

Christ's Blood

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[0 : 00] Well, please turn with me in your Bibles tonight to Hebrews chapter 12. The New Testament book of Hebrews in chapter 12.!

! Thank you for welcoming me tonight. It's a joy to stand in a pulpit that's familiar and to see faces that are familiar and to have the privilege of preaching God's word.

At Grace Baptist Church in Warsaw, we are praying for you all. for John and Joseph in particular.

And may God draw near to you, even in the preaching of his word tonight.

The realities that we consider here, the realities that we have just sung of, cannot, hear me, they cannot be taken from us. Period.

I want to talk to you tonight about the blood of Christ. Something you know plenty about. But, it was just mentioned in both of the hymns that we've just sung.

[1 : 01] And if tonight all I had to offer you was another bloody animal sacrifice where you would have to come back again tomorrow, and have another one sacrificed and another one, because they never really accomplished what they symbolized, turning God's wrath aside permanently from his people, they only pointed forward to that.

If that was all I had to offer you, if all I had to offer you was try really hard this week, and be a good person, and you'll be okay. If that's all I had, then we have no reason to be here tonight.

I have no real solid ground for you, but tonight I can point you to the blood of Christ. We're going to drink from the cup in a few moments, the fruit of the vine which symbolizes the blood of Christ.

And have the blood of Christ to hold out before you tonight as a sure and certain, unmovable hope for sinners who have been saved by that blood.

Again, the realities that we consider here tonight cannot be taken from us. Their sweet comfort, when it seems all around us, is crumbling away.

[2 : 16] Turn to Hebrews 12. Look with me at verse 24. If you look up at verse 22, you see, but you have come, and it says you've come to Mount Zion, to the assembly, 23, the assembly of the firstborn, and then to verse 24, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

And I want us to think about that blood of Jesus that is better tonight. I want to think about why it's better than Abel's blood, why it's better than the sacrifices, and a host of reasons the scriptures point us to why the blood of Jesus is better, and not just better, why it is the best.

If you didn't know the blood of Christ was significant, and all of you do, I trust all of you do, you might be able to figure that out by flipping through a hymnal. We sang a couple of hymns tonight that mention the blood of Christ.

Now, just because something is mentioned a lot in a hymnal doesn't mean that it's important, but in this case, it's reflective of a reality that is mentioned frequently in the scriptures. And so, just for fun for a minute tonight, grab a hymnal.

Pull out your Trinity hymnal, and turn with me in the back, not to hymn number, but to page number 711. Right? There's little page numbers at the back, page number 711, and there you'll find that you're in the index of subjects and occasions.

[3 : 42] The back of the hymnal has some really great resources. If you're ever looking for a hymn that includes a certain scripture, there's a scripture index in the back. If you're looking for a hymn about sorrow, if you're looking for a hymn about joy, look that up in the subjects and occasions.

You might find a hymn about it that might do your soul good. All sorts of useful references in the back of the hymnal here. But tonight, I want you to look at page 711 there, and we're in the section on Christ.

The overall heading in this section is Christ. And then it tells us, breaks that section down into different things. There's the advent of Christ, the atoning work of Christ, the birth of Christ.

And then, in the left-hand column, partway down on page 711, there is the blood of Christ. And there are about 16 hymns referenced there where the theme is the blood of Christ.

I just did a quick check while we were singing, and man of sorrows, which mentions the blood of Christ, sealed my pardon with his blood. That's not in this list. So it's not an exhaustive index, but there's at least 16 hymns in your hymnal that touch on the theme of the blood of Christ.

[4 : 51] There are more than that. Even the one that we sang tonight. So just flipping through your hymnal, you might begin to get the idea that the blood of Christ is something that's really significant and important.

Again, that's reflective of the reality that if you flip through your Bible, you will frequently come across the blood of Christ and see that it is very important, exceedingly so.

