

*This midweek study will explore the doctrine of propitiation. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.*

#### Essential Doctrine: Christ as Propitiation

Because of God's righteousness and holiness, humanity's sins must be atoned for in order for people to be reconciled to God. As the propitiation for sins, Christ's death is the appeasement or satisfaction of God's wrath against sin. Christ's propitiation for our sins demonstrates both God's great love toward sinners (1 John 4:10), as well as the necessary payment that results from the penalty of sins (Rom. 3:26).

#### 1 Jesus' propitiation removes us from God's wrath and restores us to God's favor (Eph. 2:3-7).

Option: Imagine you have a friend, Jill, who has done something hurtful toward another friend, Jane. Jill wants to make things right with Jane. Jane tells Jill, "I forgive you, but I don't really care to be friends anymore. The hurt is just too deep." Jill is still pretty upset about the divide between her and her friend. She wants to restore the relationship.

- ▶ *What suggestions might you offer to Jill before she goes to talk with Jane?*
- ▶ *What might you suggest to Jill after Jane said she forgave Jill but didn't want to be friends?*
- ▶ *Imagine Jane and Jill did reconcile. How would you know? What would you see in their relationship that proves propitiation, or moving from being under someone's wrath to being in someone's favor, has happened?*

#### Read Ephesians 2:3-7.

- ▶ *Before Jesus died for us, how did God view us (v. 3)?*
- ▶ *What is God's plan for all eternity (v. 7)? How does He view us now?*
- ▶ *What changed between verses 3 and 7? How did Jesus make propitiation for us with God?*

#### 2 Jesus' propitiation demonstrates God's great love toward sinners (1 John 4:10).

- ▶ *Consider our previous example with Jill and Jane. Which girl wanted to reconcile?*
- ▶ *How would it be different if Jane were the one who wanted to make things right? Would it be more impressive for Jane or Jill to initiate reconciliation?*
- ▶ *If Jane wanted to pursue reconciliation with Jill, and she asked for your advice on how to go about it, what suggestions would you give her?*

#### Read 1 John 4:10.

- ▶ *Who initiated our propitiation?*
- ▶ *How does the fact that God started the reconciliation process help you treasure him more?*
- ▶ *What implications do you see in God loving us first? What might this imply about how we treat those who wronged us? How can loving them first show them a picture of God's love?*

#### 3 Jesus' propitiation upholds God's righteousness in forgiving sinners (Rom. 3:25-26).

- ▶ *We've talked about Jesus' propitiation and what it does for us. Does anyone see a potential problem with us being back in God's favor?*
- ▶ *What issue might present itself if God forgives us? If a judge simply forgave a convicted criminal, how might people react? Why would they react that way? Would they be right?*
- ▶ *So what problem exists if God forgives us? What necessary virtue does God seem to be overlooking if he forgives us?*

#### Read Romans 3:25-26.

- ▶ *How does this text show that God is still just and righteous even when He forgives undeserving, sinful people?*
- ▶ *How does Jesus' propitiation help us see how big, glorious, magnificent, and gracious our God is?*

#### WRAP IT UP

- ▶ *If you were to try to teach Jesus' propitiation to your club/sports team/musical group/friends, what analogy would you use and why?*