're going to talk about some terms propitiation and expiation and then we're going to talk about [22 : 08] God's wrath so these are terms for us these aren't terms for seminary students we got this we got this alright so jump over as a way to kick it off jump over to 1 John chapter 2 to understand God's perspective of the cross Mark already gave us the answer he's right ahead so now we have to go back and fill in why Mark answered the way he did let's kick off by going over to 1 John chapter 2 verses 1 and 2 alright so John writes so he writes my little children I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin but if anyone does sin and that if is probably better translated since right we all sin right we've all sinned fall short of the glory of God right but if anyone does sin we have an advocate some of the translations you may say helper right one who comes along a side right we have an advocate with the Father

Jesus Christ the righteous and then verse 2 says he is the propitiation for our sins and I'll stop there halfway through verse 2 he is the propitiation for our sins and so a couple of key observations to draw out I've got a couple of questions here just to these are sort of observation questions for you all so I'm starting easy but question number one is who does John present as the solution to our problem of sin in verse 1 yeah Jesus Christ right yeah yeah again I told you it's a puffball question alright so if anyone sins since anyone sins we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous alright so Jesus is the advocate right he's the solution to our problem for sin right now question number two how is Jesus described easy question but then the harder question is and why does it matter we're going to unpack why it matters but how is

Jesus described in verse two yeah he is the propitiation now if you don't know what that means hold tight we're going to spend the rest of the night talking about that he is the propitiation for those of you who may understand that term Mark again you went over it a little bit earlier why does it matter so what so what that John writes here that Christ is the propitiation for our sins anyone hazard a guess there yeah Solomon yeah yeah God sees Christ's righteousness covered on us all right that's spot on is there anything more to that though it does matter because if Christ sees any imperfection in us we're not worthy but what else is there there's a certain inference or context that comes along with propitiation we'll get to that if you don't know it

I'm just curious if anybody knows he satisfied a debt we could not pay and the debt is death right so the term satisfaction right another term could be appeasement he appeased God he satisfied God what is it about God what's being satisfied what's being satisfied why is he being appeased his

wrath bam bam that's it so yeah that's what we're getting to tonight is talking about when Christ here's the bottom line the last slide is going to say when God looks at the cross what's he see he sees his wrath being satisfied that's basically the theme for tonight that's the I'm giving you the last page of my notes now it's all about satisfying God's wrath and it's amazing as I sort of did a little study a little tangent on church history even as recent as you know back in the early 1900s there's been a lot of debate about

God's wrath and we'll get to that here in just a moment I found that extremely interesting and this is what D.A. Carson brings up as well if you've read chapter 2 what exactly is God's wrath well if we don't have a good sense if we don't understand what sin is and we don't have a biblical theology of sin proper then that's going to take us off on a tangent where we're probably not going to have a biblical understanding of God's wrath and that's going to take us off into further tangent on not having a good biblical understanding of what the cross is so we know that through propitiation God's wrath is satisfied so that's sort of the that's the answer so now we're going to back up and try to understand because again I want to equip you right you want to be equipped to explain this in simple terms when you're given the opportunity to do so by co-worker friend family member you know there's folks that are interested in just in God's just in God's providence he's going as you pray to what back in chapter one to advance the gospel if you're praying

[27 : 40] Lord use me to advance the gospel then he's going to open up opportunities and conversations to talk about these sorts of things right this is not all random sort of stuff and so this is equipping you to explain the glory of the cross again if you have a friend or a co-worker or a family member they don't get the whole y'all gather every Sunday morning and talk about the cross what's the big deal how are you going to put it in your own words and come across sincere and winsome and biblical and so this is what the focus is in chapter 2 is focusing on the cross and being able to understand that so we need to understand let's back up we know what the answer is so let's back up and make sure that we have a biblical understanding about what the problem is and again we know what it is it's sin but it's more than just sin right alright so let me go to the next slide so we talked about God's wrath against sin that is the problem that we have you know if could we