So when we drink this cup that's before us tonight, filled with the fruit of the vine, we're to be reminded of the blood of Christ. Isn't that what Jesus said when he took the cup and he gave it to his disciples on that night?

For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Now, when he said, this is my blood, he didn't mean literally, this is my blood.

That was still in his veins at that point. It hadn't been shed yet. He meant this is a representation, a picture of my blood. Just like, I didn't bring my phone in with me, but I could show you a picture of my family.

[5 : 49] I could hold that up to you. I've used this illustration. I probably used it in Bremen before I used it in Warsaw. But I could hold up that picture of my family and say, this is my family. And you would know what I mean. It's not literally my family.

It's a, those pixels, that's a representation of them. I didn't bring my family tonight. I'm sorry. I know that disappoints some of you. I would rather see them than me too.

But they are, they are home tonight back in, back in Warsaw. But you understand that when Jesus says, this is my blood, when he passed that cup around, it didn't literally mean it was his blood. It was a representation of, or a picture of it.

So you say, that's all well and good, but why is that blood of Christ so important? Well, Hebrews, I think, helps us by comparing the blood of Jesus to other blood. So let's talk about those comparisons and then notice why, for other reasons from Scripture, why Jesus' blood is better.

As the Scriptures unfold and explain for us what exactly it is that the blood of Christ does, what it accomplishes. So that when we partake tonight, and we hear those words, this is my blood, shed for you.

[6 : 59] I hope it will hold greater meaning. Not that you're going to hear something tonight that's earth-shattering that you haven't heard about the blood of Christ, but I hope it will help you focus your mind on just what it is that we are partaking of tonight.

Just what we should remember as we partake. So what is the blood of Jesus compared to? Well, here where we've turned in Hebrews 12, it's compared to the blood of Abel.

Look at that just again for a moment. You've come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, into the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Now after Cain killed his brother Abel, do you remember what God said to Cain?

Genesis 4, verses 10 and 11, and the Lord said, what have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.

And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hands. And so when the author of Hebrews says, speaks a better word than the blood of Abel, he's not just making stuff up.

[8 : 00] The blood of Abel spoke from the ground. And God heard that voice and carried out vengeance on Cain. Matthew 23, so that on you, Jesus is speaking, on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah.

It seems that Abel's blood, when it cried out from the earth, it opened its mouth to receive that blood, that it cried out for vengeance. And God heard and answered the voice of Abel's blood as it were.

The blood of Christ also cries out. But it cries out with a different voice than the voice of Abel's blood. The blood of Christ calls out for forgiveness for all who are washed in that blood.

And I want you to see that in a few moments. We're going to look at a bunch of passages about what the blood of Christ accomplishes. But isn't that a better voice?

Five bleeding wounds he bears. Forgive him, oh forgive, they cry. Abel's blood cries out for vengeance. The blood of Jesus cries out for your forgiveness.

[9 : 12] Remarkable truth. Isn't that a better blood? Better voice. Hebrews also compares the blood of Jesus to the blood of the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

Turn over to Hebrews 9 with me. Hebrews compares Jesus' sacrifice to the sacrifices.

But here in Hebrews 9 it explicitly compares His blood. So Hebrews 9 verses 13 and 14. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Everywhere you look in the Old Testament there's blood in some ways. And Hebrews and really the rest of the New Testament shows us that those bloody sacrifices are fulfilled in the one true sacrifice of Christ.

Those sacrifices couldn't ultimately purify. Yes, Israel had to abide by them. They turned aside the wrath of God as it were for a time but in and of themselves they were markers pointing forward to the sacrifice.

[10 : 31] The Israelites weren't saved by those bloody sacrifices. They were saved by the sacrifice of Jesus. And so the sacrifice the blood of Jesus that was shed was better than those bloody sacrifices.

They could they could grant ceremonial cleansing but the blood of Jesus truly cleanses our conscience to serve the living God.

That's a better blood. And so His blood is compared to that of the Old Testament sacrifices and it's better. Now it's it's probably clear to you that the blood of Jesus is better not just because of what we see here in Hebrews but because of your knowledge of Scripture.

