

Essential Truths I: Living With God

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The Blood

The foundation of God's plan of salvation is the blood of Christ, shed on the Cross. **Ephesians 1:7-8** tells us:

New International Version: "In [Jesus] *we have redemption through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding."

God's Word: "*Through the blood of his Son, we are set free from our sins.* God forgives our failures because of his overflowing kindness..."

New Century Version: "In Christ *we are set free by the blood of his death*, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God's grace, which he has given to us so fully and freely..."

New Living Translation: "He is so rich in kindness that *he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son*, and our sins are forgiven. He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding."

The Living Bible: "So overflowing is his kindness toward us that *he took away all our sins through the blood of his Son*, by whom we are saved; and he has showered down upon us the richness of his grace."

The New Testament in Modern English: "It is through [Jesus], *at the cost of his own blood*, that we are redeemed, freely forgiven through that full and generous grace which has overflowed into our lives and opened our eyes to the truth."

The Word

God

Origins

Jesus

The Cross

The Blood

Resurrection

Repentance

Grace

Faith

Water Baptism

Holy Spirit

Temptation

Fellowship

Generosity

Kingdom of God

Worship

Prayer

Eternity

Second Coming

The Call

The Message: “Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, *his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross*, we’re free people – free of penalties and punishments chalked up by our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. *Abundantly free!*”

The Amplified Bible: “In [Jesus] we have redemption (deliverance and salvation) *through His blood*, the remission (forgiveness) of our offenses (shortcomings and trespasses), in accordance with the riches and the generosity of His gracious favor, which He lavished on us...”

The shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross was the essential condition for us to receive forgiveness for our sins and acceptance into the presence of God.

The blood of Christ is God’s solution to the problem of mankind. So in order to understand the solution, we need to first understand the problem. That problem is called sin.

The Problem of Sin

Sin is not just a matter of doing something wrong. We tend to think of sin as being the acts of sin. But there is also a state of sin – the state of being out of relationship with God due to a hardened heart, a darkened mind and a corrupted behavior.

Read the following descriptions of sin from God’s perspective:

Read Romans 1:18-31

Read Ephesians 2:1-3

Read Ephesians 4:17-19

Read Colossians 1:21

Sin devastates a person’s life, destroying and consuming. It has four principal effects:

- Sin separates you from God (**Isaiah 59:2**)
- Sin brings guilt (**Psalms 38:4**)
- Sin allows Satan to accuse you (**Zechariah 3:1-4; Revelation 12:10**)
- Sin demands the death penalty (**Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 1:32**)

Read Romans 3:23-24

As we have previously seen, sin is defined by the Bible as “fall[ing] short of the glory of God.” **Romans 3:23** tells us the problem: “...for *all* have sinned...” **Romans 3:24**, however, tells us the solution:

“...for all...are justified freely by his grace *through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*”

Read Colossians 1:19-20

God’s solution was redemption. Redemption means the purchasing back of something that was lost or stolen. Note the following examples of everyday redemp-

tion in the Bible (**Exodus 21:29-30; Leviticus 25:29-30**).

Read Psalm 49:7-9

What kind of price could ever redeem the whole of mankind from judgment and death? The price was too high – far beyond anything that man could meet himself. Only one life could match the heavy redemption debt that mankind had – and that life was the life of the Son of God himself. The price tag for the redemption of mankind was the blood of Jesus Christ.

The Shedding of Blood

Read Hebrews 9:22

Right throughout the Old Testament, the shedding of blood was necessary to eliminate the penalty of judgment against a person's sin. Down through the annals of history, countless animals were slaughtered, their blood shed on the altar, as sacrifice for the remission of sins.

Read Leviticus 17:11

The blood represents the life of the creature. In the shedding of blood, life was poured out for another. It is the seriousness of the problem of sin that necessitated such a drastic solution.

One powerful illustration of this redemption through the shedding of blood is found in the book of Exodus. When God rescued the people of Israel from Egypt, he commanded them to put the blood of a lamb on their doorposts.

Read Exodus 12:13

God said, "...when I see the blood, I will pass over you." When the angel of death saw the blood of the substitute lamb on the doorposts of a home, he "passed over" them and did not judge that household. This great redemption became known as "the Passover."

Read 1 Corinthians 5:7

The sacrificial lamb was a picture of the coming Lamb of God – Jesus (**John 1:29**). His shed blood was not simply a stop-gap measure, such as had been with the sacrifice of animals. His blood was shed "once for all" to redeem our lives to God. Instead of being based on constant sacrifice, but on a "once for all" sacrifice (**Hebrews 10:1-4**). The Old Covenant provisions for animal sacrifice were only a "shadow of the good things to come."

Read 1 Peter 1:18-19

These two verses sum up God's plan of redemption. From this passage we know:

- **The price of redemption:** "...it was not with silver or gold that you were redeemed...but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect."

- **The goal of redemption:** “...you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers...”

The Reason for the Blood

The salvation package based on the shedding of Jesus’ blood on the Cross is comprehensive. It solves every part of the human predicament.

The Blood is for God

Because of the blood of Christ, the barrier of sin, which stood between you and God, is dissolved. This means three things for you:

- The blood of Christ brings “peace with God” (**Romans 5:1**)
- The blood of Christ saves you from God’s wrath (**Romans 5:9**)
- The blood of Christ reconciles you to God (**Romans 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:18**)

Because of the blood of Christ, fellowship with God has been fully restored. God’s holiness has been fully satisfied.

The Blood is for man

The blood of Christ not only satisfies the holy requirements of God. It also meets the innermost need of every person.

