

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF
ATONEMENT IN THE WRITINGS OF
JOHN R. W. STOTT AND
ELLEN G. WHITE**

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Introduction

The study examines two evangelical penal substitutionary theologies of atonement presented by John Stott and Ellen White. It adopts a descriptive and analytic approach for examining the respective atonement theologies of both authors. Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of the dissertation and the methodology adopted. Chapter 2 examines the different theories of atonement in Christian theology. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the respective atonement theologies of Stott and White. Chapter 5 is a comparative analysis of the concept of atonement in both authors, while chapter 6 summarizes the conclusions of the study.

Purpose

The purpose of the research is to describe, analyze, and compare the concepts of atonement as articulated in the theological writings of Stott and White. The study endeavors to explore the contrasting scope of atonement presented in the two respective theological systems. It also aims at discovering whether there are any evangelical theological bases for a rapprochement between Stott's atonement theology (which is centered on the cross) and that of White (which is likewise centered on the cross, but also includes the heavenly sanctuary ministry of Christ). Additionally, the research also aims at finding out the reasons for the differences in their atonement theologies, since they both subscribe to the penal substitutionary view. Another goal of the research is to discover any distinctive contributions that both theologies have made to the Christian theology of atonement.

Method

In order to bring out the similarities and differences between the two theologies of atonement, the study examines their respective assumptions, presuppositions, and methodology. Other relevant criteria used in the comparative study include the centrality of the cross, the achievement of the cross, atonement as substitution, the high-priestly ministry of Christ, and the scope of the atonement.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the study shows that the atonement theologies of Stott and White reveal a common commitment to two pillars of evangelicalism, namely,

the supreme authority of Scripture and the penal substitutionary view of atonement. However, critical differences between the two theologies in respect to the presuppositions in their doctrines of God in relation to atonement on the cross versus atonement in stages, the extent of the atonement, the issue of the revocability of justification, the cosmic-controversy theme, and the high-priestly ministry of Christ seem to account for the differences observed in the theologies. Overall, White's theology seems to be broader in its presentation of the scope of the atonement and seems to be more consistent with the scriptural evidence. It is hoped that the renewed interest in the judgment aspect of the atonement by some evangelical theologians in recent times may lead to a more sympathetic examination of the broader view of White on atonement in the wider evangelical theological arena.