



## Doctrine 6: Atonement through Christ

*We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by His suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.*

### Big ideas

- Jesus' life, death and resurrection opened the way for humanity to be reconciled to a loving God
- Biblical metaphors for the atonement include: ransom, punishment, sacrifice, victory and love
- Understanding the generosity of God motivates us to tell others about Jesus

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”

*(John 3:16).*

The Bible uses many metaphors to help us understand how Jesus made peace and restored our relationship with God. This is what is referred to as atonement.

**Ransom** – The payment Jesus made to secure our freedom from sin and death.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

**Law courts** – The punishment for our sins was experienced by Jesus on the cross.

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

**Sacrifice** – Jesus died in our place as a sacrifice to restore fellowship between God and people.

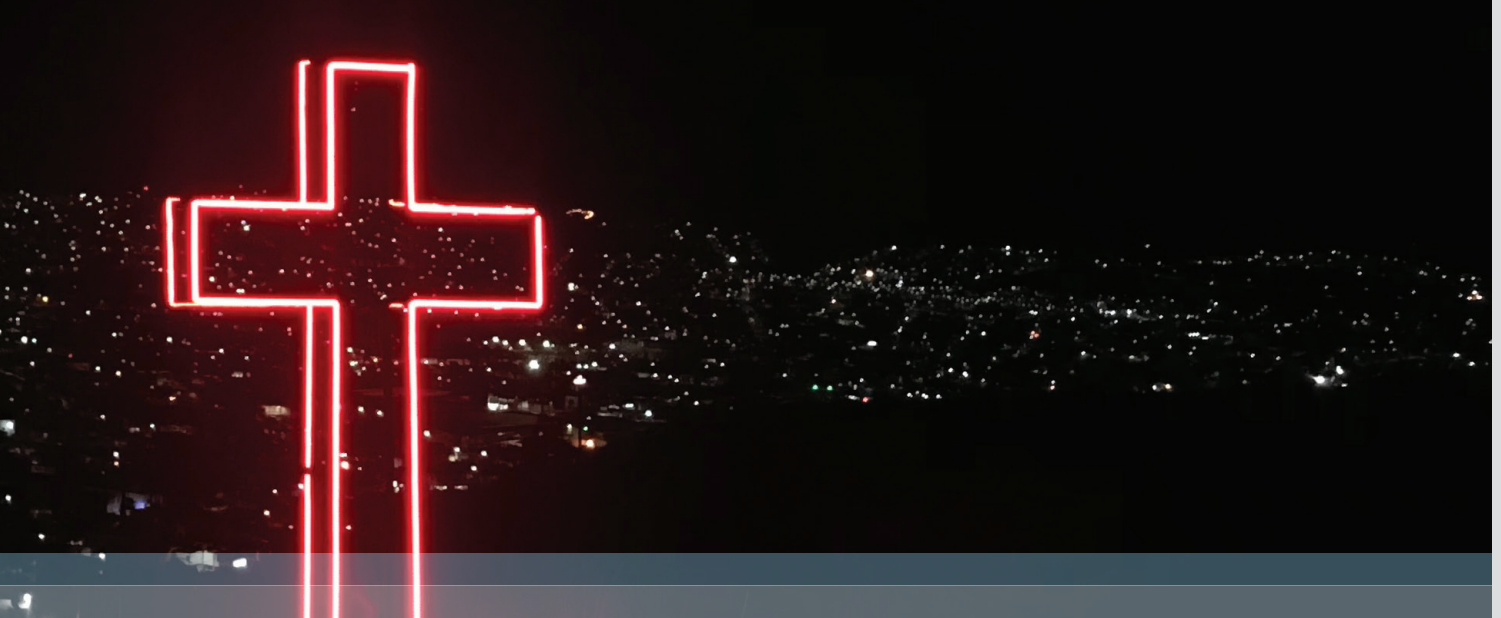
“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

**Victory** – Jesus defeated sin, death and powers of evil and we can share in that victory.

“He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” (Colossians 2:13–15).

**Love** – The self-giving love of God for people and this world.

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16).



On Good Friday, Jesus died to take our sin and death into himself. On the cross, Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice of love – to die for us. On Easter Sunday, Jesus defeated sin and death. In Christ, we can now share in his resurrected life and be saved. Jesus' death demonstrates his great love and the resurrection demonstrates his incredible victory. We share in both his death and his resurrected life.

“*If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin*” (Romans 6:5-7).

This relationship with God is freely available to all people. When we appreciate and experience the power of the cross, we are motivated to share the love of Jesus with others. Evangelism is the sharing of the good news of God's love and is the heart and soul of the Christian story.

To be a soldier in The Salvation Army is to join in that great calling and to care for the needy and disadvantaged.

## Putting belief into practice

*I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.*

- **Be ready to give an answer –**

“*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander*” (1 Peter 3:15-16).

- **Preach the gospel** – Study what the Bible has to say about what Jesus did for us. Be ready to explain what God has done for us and how people can follow Jesus and become a Christian. What difference has the gospel made in your life? What was life before? What is it like now?
- **Caring for the needy and the disadvantaged** – Don't back away from friendships with people who don't know Jesus – or people who are very different from ourselves. Spend time with people and show them the generosity and love of God. Be intentional in building relationships and showing Christ's love to the needy and disadvantaged in your community.

## Discuss

- Share your testimony of how you came to know Jesus and follow him.
- Discuss how you can show the love of Christ in 'caring for the needy and disadvantaged' in the community.
- How is The Salvation Army serving the community in your area?