



Elements: Atonement... Not Passing the Buck

Week of July 17, 2022

Connect Group Discussion Guide

Elements is about taking the foundational doctrines of the church, making them personal, and understanding how they enhance our relationship with God.

- Circle Time: Share a moment when you had incurred a debt, whether financial or otherwise, and someone else unexpectedly paid the debt for you? What emotions did you feel and why? How did you respond to the person?
- What is the Definition of Atonement?
 - Reparation for a wrong or an injury.
 - Where do you see Atonement (spiritually as well as non spiritually) happening in everyday life?
- Read Genesis 3:1-24. What do you see as the immediate consequence of sin in this story? What was the long term effect? In what ways is atonement made for their sins?
 - How does God creating clothes for them illustrate his atonement for them in that situation?
- What did God promise would be the result of eating the fruit? In what ways did this promise come true or not come true?
- Read Leviticus 16. This passage describes the inner sacred room of the temple as a place that Aaron can only go once per year and must fill it with smoke so as not to see God on the Atonement Cover (Otherwise known as the mercy seat). Only the high priest can come in here once per year. Only priests can go into the room outside of the holy of holies. Everyone else can only enter the courtyard.
 - What do you think people thought about the accessibility of God? Do you think this was desirable for the priests or a burden for the priests? Why or why not?
 - Why all of the rules and regulations? Why can't the people just go in and encounter God? Why can't people be in God's presence outside of the tabernacle?
 - Where do you see atonement made for both original sin as well as personal sin? *Original is with the burnt offering... personal is confessed over the scapegoat.*
 - Where do you find hope for your life in this chapter of Leviticus?
- Read Romans 3:25. In the original Greek it says that God presented him as a *hilasterion*. Every other instance of this word in scripture specifically refers to the lid on the ark of the covenant otherwise known as the "mercy seat". In other words Paul says that God presented Jesus as the mercy seat! But at the crucifixion event. The curtain of the inner room of the temple was torn.
 - With all of this in mind, when Jesus dies on the cross what happens to the accessibility of God and his Atonement?
- What is the take home for you? How does this impact you?