I mean could you imagine a situation where or a world an existence where you can sin all you want to and there's no wrath to come I don't even I can't even imagine it would be some alternate world multiverse for those of you who are sci-fi but you know I don't know but but you know they're they're they're a world where there's consequences to our sin right and I don't get it I don't I just I can't imagine it because I've just never thought about the context of I mean God was in the beginning right from the foundations of the world right he created existence he created time he's outside of time and so so when I think about sin there's always that there's a payment that's coming because God is perfect and we're not right so there's that wrath there's that payment that's going to be due well again a lot of people don't don't see that and I'll get to

I'll get to that in just a minute where a lot of folks don't don't don't believe that there's wrath to come they look at the cross and they go hey the cross it yeah it got rid of my sin but not the part about appeasing God right it's sort of like half the equation and I'll get to that in just a minute but there's some crazy crazy thoughts crazy theologies out there let's take just a moment to I know you believe me when I say God's wrath exists!

I want to directed towards sin so New Testament so I'm going to want to do Kevin can I just start with you is there anybody that doesn't want to read can I just go all right so Kevin would you if you can look up Romans 1.18 and we'll just go down the row then then 2.15 and then Mon 5.9 so that third row y'all are all Romans Marvy can you do Ephesians 2.3 and then second row first hey Lucy can you read 1st

Thessalonians 1.10 you got your Bible all right and then Revelation yeah let's stay in the New Testament then Revelation 6.16 and 17 and then I'll save you three for the Old Testament all right so Solomon Exodus Numbers Mark and then Psalm 7.11 so read them loud again this is listen this is just a small sample small sample I read somewhere that like in the first 50 chapters of Psalms there's dozens and dozens of references to God's wrath so we could have just camped out in Psalms but anyhow so let's just go through these fairly quickly Romans 1.18 there you go so God's wrath is revealed if God's wrath didn't exist then that verse is not true God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness ungodliness thank you

[32 : 20] Romans 2.5 yeah so not only does God's wrath is revealed but we as unrepentant sinners we're storing up wrath sounds like a problem to me right sounds like a problem Romans 5.9

Mona yeah so that's good news we are saved from God's wrath through Jesus Ephesians 2.3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and we were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind all right so all humanity all mankind hey you all we are what is it by nature we are children of wrath that's bad news isn't it we are children of wrath we are children of the recipient of God's wrath all right 1 Thessalonians 1.10 to which your son of the heaven will be raised from the dead

Jesus deliver us from the wrath to come all right so that was like the Ephesians verse right so Jesus delivers us from that wrath to come wrath to come all right Revelation 16 and 17 Jessica yeah so a reference to the wrath of the lamb yeah who can stand to God's wrath all right old testament exodus 32 10 through 14 now therefore let me alone that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them in order that I may make a great nation of you but Moses implored the Lord God and said O Lord O Lord why does your wrath burn on against your people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand why should

Egyptians say what evil intent you bring them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people remember Abraham Isaac and Israel your servants to whom you swore by your own self and said to them I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring and they shall inherit it forever and the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of and bringing to his people alright so we see in that reference that passage that God's wrath is turned away by intercession right so so we're learning more about God's wrath right is God's wrath like our anger no right but you know is it is it responsive to intercession clearly it is perhaps not

God's ultimate wrath but at least from a time frame perspective God does relent he does forbear right alright so that was Exodus 32 God's wrath is turned away through intercession good to know alright number 16 and Moses said to Aaron take your censer and put it in the fire from the altar and lay incense on it then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them for wrath has gone forth from Yahweh the plague has begun then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken and ran into the midst of the assembly for behold the plague had begun among the people so he put on the incense and made atonement for the people alright so as we continue in the Old Testament now we're starting to be introduced to there's intercession but now there's this concept of a covering of atonement right that prevents if you would

God's wrath right it stops God's wrath so covering atonement there's something that does stop God's wrath okay you can see the foreshadowing right of Christ alright so that's numbers and then Psalm 711 God is a righteous judge and a God who feels indignation every day wow does that surprise you God feels indignation every day no but I did know it was in the Bible are you surprised to read that knowing knowing our world right I mean again for all of sin from the from the very beginning in Genesis yeah so God is a I think it's that God is a righteous judge a righteous judge yeah and a God who feels indignation so he feels indignation so God is righteous he's a judge what's what's there's another word there that we'll we'll bring up here in just a minute but he's holy right when you think of God's righteousness when you think of his wrath it all comes from his holiness right his his perfection if you would alright so we're learning more about

