

a) THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

i) Introduction

- (1) When Jesus was crucified, the hopes and dreams of the disciples were shattered.
- (2) In the light of the resurrection those same disciples tried to make sense of why Jesus had to die.
- (3) The disciples come to the conclusion that Jesus' death had something to do with making the world right with God. How did they speak of this?

ii) Biblical metaphors or images they used to understand his death.

- (1) The financial image
 - (a) The setting for this image is the slave market
 - (b) Jesus is said to have paid the price to set us free
- (2) The military image
 - (a) The setting is war or the battle field
 - (b) Jesus defeats God's enemies and sets humanity free who had been held captive and were in exile
- (3) The sacrificial image
 - (a) The setting is the Temple
 - (b) Jesus is the sacrifice offered for the sins of humankind.
 - (c) We are saved by "the blood of the Lamb"
 - (d) In some cases Jesus is both the sacrifice and the high priest offering that sacrifice.
- (4) The legal image
 - (a) The setting is the courtroom
 - (b) We are the accused, standing in the dock, guilty as charged. The sentence is death.
 - (c) Jesus dies on our behalf and the judge pronouncing the guilty party innocent.

iii) The idea of the God vs the gods.

- (1) In the ancient world the gods were testy and easily offended.
 - (2) Much of religion was finding the proper sacrifice or set of prayers to placate those angry gods.
 - (3) But the God of Israel was "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."
 - (a) It is therefore wrong to understand what Jesus did in these terms.
 - (b) The doctrine of the Trinity also makes it impossible to understand what Jesus did in those terms.
 - (c) Also John 3:16 Abelard?
 - (4) Anselm's "satisfaction" theory of the Atonement
 - (a) No mention of satisfaction in the Bible
 - (b) Jesus came not to change God's mind but to express it.
- iv) The Cross
- (1) Convicts us of sin, reveals our sins
 - (2) Reveals that God is willing to bear the suffering due to sin
 - (3) Shows the boundlessness of God's love.
 - (4) We are sinners, yet forgiven because of God's love