

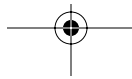


preface

Academics are prone to lamentation—it is an occupational hazard. About three years ago the editors were lamenting the fact that there was no *Festschrift* for our esteemed colleague Roger Nicole. To that lament we added another. As we were bemoaning the paucity of really good thinking on the doctrine of the atonement, the idea for a book began to flicker in our minds. As we massaged the idea, we began to see a vague image of a resolution for our lament. We knew that one of his favorite doctrines, one to which he had devoted considerable academic attention over his long career, was the atonement. The fact that evangelical readers have not seen much on this topic since John Stott's *The Cross of Christ* in 1986 made the project even more appealing. What better way to honor our colleague and dear brother than a book devoted to the topic of the atonement? This way we could, so to speak, kill two birds with one stone.

Eventually, we took our idea to Dan Reid of InterVarsity Press, who suggested, in so many words, that we could kill a third bird. We could stimulate renewed discussion of the doctrine of the atonement among college students, seminarians and other scholars, and honor Roger at the same time. Thus, we designed this *festschrift* as a textbook.

One final task was to assemble a superb team of evangelical scholars and ask them to turn their academic talents to the doctrine of the atonement. Our scholars were eager to participate, both because they wanted to honor Roger for his many years of service to the church and because they wanted to address the all-too-neglected doctrine of the atonement from their particular angle of expertise. The caliber of the contributors may be seen as a tribute to Roger's reputation and relationships.





In a career spanning over half a century, Roger Nicole has been identified with a number of important doctrines such as inerrancy of Scripture, the role of women in the church and, more recently, opposition to open theism; but the doctrine of the atonement retains a special place in his theological heart. These essays are offered in fond affection for a dear friend and superb scholar.

Special thanks to two superb graduate assistants, Jeremy Alexander and Ryan Reeves, to Rev. David Bailey for sharing his recollections of Roger Nicole, and to John Muether for the subject index.