[37 : 58] God's wrath so and there's other verses just time doesn't allow to go over all of them and I'm having to skip around my notes a little bit but bottom line is right so when we think of God's wrath and this is important for some other points here in just a minute right but it it's not the wrath that again we would feel as a human wrath like when we're super angry or super mad right we're gonna have wrath on someone or something right where we just sort of explode right it's not arbitrary it's not it's not based on emotions or feelings it is when you think of God's wrath it's it's a settled holy opposition to sin a settled holy opposition to sin and then we read there I think it was in numbers right so so if God's wrath is real which it is not if but since since God's wrath is real then that wrath has to be addressed and how is it addressed at least we saw in the Old Testament from some sort of concept of a covering right something has to be

God has to be appeased he has to be his wrath has to be satisfied and we see that example the sacrificial system in the Old Testament right so so these sort of basic biblical truths and concepts around God's wrath and what it is and what it isn't we may again we may have a a false understanding of what his wrath is holy perfect wrath not like again how you explain this to someone who's not a believer or someone who's searching this is where it takes some work right it

takes some work to sort of untrain them unexplain well the wrath that you when you think of wrath and you think of God you think just a mean old bully God right no no no that's not at all how scripture I mean God is holy and he's righteous right and he is a God of justice so there is biblically that's supported that God is a wrathful God but it does set the stage for this concept of propitiation that we talked about a minute ago okay so that's the problem so we started this slide in this section with what's the problem yeah we all sin and fall short of glory of God we know that one right Romans 3 right but it's more than just the fact that we sin you have to take it to the next step it's that because we sin there's wrath there's a payment that is there waiting and God's indignation always continually against you against each of us because we're sinners so that's our problem so again hopefully it's a little bit more than just sort of the bedtime you know story of God died for my sins he died on the cross it's more than that it's more than just he died on the cross for my sins right he died Jesus Christ died on the cross as a propitiation right so that hopefully that word we leave tonight that word's not going to be intimidating right God was appeased his wrath was addressed it was satisfied through Christ's sacrifice on the cross alright so let's go to propitiation right oh some key points about this section

I just went over these right so God's wrath I didn't know I put this on the slide so God's wrath is not explosive or arbitrary like I said it's settled holy opposition to sin that's the main thing that we want to take from this it's not capricious right God's wrath it's real but it's again driven from his holiness alright let me go to propitiation real quick and I want to turn to a couple of scriptures that uses this word again as we sort of right we started with the answer then we backed up to the beginning right we sin now we've defined the problem there's God's wrath that has to be dealt with so what happens next so we read in 1 John 2 2 earlier Christ is the propitiation that's actually one of the verses here but let's read a couple of other references that also talk about Christ being propitiation so Romans 3.25 is the first mention in the New Testament of Christ being propitiation Josiah are you able to multitask back there and read so if you could turn to Romans 3.25 and then Jeremy we'll come back to you for Hebrews 2.17 and then I'll read 1 John the two 1 John references so Josiah when you're ready

Romans 3.25 who God displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood through faith for a demonstration of his righteousness because in the forbearance of God he passed over the sins previously committed read that again please I was looking for the word propitiation it may be a different who God displayed publicly as a propitiation oh there it is okay a demonstration of his righteousness remember that that's one of the that's one of the closing thoughts for tonight it's when God looks at the cross part of this is he's demonstrating his righteousness through the propitiation alright so that's Romans 3.25 Hebrews 2.17 therefore he had to be made like his brethren in all things so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people alright so another example here where

