

**BIG IDEA**

Atonement reminds us that Jesus would rather die than live without us.

**SCRIPTURE**

Hebrews 2:14-18, Colossians 2:13-14, Romans 3:22-26

**ICEBREAKER**

What is your favorite type of puzzle to solve? Sudoku? Crossword? Rubik Cube?

**OPENING THOUGHT**

The word Atonement is a big, theological word the Christian tradition has used to describe how and why the cross of Jesus solves humanity's biggest problem. What do you think the fundamental human problem is? How might the death of Jesus solve that problem?

**BIBLE DISCUSSION**

1. Read Hebrews 2:14-18. What do you notice? What basic problem does this passage convey? What is accomplished by Jesus' death?
2. Read Colossians 2:13-14. What basic problem does this passage convey? What is accomplished by Jesus' death?
3. Read Romans 3:22-26. What do you notice? What basic problem does this passage convey? What is accomplished by Jesus' death?

**LIFE APPLICATION**

4. How have you heard people talk about the death of Jesus? What similarities or differences did those understandings of Jesus' death have with the three ways of thinking about atonement listed below? (For more information on each atonement theory, see the Leader's Guide).
  - Victory Theory declares we have victory over sin.
  - Satisfaction Theory declares Jesus shores up where we fall short.
  - Penal Substitution Theory declares Jesus paid the price for us, taken the punishment we deserved.
5. Scot McKnight, in his book *"A Community Called Atonement"* uses a golf club analogy to illustrate how each way of thinking about the atonement sheds light on the fundamental mystery of the atonement. He says that atonement is difficult to explain because it has so many different dimensions, a lot like a bag of golf clubs. Each club is useful in different ways, but they're all aimed at the same target. To only use one club for an entire game would be to miss out on the rich array of options given to us. How would the redemptive work of God be limited if we applied only one Atonement Theory to life?
6. Is it difficult or refreshing to have permission to view all three atonement theories as useful "clubs" in your bag?
7. How do these theories address different areas of our life? Can you share how one might pertain to something you are going through right now?

**CHALLENGE**

The atoning work of Jesus is the beginning of God making all things right through his Son, Jesus. Jesus makes me right by restoring all of the toxicity and brokenness in my heart. He makes us right, healing the things that divide us against each other and keep us at a distance. He makes the world right, repairing the systems and structures that contribute to evil and injustice. Spend some time in prayer this week, praying over the answers to these questions:

- What restoration do you need?
- What restoration do we need?
- What restoration does the world need?