- The blood of Christ cleanses you from guilt (**Hebrews 10:22**)
- The blood of Christ brings you close to God (**Colossians 1:20-22**)
- The blood of Christ gives you boldness to enter God’s presence (**Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-21**)

The issue of guilt is a particularly important one. It is important to understand that, contrary to common wisdom, guilt is not bad. God created our conscience to be a watchdog, letting us know when we have done wrong. Guilt has been designed to lead us to God in order to receive his forgiveness. But unresolved guilt will cripple a person emotionally.

Read 1 John 1:7-9

God’s answer to guilt is not the world’s answer to guilt. God does say, “Hey, it’s all right! You’ve got nothing to feel guilty about!” No, God does not sweep sin under the carpet. He exposes the sin, then deals with the guilt through the blood of Christ. As **Hebrews 9:14** tells us:

“How much more, then, will the blood of Christ...cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”

The Blood is for Satan

Satan’s chief activity in this age is as an “accuser of the brothers” (**Revelation 12:10**) but standing against Satan as our accuser is none other than the Lord

Jesus himself, who is our “advocate” before God’s holiness (**1 John 2:1-2**). Jesus stands against Satan as our High Priest, but the blood that cancels out Satan’s accusations is his own (**Hebrews 9:11-14**).

The blood of Christ has a very real meaning to Satan himself. It means two devastating things to him:

- ➔ The blood of Christ puts God on man’s side against the devil (**Romans 8:31,33-34**)
- ➔ The blood of Christ dissolves Satan’s legal rights of ownership (**Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Timothy 2:6**)

As the accuser, Satan will try to use guilt to stop people from feeling worthy to enter God’s presence. It is true that in ourselves we are totally unworthy. But the blood of Christ makes us worthy *in him!* The blood wipes out every accusation that Satan may bring against us.

The Barrier of Sin Broken

Read Romans 8:3-4

The Cross totally demolished the barrier of sin between you and God. Forgiveness has been extended to you – not because God is turning a blind eye to your sin, but because the blood of Christ has eradicated your sin before God.

Read Isaiah 1:18

Read Psalm 103:10-12

There are five words which the Bible uses frequently to describe the effect the blood of Christ has on your life:

Atonement

Read Romans 3:25

Atonement is the act of taking away the sin of a person. An atoning sacrifice is one where someone or something substitutes for a person before God, receiving judgment in their place. In that sacrifice, innocence is swapped for guilt, righteousness for sin, peace for judgment.

Read 1 John 2:2

Justification

Read again Romans 5:9

To be justified means that we now have peace with God (**Romans 5:1**). It means that the court records against us in heaven have been wiped clean. Because of the blood, we can stand before God with no judgment hanging over our heads. As one person put it, to be “justified” means it is “just [as] if I’d [never sinned].”

Read Acts 13:39

Redemption

Read again Ephesians 1:7

As we have already seen, “to redeem” means to “buy back.” Because of disobedience to God, mankind had sold itself out to Satan’s power. The blood of Christ was the price God paid to buy us back (**1 Corinthians 6:20**).

Read Colossians 1:13-14

Reconciliation

Read again Colossians 1:19-20

To be “reconciled” means “to be brought back into relationship” with God. All the barriers between us and God have been broken. Fellowship with God is restored.

Read Ephesians 2:13

Sanctification

Read 1 Corinthians 6:11

Sanctification means “the setting apart of something for holy use.” To be *sanctified* means “to be set apart by God, to be made holy” (read **1 Corinthians 1:2**). The cleansing effect of the blood of Christ is the basis for a holy walk with the Lord (**Hebrews 13:12**).

Read Hebrews 10:14

A Better Word

Read Hebrews 12:23-24

The Bible tells us that “the sprinkled blood [of Jesus]...speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” In order to understand what these means let’s have a look at the word that each blood spoke.

The blood of Abel

Read Genesis 4:3-16

After Cain had killed Abel, God declared:

“Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.”

Abel’s blood cried out for vengeance and punishment against Cain, and the result was a curse upon his murderer’s life (**Genesis 4:11**).

The blood of Christ

Like the blood of Abel, the spilt blood of Christ also speaks out, but its message is different. Unlike Abel’s blood, the blood of Christ does not cry out for vengeance but for forgiveness (note **Luke 23:33-34**). The result is not a curse, but blessing (note **Galatians 3:13**).

The ones who called out for Jesus to be crucified cried out: “Let his blood be on us and on our children!” (**Matthew 27:24**). But don’t think it was just the Jewish leaders of Jesus’ day who were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. Every single one of us was responsible. Every one of us nailed Christ’s hands and feet to the Cross. The words of the Jewish leaders were our words: “Let his blood be on us and on our children!”

But the wonder of God’s love for us is that God turned this curse upside down. The blood of Jesus now covers us, not in judgment, but in forgiveness. The blood of Christ speaks a far better word than the blood of Abel.

The Seal of the Covenant

Read Luke 22:20

The blood of Christ was the seal of a covenant God has made between you and Him. Jesus described the terms of your relationship with God as “a new covenant in my blood.” The blood of Christ is called “the blood of the eternal covenant” (**Hebrews 13:20**) – the everlasting basis of your fellowship with God.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:16

When we join with other Christians around the Lord’s Supper (**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**), the cup that we drink is called “a participation in the blood of Christ.” Just as the life of the creature is in the blood (**Leviticus 17:11**), so the blood of Christ represents the life of Christ.

Read John 6:53-57

The blood of Christ is the basis for your life in God. It is not just an historic event, a past-tense fact that you believe in from a distance. The blood of Christ has a real and powerful effect on your day-to-day life. It is life and nourishment to you. It has changed the course of your life forever.

As **Hebrews 9:12-14** declares, rendered in the *New Living Translation*:

“Once for all time [Jesus] took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took his own blood, and with it he secured our salvation forever. Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls...could cleanse people’s bodies from ritual defilement. Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our hearts from deeds that lead to death so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.”