[43 : 39] Christ makes propitiation for the sins of the people and similarly again 1 John 2.2 we read that just a minute ago he being Christ Jesus Christ the righteous he is the propitiation for our sins and then over in chapter 4 verse 10 in 1 John John writes in this is love not that we have not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins so how many times was love I mean 1 John right that's the love that's the love book right so so you may have an example where and again if time allows we'll talk a little bit about liberal theologians in the early 1900s could not reconcile God's wrath if God is as wrathful as you say he is then how can God be loving those don't those don't those are mutually you know separate and we would say no no scripture says that those are both truths we may not in our infinite or in our finite mind we may not be able to reconcile those the cross reconciles it right the cross does reconcile it but that that was what led some errant in my opinion some errant theology in the early 1900s about propitiation but that that's you know 410 in this is love

John defines love not that we have loved God but that he loved us and how did he do it he sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins that's pretty straightforward isn't it yeah so again as you're talking to your hypothetical friend or family member or whatever these are biblical let the word do the work right just memorize this is why I'm always about scripture memory right memorize some of these key verses and prepare yourself to sort of explain a little bit how how we can have a God that's both wrathful but also a God who's loving Alonzo it's not just from the early 1900s because I've been reading articles about that in the last two weeks ah yeah about the discrepancy if God is love then how can he get upset with us and I thought because he loves us right right that's what

they're going they're doing that argument yep absolutely all right so key points from these verses right so propitiation is relational right as we keep reading over and over Christ became the propitiation the appeasement the satisfaction for our sins well what's the result of that that it restores relationship with God right that's one outcome of Christ being propitiation it's also substitutionary right and that makes sense right he's dying in our place right so you hear the term substitutionary atonement right theological term substitutionary atonement right he substituted himself for us and he was the covering right so that when God looks at us he sees Christ righteousness in us so we these are some of the concepts we get out of Romans and Hebrews and 1st John again we're we're sort of getting that we're sort of ground our understanding about what propitiation means because of the next slides and then we just mentioned propitiation is rooted in God's love right 1st John 4:10 we just read that all right

I'm just looking at the clocks I'm going to go a little bit later all right so this is so we've covered some foundational understandings of propitiation of atonement of covering of appeasing God's wrath and I wanted to take just a quick three minute tangent because D.A. Carson does this so in chapter in pages 42 43 44 45 and 46 so he spends about a third of this chapter talking about this debate that happened in the early 20th century and I was really tempted so last night I was tempted just to skip this and then today I'm like no no I've got to go over this this is this is too good and so what I tried to do I worked hard I worked hard today this was today I worked hard to try to distill this down just to the basic elements because it brings such glory to the Lord and such glory and a deeper understanding of the cross knowing some of the debates that have happened in history again this was not too long ago 100 years ago and so my notes are the slides here so I don't have anything here different

I think than I'll put on the slides just for simplicity sake so I'll go over the slide and so after maybe we talk about this for a few minutes it may make more sense then if you go back and read when you read 42 43 44 45 46 the first time I read these pages I'm like oh I gotta slow down and reread this because this is this is I'm just going to skip over to the very end of page 46 but I couldn't do that so I was renewed and refreshed this morning and so this is what you're getting for right now all right so 20th century debate right propitiation versus this other term called expiation right and so we've talked about tonight already so this propitiation word well what's this mean we've talked about that the act the action of propitiation right it addresses God's wrath all right so think of that so propitiation it's a satisfaction it appeases God's wrath right it satisfies God's wrath that's what propitiation means it's really that straightforward so keep that in mind now there's this other term called expiation all right now read that on the slide so expiation is biblical all right so so this is not heretical expiation is biblical but the problem is as we'll read in just a minute is that expiation you can think about it as a part of propitiation all right and that'll make sense here in just a minute but expiation what's that term mean it simply addresses in more narrow terms the human sin addresses human sin by cleansing or removing guilt that's a good thing just think to expiate to remove to get out and so this concept of expiation right it's an action it's a concept it's a doctrine that addresses our sin our human sin by cleansing or removing guilt okay so if we read the points under the debate