You know something about the blood of Christ because you've read your Bible before. You've heard it preached before. So let's think about some of the things that you know from Scripture about why the blood of Jesus is better.

Why was it better than those Old Testament sacrifices beyond what we've said? Well, first of all it was the blood of a human. An animal could never ultimately suffice as a sacrifice for the one creature that was created in the image of God.

[11 : 37] Man, an animal sacrifice isn't ultimately going to work. A person is going to have to be sacrificed in our place. So Jesus is truly a man.

Hebrews tells us that too. You don't have to turn there but back in Hebrews 2 part of verse 14 since therefore the children, us, share in flesh and blood he himself likewise partook of the same things. You ever think about that? That unless Jesus became a man he couldn't be sacrificed. He couldn't die. His blood couldn't be shed. He had to become a man. He likewise partook of the same things flesh and blood.

Verse 16 of Hebrews 2 for surely it is not angels that he helps but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

If Jesus had stayed in heaven he couldn't have been our high priest. He couldn't have represented us before God. He couldn't have been the sacrifice for sin. He had to become a man like us.

[12 : 48] Animal sacrifices would never suffice. 1 Timothy 2 5 For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and the man Christ Jesus.

So one way that the blood of Jesus is better is the blood of a man not an animal. But not just any man will do. A sinful man can't take the place of another sinful man.

It had to be a perfect man so it had to be the God man. Jesus the only one to ever walk the earth without sin. Which would amaze us. We don't have time to talk about it tonight but he was the sinless son of God.

So not only was his blood better as a man than the sacrifices he was a better high priest too. They were men but they were flawed. They needed forgiveness for their sins.

They needed to offer a sacrifice first for themselves and then they could offer a sacrifice for them. Not Jesus. He was perfect. He needed no forgiveness. The perfect priest and sacrifice and his blood then is the perfect blood and it only needs to be shed once.

[13 : 51] Unlike all of those ongoing sacrifices of the old covenant they really showed their imperfection. Can you imagine living under the old covenant? It wears me out to read Leviticus.

I think it's good to read Leviticus. I don't mean that in a negative way but I think of all of those sacrifices how do I even keep up with that? If it's a special day like the day of atonement do we have to do the regular sacrifices for that day?

And there's so many to keep track of and it wearies me to read it and to think about what it would have been like not to be to be pastor Aaron but to be the high priest Aaron.

We don't have to worry about that. One sacrifice offered once. It didn't need to be repeated because it was the perfect one. The one that all those others pointed forward to.

That sacrifice has taken place. So when we partake here tonight you see the foolishness of thinking that we're sacrificing Christ again when we partake of this meal which some people think this bread and this cup that is not a sacrifice.

[15 : 02] It is a remembrance of the once for all sacrifice of Christ. This commemorates that sacrifice it doesn't repeat it. And so Hebrews 7 you might want to turn here I want to read a number of verses Hebrews 7 verses 23 and following the former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office but listen to this here's another aspect of the betterness of Christ but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever.

Those priests all died. We need another one. We need another one. Not Jesus. He lives forever. He continues forever. Verse 25 Consequently he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him.

Since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest and here's his betterness. Holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens.

He has no need like those high priests to offer sacrifices daily first for his own sins and then for those of the people. Since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests.

The word of the oath which came later than the law appoints a son who has been made perfect forever. The blood of Jesus was far better than Abel's or the animal blood.

[16 : 26] It's the blood of a human and that of the perfect, sinless, eternal high priest. Better. His blood is better by far.

Aren't you glad we lived under the new covenant? Not the old. We see the fullness of it. We don't have to look forward through bloody sacrifices to anticipate. We look back at the one sacrifice and we have this beautiful meal given to help us remember what Christ has done.

But to see further the beauty of the blood of Christ, I want you to think with me about what his blood accomplishes. See how it's better than the Old Testament sacrifices, better than the blood of Abel. But what does his blood accomplish?

