

## The Inscrutable Question: Infralapsarian Order Is Documented in Acts 16:30-31; Principles on Unlimited Atonement

11- Acts 16:30-31 logically reveals the infralapsarian order of the elective decrees:

**Acts 16:30 -** After he [ the Philippian jailer ] brought them [ Paul and Silas ] out he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

**v. 31 -** And they said, "(You) believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved ..."

- 1) The understood subject "you" refers specifically to the Philippian jailer but generally to all who ask the question, "What must I do to be saved?"
  - 2) Since "you" must exist in order to ask the question and to hear the response, then the **decree to create mankind** must come first.
  - 3) It is obvious that the jailer is not saved and thus something is required in order for him to appropriate salvation. Consequently, he must be fallen. This verifies elective decree number two: **to permit the Fall**.
  - 4) That Paul and Silas have the answer to his question indicates that a way of salvation has been provided for everyone. Elective decree number three: **to provide salvation to all mankind**.
  - 5) Appropriation of salvation requires a non-meritorious volitional decision to believe in Jesus Christ.
  - 6) The verb πιστεύω / *pisteuo* /: believe, is in the aorist active imperative and is therefore a challenge to the jailer's volition. He was free to believe in Christ for eternal life or to reject Him and remain under condemnation.
  - 7) This verb illustrates the fourth elective decree: **to elect those who believe in Christ and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe**. (We will note more concepts associated with the verb "to believe" shortly.)
  - 8) Finally, it is clear that those who do believe will be saved. This refers to the fifth elective decree: **to apply salvation to those who believe in Christ**.
- 12- Thus, the infralapsarian order of elective decrees clearly reveals that salvation is available to everyone and may be appropriated by means of faith alone in Christ alone: **Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved**.
- 13- The principle that anyone who believes in Christ receives salvation and eternal life is called Unlimited Atonement.
- 1) Unlimited atonement may be defined as the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross in which He suffered spiritual death as a substitute for the entire human race.
  - 2) Unlimited atonement also includes the fact that the judgment of every human sin in Christ was sufficient to satisfy the righteousness and justice of God resulting in propitiation.

**PROPITIATION:** Means "to satisfy" and refers to the fact that Jesus Christ was an acceptable substitute for the imputation of all human sins and that their judgment in His satisfied the righteousness of God for their payment. Because the Lord's work on the cross propitiated the Father's righteousness, His is free to show mercy to the believing sinner, remove his guilt, and forgive his presalvation sins. Propitiation is therefore the Godward side of the cross.



- 3) Unlimited atonement therefore means that salvation is a potential for the entire human race, but only becomes a reality for those who believe in Christ.
- 4) For whom was Christ "made sin" in 2 Corinthians 5:21? For everyone to whom God imputed soul life and simultaneously Adam's original sin at physical birth.

**2 Corinthians 5:21 - For God made Christ, who knew no sin [ **impeccability** ] to become sin as a substitute for us [ **atonement** ] for the purpose that we might become once and for all the righteousness of God through Him [ **imputation of God's righteousness at salvation** ].**

NOTE: For Jesus Christ to be the substitute for everyone, He must be judged for the sins of everyone. Spiritual death precedes personal sins. The Work of Jesus Christ was necessary to make atonement for our spiritual death. Thus, condemnation at physical birth must precede salvation.

- 5) Every person beginning with the birth of Cain has been born condemned at physical birth.
- 6) In eternity past God knew from His omniscience each and every person He would choose to select and His undiminished love prepared a solution through Christ.
- 7) Salvation is the divine solution to spiritual death that every person is free to accept or reject.
- 8) Consequently, condemnation is the greatest benefit that could accompany the imputation of human life.
- 9) Condemnation of the entire human race sets up the potential of salvation of the entire human race. God did not condemn us to send us to the lake of fire but so that we might be saved.