[50 : 27] I think this will make more sense so early 20th century liberal theology so we have theologians that were more liberal in thinking that they were uncomfortable with the concept of divine wrath all right and we talked about that just a minute ago about how can we have a God who's divinely wrathful but also divinely loving at the same time and part of this and Carson goes into detail about this is when you think of pagan religions how pagan religions try to appease their gods through sacrifice right so I think we've read or we've been taught or we generally know perhaps right that if you wanted to appease the God of the weather right you sacrifice something you want to get the God of weather on your good side so that your crops will grow right or the God of this or the God of that and so we've got people groups throughout history that again think of pagan think of worldly right that they're trying to appease their concept of

God right so they'll earn the God's favor sounds pretty similar to we as sinners wanting to earn God our God's favor through forgiveness of sins right so but liberal scholars a second bullet scholars like C.H.

Dodd argued that the Greek terms behind the word propitiation that because of this they were uncomfortable with divine wrath because divine wrath was mainly worldly you know cannibalistic and pagan and they didn't want to have anything to do with that crossing over into what scripture says and so they said hey in scripture when you read the word the Greek word around propitiation it

really doesn't mean appeasing God's wrath what it really means is that it just means that you're cleansing your sin you're removing the guilt and the sin from yourself that's really what it means in those verses that we read that's why we read those three or four verses where there was propitiation you can go back in the slides and you know we had Josiah read them and Jeremy and I read those references to propitiation and so these liberal theologians 100 years ago were saying no no no no there's no concept of appeasing divine wrath actually scripture God is really not wrathful and what these liberal theologians went on to say is hey you know every time we sin something bad will happen in consequence right so God's wrath is really it's more impersonal right and I think I didn't put that on there so God's wrath really we see God's wrath is when you do something wrong and something wrong happens with you and it's all even and it's taken care of so there's God's a God of love there's no wrathful God there and that's sort of how he takes care of your sins and so you can see that Greg are you serious yeah if you were to research this a lot more you would read this and their views on how I think D.A.

Carson puts it let me look because I think he actually says that what page I thought I marked it but I didn't get it oh well I can't find it right at the moment but it's in I think it's in these few pages I read a bunch of different materials so so so again they were trying to reconcile how God's wrath is really more impersonal and so you sin something bad happens well is that true is that true when you sin does something instantly bad happen to you as a consequence of that no no think of Adam and Eve did God you know did they eliminate Adam and Eve when they sinned no God God forbears his wrath isn't instantaneous right God forbears he forbears for a long time right at the end of the day his wrath has to be appeased right so as believers

[54 : 39] Christ is our propitiation unbelievers unbelievers are going to pay that penalty in hell right so there is our God is a God of wrath but again the liberal theologian would say no God can't be a God of wrath and a God of love at the same time so this is how our sins are taken care of through expiation all right you got that I know I know Alonzo sitting here with your mouth open well yeah yeah yeah yeah so or even or the New Testament so this this became so influential the third bullet Bible translations especially the Revised Standard Version they actually replaced the word propitiation with expiation so if you grab an old RSV version you're going to see expiation in those references that we read earlier so then evangelical scholars that's the good guys the ones that we're like minded with they came along and they refuted this sort of thinking this sort of influence and they said hey absolutely

Alonzo to your point the Old Testament sacrificial system includes wrath turning elements that's why we read the Old Testament references a minute ago New Testament context of these verses also includes divine wrath you can't escape when you read scripture you can't escape the fact that God is both a God of wrath and a God of love and this is like the evangelical scholars were refuting these thoughts of trying to redefine propitiation to expiation and then he said you know the Greek terms for this word propitiation that they can include both a cleansing expiation and an appeasement propitiation he said there's room for both that's why I say expiation is not unbiblical it's just some some theologians will take that out of context at the exclusion of propitiation right those liberal scholars in the early 20th century would say early 1900s would say there is no appeasement there is no propitiation that's the wrong word there is no appeasement of a wrathful God because God's not wrathful God's love well no that's the part I mentioned earlier you do you know you sin and then something and then you get an immediate consequence so it's appeased that's why I was looking for that reference I couldn't find it so day to day they would say the sin the expiation occurs just as natural consequences is the term I like to use you do something wrong you sin then whatever consequence happens alright you're good there's no appeasement necessary because God's impersonal right he's sort of like it's all handled you know in the course of life so I know I know so so we were saying on that last line that we are cleansed of our sins because Christ appeased God's wrath because it's through a propitiation yeah yeah I would the in the act of propitiation in the appeasing of God's wrath when

