

## Preamble

redeemed and believing elect is not in question; God works in them, keeping them throughout their earthly pilgrimage, to present them faultless in glory at the last day. None of this is at issue here. Let me say it again: *None of this is at issue here.*

So what is? Just this: What, exactly, is offered to sinners in the free offer?<sup>20</sup> If the redemption Christ wrought is particular in its scope – that is, limited in its extent – how can the offer be free and sincere to every sinner? Putting it the other way: If Christ has not died for every sinner, how can every sinner be offered salvation? There are two questions here. *First*, what is the extent of the atonement? *Secondly*, if this is limited, how does it impinge on the free offer?

Before I set out my answers to these questions, let me explain my purpose. There is a theological issue, yes, and it is vital to be as accurate and as clear as we can when forming our doctrines and practices. But I am not writing this book merely to engage in an academic debate. As I said in my *Offer*:

The free offer is an important principle or doctrine, yes, but it is not so much a controversy over doctrine which is at stake; *it is the practical consequences of that controversy.* I want to let believers know how far we have fallen away from real gospel preaching. Above all, I pray that preachers who read my book – and I include myself – may be moved to fulfil the task God has laid upon them.<sup>21</sup>

The same applies to this book. I am convinced we need to preach the free offer without fear or embarrassment. Some, who would like to do this, feel that particular redemption militates against it.<sup>22</sup> Wanting to be true to Scripture, they think limited atonement stops them making invitations to all. They are mistaken.

But my aim is not merely to prove a point. Yes, I want to do what I can to remove, in a biblical way, hindrances from the path of those who would like to be free with sinners – to rebut, especially, the mistaken view that particular redemption rules it out.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, I hope to show that the opposite is the case; without a particular, definite and absolute redemption for all the elect, there would be no free offer to sinners.

Yes, I want to do all that. But I want to go further. I pray that my book will encourage all who are seeking to address sinners with the free offer – to encourage them to go on with it, and to be even

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more bold, to have even more love for sinners, to reach full biblical freeness in the glorious work. Indeed, above all, I hope my book will contribute to the dawning of a better day than many of us know at present – a day in which God raises up men who will not only biblically address sinners with the full and free offer of Christ, *but do so with success.*<sup>24</sup>

So let us begin.