

## Week 9 - Limited Atonement

### *Sufficient for All, Efficient for Believers*

#### Part One: Counting Sheep

##### John 10: 14-30 (NIV)

<sup>14</sup> “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

<sup>19</sup> The Jews who heard these words were again divided. <sup>20</sup> Many of them said, “He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?”

<sup>21</sup> But others said, “These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

<sup>22</sup> Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. <sup>24</sup> The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

#### What is Limited Atonement?

Limited Atonement is one of the most controversial aspects of Tulip. Stated simply, it supposes that Jesus Christ’s death was sufficient for all people, but is only effectual for believers. In other words, Jesus only bore the sins of those who were chosen for salvation by God; He did not bear the sins of every individual who has ever lived. This is also sometimes referred to as “Particular Atonement” or “Particular Redemption.”

? Why do you think people reject Jesus even though He told them who He was?

? According to Jesus, what are the characteristics of people who are among His sheep?

? What does it mean to listen to Jesus’ voice today? How can we better hear him?

? How can we have confidence that we are among Jesus' sheep?

## Part Two: Our Role In The Gospel

### John 3:16-18 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

? When dealing with weighty subjects like Limited Atonement it's useful to hold tightly to clear Biblical truths. What are some of the truths we see in John?

? Why does it matter whether or not people trust in Christ?

### 1 Timothy 2:1-6 (NIV)

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— <sup>2</sup> for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

? Verse four says that God wants all people to be saved and come to a "knowledge of the truth." How do we sometimes act like we don't believe this is the case? How are you tempted to believe that some people will never accept God's truth?

? Why should we offer the Gospel to all people despite the fact that some may not accept it?

? Does the idea of a particular atonement make you feel hesitant to be evangelistic? Why might it be important to spread the Gospel message?

## For Discussion and Accountability

? How do I sometimes live like Jesus never died for my sins? What do I need to change about my daily habits to keep Christ first in my life?

? How do I sometimes act like God doesn't want to see all people come to him? Who have I pushed away from the gospel because of hurt or pain? How can I seek reconciliation in that relationship?