Christ died on the cross he cleansed us right what what second Corinthians 5 17 for our sake he made him who knew no sin to be sin Christ he the father right made Christ to be sin who knew no sin so that we might become the righteousness of God right that that's that cleansing that that great exchange that substitutionary part so yeah so there is a cleansing of our sin a removing of the guilt as part of the cross but why but it that's not where you stop why why was there expiation why was there a cleansing of the sin to appease a wrathful God that's the part they were they were they were

trying to drop from here it could be very subtle just hearing it for the first time but again I would just encourage you to go back and read these pages you can do your Google internet research as well watch what you read yeah yeah yeah because hey

That's a better life is highlighted, not so much God's wrath highlighting in that. Because you just hear the God is love part. Yeah, so for the recording, you know, Marvy, you were talking about how a proper understanding of this helps us give a proper explanation of the gospel, and it's not a soft, sort of a soft, mushy gospel, right?

[59 : 43] You know, God is all love. He's got a wonderful plan for your life. That part's true, but you can't say that to the exclusion of God is also holy and just. Yeah, I think if you sort of drop off the propitiation part, the appeasement of God's wrath, perhaps we think that it's more appealing.

It might be more appealing to a non-believer, but it's just not biblical, right? You don't want to do a bait and switch on them, right? Tell them only half the gospel. And again, I think you're deglorifying the cross and what it actually means.

The work that it was done. Yeah, and the work. So I've got a couple of, what is this, Greg, why did you even bring this up, right? Or here it is, we're almost at time, we're actually at time. Why did you even bring this up? So this is why the debate matters as far as propitiation versus expiation, right? Right? Removing propitiation from the equation here, right? It removes the personal, and I think we've been sort of talking about that, that personal dimension of atonement, that God is intimately involved, that God is love, that He sent His Son to die for you, not just generally to die on the cross for someone's sins.

You've probably heard Jeff say on occasion that as we're sharing the gospel and getting to know folks, especially like in membership interviews, that he's had, it's a regular occurrence when someone will say, I knew the gospel, I knew that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, but the part about my sins, the whole making the gospel personal, there's something that just, for some people it doesn't click until it clicks.

[61 : 22] That personal part that He died, He died for me. I get that He died, but He died for me, the personal part. And so when you think about this cleansing of the sin, just sort of generically without appeasing God's wrath, that's part of the reason why this debate matters and why it's so important not to exclude the appeasement perspective of propitiation.

It shifts the gospel from Christ bore God's wrath for us to Christ removes our sin problem. Again, it's not incorrect to say Christ removes our sin problem.

It's just incomplete. I think that's probably the best way to say it. Not incorrect, but incomplete. And then it changes how we understand God's holiness and justice and love.

What if God was not indignant all the time to sin? What if God sort of... Was it... Oh, yeah. Here, the bottom of...

And again, I'm speeding to a conclusion. On page 45, the top of 45, if God were to gaze at sin and rebellion, shrug His shoulders and mutter, Well, I'm not too bothered.

[62 : 34] I can forgive these people. I really don't care what they do. Surely there would be something morally deficient about God. Should God care nothing for Hitler's outrages?

Should God care nothing about my rebellion and your rebellion? If He acted this way, He would ultimately discount His own significance, sully His own glory, besmirch His own honor, and soil His own integrity.

Wow, that's a great... Top of 45, those first several lines. We should be thankful that God is a wrathful God and that He's holy and that He's just.

All right. In conclusion. All right. So why does propitiation matter? Just sort of wrap this up and put a bow on this.

Right? So I've got four points here. Why does it matter? Why do we have this conversation tonight? Why does D.A. Carson spend a third of chapter 2 talking about propitiation? Number one, it preserves the unity of God's love and justice.

