

Dear Christopher,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked if Christ died for your sins and paid for your sins, then you wondered why you are still required to atone for your sins or apologize to anyone. You wondered what Christ really did for you, if you still need to forgive others to be absolved.

When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden he plunged the entire human race into sin. Each of us is born in sin and in need of a redeemer. Jesus' mission on earth as a perfect human being was to redeem the fallen race by dying as a ransom for Adam and all of his progeny. "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (I Corinthians 15:22) Jesus' sacrifice can in no way be minimized. It was monumental. In fact, it was the greatest sacrifice that has ever been made. Jesus' death and resurrection freed the entire human race from the curse of death (because of Adam's sin) and opened the way for his faithful followers to reign with him in heaven and for the rest of the world to come forth from their graves and have an opportunity for everlasting life on earth. This period of time is known as the 1000 year Judgment Day of Christ's kingdom. Without Jesus' sacrifice for Adam's original sin, there would be no resurrection either in heaven or on earth for the human race. People would die without ever having a hope of returning to life. Because of Jesus' sacrifice even the vilest offender will have a second chance to live a righteous life without the inherited sinful nature that he has now. However, to attain life everlasting, he will have to ask forgiveness and make restitution to everyone he hurt or offended in his past life. Then he will have to learn what God's righteousness is, practice it in his daily life, and finally write it on his heart so that so that it will become part of his very nature. For some who led extremely sinful lives and are unrepentant that task will be difficult. If the offender continues to sin in the kingdom after a reasonable period of instruction, he will be taken away in the second death.

If Jesus' sacrifice was so all encompassing, why then ask for forgiveness when we sin? Jesus' death in no way absolves us from asking for forgiveness for our daily sins. His sacrifice redeemed us from the original sin that we inherited from Adam. That is what is meant by, "He died for our sins [our inherited sinful natures]." Forgiveness is always in order, both now in in the kingdom to come. When we do not ask for forgiveness or forgive those who have offended us, we will have a much more difficult time in the Kingdom on earth when forgiveness will be required to attain everlasting life.

Redemption is the free gift of Jesus, but our salvation must be earned. One of the ways to earn that salvation is to forgive those who have offended us as well as ask forgiveness of those we have offended. Jesus told us, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." (Matthew 6:14-15)

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio