

The Atonement of Jesus Christ



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Why We Need the Atonement

Jesus Christ “came into the world . . . to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world . . . that through him all might be saved” (D&C 76:41–42, page 139). The great sacrifice He made to pay for our sins and overcome death is called the Atonement.

Every member of the human family will experience two kinds of death: physical death and spiritual death. Physical death is separation of the body and spirit. Spiritual death is separation from God. If Jesus Christ had not overcome these two kinds of death, we could not have returned to Heavenly Father.

But our wise Heavenly Father planned for a Savior to ransom (redeem) us from our sins and from death.

Christ Suffered and Died for Us

The Savior atoned for our sins and gave His life on the cross. It is impossible for us to fully understand how He suffered for all our sins. In the Garden of Gethsemane, the weight of our sins caused Him to bleed from every pore. Later as He hung upon the cross, Jesus continued to suffer for our sins and eventually suffered a painful death by one of the cruelest methods ever known.

Jesus loves us so much that He willingly suffered such spiritual and physical agony. Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son to suffer and die so that we can return to live with Him again.

We Will All Be Resurrected

On the third day after His Crucifixion, Christ took up His body again and became the first person to be resurrected. His friends who went to His tomb found two angels who told them, “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said” (Matthew 28:6, page 1240). Christ later showed Himself to many of His disciples.

Thus Christ overcame physical death. Through His Atonement, the Savior makes it possible for all people who have ever lived to be resurrected. Our spirits will be permanently reunited with our bodies. This condition is called immortality. All people will be resurrected with a perfect body.





We Can Be Saved from Our Sins

The Savior's Atonement makes it possible for us to overcome spiritual death. Although all people will be resurrected, only those who accept the Atonement of Jesus Christ will be saved from spiritual death.

We accept Christ's Atonement by having faith in Him. We show our faith by repenting of our sins, being baptized, receiving the Holy Ghost, and obeying His commandments. We live a new life as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Savior tells us, "For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent" (D&C 19:16, page 32). Christ did His part to atone for your sins. To make His Atonement fully effective in your life, you must strive to obey Him and repent of your sins. No matter what mistakes you have made, you can be forgiven and cleansed from sin. You can be prepared to return and live forever with your Heavenly Father.

Find hope in the Savior's promise to those who accept His Atonement and repent of their sins: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18, page 862).



"[Jesus Christ] shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people."

Mosiah 3:7, page 152

LOOK
THEM
UP

Additional Scriptures

- **1 John 1:7, page 1555**
(Jesus cleanses from sin)
- **2 Nephi 9:21–22, page 74**
(the Savior suffered for all people)
- **Mosiah 16:6–8, page 178;**
Alma 11:40–45, pages 236–37
(resurrection possible through Jesus)
- **Alma 34:9–17, pages 293–94**
(why we need the Atonement)
- **D&C 19:16–20, page 32**
(Jesus describes His suffering)



Personal Experience

When I first went to prison, I tried to deny and justify my behavior by blaming others. As I accepted my responsibility and the pain I had caused, I began to feel guilt, hopelessness, shame, and deep loss. I remember the thoughts of suicide—of ending it all to escape the feelings that consumed my soul.

I am grateful for the service missionaries and volunteers and the hope they brought to me through the programs and gospel lessons they provided. Their faith and testimonies, along with my own prayerful pleas for forgiveness to my Heavenly Father and Redeemer, helped bring me out of my deep depression.

One day while sitting in the chapel, an overwhelming feeling of peace came into me, and I finally felt within my heart and soul that the Lord had accepted my pleas for forgiveness. My dark feelings left and—similar to what Alma the Younger said in the Book of Mormon—I was no longer harrowed up by the guilt of my sins (see Alma 36:19, page 299). I felt at peace! The Atonement of Jesus Christ had rescued me!

I testify that the Savior “will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities” (Alma 7:12, page 225). Jesus Christ will save any of us from our sins and despair if we turn to Him with fulness of heart.

“I finally felt within my heart and soul that the Lord had accepted my pleas for forgiveness.”

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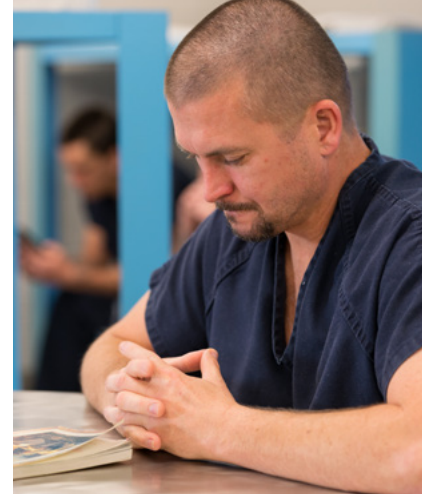
RESPONSE FORM

What is physical death? What is spiritual death?

Why did Jesus Christ perform the Atonement?

How does your knowledge of the Resurrection affect your behavior now?

How will you live differently from now on so that the Atonement of Jesus Christ can cleanse you from sin?





Why is it important to you to be forgiven of your sins?

How will you show gratitude for the Savior's sacrifice?

Is there anything else that you have learned from this lesson that you would like to share?

Name _____ Offender # _____

Please answer the questions on this response form, detach, and return to the address below:

Correctional Services
50 East North Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
1-801-240-2644

Please request the next lesson you would like to study: _____