[63 : 39] Right? God does... God's love does not cancel His justice. Right? You would think, oh, if He's loving, He'll just ignore it, forget about it. Mm-mm. Right? God's love is fulfilled.

He fulfills it in Christ. And then... We read Romans 3, 26, I think a minute ago. God is the just and the justifier. So He preserves the unity of love and justice. Love and wrath.

Right? Love and holiness. Secondly, it upholds substitutionary atonement. And we've talked about this. Christ stands in our place. There is a judgment. There is wrath.

There is consequences that need appeasing, that need paying. And Christ is the one who does that. The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, upon Christ.

Third reason why this matters. Doesn't it give us assurance as believers? Right? If Christ bore God's wrath, there's no more wrath.

[64 : 36] Right? That's it. God bore all of God's wrath for you. Right? He paid the total price tag, the total penalty. So I mean there's none left for you.

Romans 8, 1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. That's a great verse to memorize. There is therefore now no condemnation.

No condemnation. In your dying days, you can rest peacefully knowing that there is therefore now no condemnation if you're in Christ.

That gives believers a ton of assurance. Right? And lastly, it magnifies God's love. These are four points, but there's probably many more. Propitiation is not God being convinced to love us.

It's not that we tricked God and we painted God into a corner. Right? You know, some sort of loophole. Right? That is not what propitiation is. Right? It's the expression of His love.

[65 : 39] And again, we read 1 John 4.10. Love is defined by propitiation. Propitiation. I'll leave you all with this. Earlier, I talked about the pagan rituals, the pagan sacrifices, where the subject had to offer something to the object.

Right? I, as a subject, had to bring a sacrifice in order to appease my God, the God of weather or the God of health or the God of whatever. Right? So, I'm the subject bringing something to appease the object.

What's it look like with God and Jesus? God is both the subject and the object. Right? We did nothing. We did nothing.

Right? God is the one who gave His Son. God sacrificed His Son to appease God. Figure that one out. Right?

That's a brain. That's what's so different with Scripture. Only God. Right? Only God could have done this. So, God's subject offered this sacrifice through Jesus Christ, His Son, through His grace and mercy and love, offered that to us to appease the wrath that was due us.

[66 : 53] That's a big difference as we think about appeasing God's. Right? And that's why, going back to one of the earlier points, where the liberal theologians, you know, weren't keen about sort of talking about appeasing God's wrath because it was just so close to worldly pagan thinking.

That was, that's a huge difference is that we're not sacrificing something to appease our God. God the Father sacrificed God the Son for us.

Let's pray. So, Father, we thank You, Lord, for these truths tonight. Oh, Lord, may we just be diligent in continuing to plumb the depths of Your riches of Your truths.

So, Father, I thank You for this book that D.A. Carson has provided us for. Your Scripture, Lord, that just echoes and testifies to Your glory. Father, I am grateful, I am thankful that You are a holy, just, wrathful, loving, patient, enduring, merciful God.

Thank You for Jesus Christ, our propitiation. Thank You that He stood in our place. Lord, that He stood in my place to cleanse me from my sins, Lord, and to appease the wrath that You had on me because of my sin.

[68 : 21] Oh, Father, may this be a thought, a truth, a doctrine that we rest in, that we glorify in, Lord. And I pray tonight, just as I started, Father, Lord, for those here tonight, for those who may listen to this recording later, Lord, Lord, for my prayer is that we can understand these truths that You give us through Scripture, and You would equip us, Father, to, in our own words, but using biblical truth, Lord, to convey, to clearly communicate in a winsome but truthful, firm way about how You save and how You have given the ultimate through Jesus Christ and how You do love us, but how You are also holy and just.

So, Father, thank You for giving us understanding through Your Word for that, Lord. Thank You for my church family, Lord. Thank You for how You continue to bless us day in and day out.

Thank You for this facility. Thank You for those who have come tonight, Lord, to give of their time, to hear and to have a willingness to be taught. Father, I pray that You have blessed tonight, Father, not because of what I've said, but because of what Your Scripture teaches us.

Thank You for that, Lord. Bless our time together. In Christ's name, amen.