We just looked at the hymnal a moment ago to see how many references there were to the blood of Christ. You know, I forgot to tell you this, if you search the Trinity hymnal online, you'll find, I think, 112 references to blood in the Trinity hymnal.

I'm betting most of them are to the blood of Christ. So anyway, we talked about that hymnal and saw there's a number of references to the blood of Christ. Now let's do the same with our Bibles, since our hymnal is drawn from Scripture.

[17 : 36] Again, it's just a reflection of what is true and good and important. We're not going to look at all the references in Scripture to the blood of Christ, but here are some important ones that remind us of what the blood of Christ means for us, what it accomplishes for us.

And I'm just going to fly through these and hope you feel just a little bit of the weight of what Scripture has to say about the blood of Christ. Seeing it's better now, let's see what it accomplishes. You don't have to turn to these.

If you want to, you can, but you just follow along. Jesus Himself said it was for the forgiveness of sins. And when He instituted the Lord's Supper, which we noted earlier, Matthew 26, 28, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Or when John talks about it in his first letter, 1 John 1, 7, but if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. We're guilty and we're dirty. So we need forgiveness and we need cleansing. And the blood of Jesus, Jesus and John tell us, takes care of both.

[18 : 45] It's through the blood of Jesus that Gentiles are brought near, which is good for us. It wasn't just one nation, Israel. It was all nations and it's the blood of Christ that brings us near. Ephesians 2, 13, but now in Christ you who are once far off have run brought near by the blood of Christ.

Without that, you're out. I'm out. Ah, but the blood of Christ has been shed for Gentiles like us. He draws us near. Hebrews 10, 19, therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, the Israelites were restricted from coming into the holy of holies only the high priest once a year.

We have free access into the presence of God because of the blood of Christ. It's washed us clean. Hebrews 13, 12, so Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

It's by his blood that we are made holy, that we are sanctified, that we are cleansed. Jesus ransomed us with his blood. It was the price to be paid for the forgiveness of sins.

In order, blood had to be shed for our sin. Someone had to die for our sin. And if it's not us, there's only one sacrifice, one ransom payer, one redeemer, and it's Christ.

[20 : 03] So listen, listen to these references. 1 Peter 1, 18 and 19, knowing that you were ransomed from the feudal way inherited from your forefathers. Well, maybe I can buy my way in.

Maybe if I do enough good things. Nope. Not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

They're singing praise to the lamb and glory in Revelation 5, 9, and they sing a new song saying, worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals for you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

We've gathered tonight here as the church. So I want you to hear what Paul said to the Ephesian elders. He got them all together on a beach near Ephesus in Acts 20 and he says to them in Acts 20, 28, pay careful attention to yourselves and all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God which he obtained with his own blood.

So that's a word to elders. You take care of that church. Jesus obtained it with his blood. But as the church, think with me about that for a moment. Without the blood of Christ, there's no church.

[21 : 23] You're not here tonight. Nor am I without the blood of Christ. He obtained it with his own blood. His blood was the propitiation for our sins and that's a big word to say he turned aside God's wrath.

God's wrath is going to be poured out on you. Jesus steps in and takes that wrath. All part of God's plan and turns it aside. His precious innocent blood shed instead of your guilty blood.

God's blood. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith.

Romans 5.9 Since therefore we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. Through his blood. We can do this all day.

We can pile up reference after reference. It's through his blood that we have peace with God.

Colossians 1. It's to his praise. Revelation 1.5 and 6 to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.

[22 : 38] If you've been set free from your sins tonight, it's by the blood of Jesus. And what should that make us do? Revelation 1 still to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. And so what a blessing to my heart to hear you sing tonight, man of sorrows. Hallelujah. What a savior. You are praising Jesus for his shed blood as you sang.

And that's the right response. One of worship. And to bring us back to the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 10 16, the cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? We are in union with Christ, his blood shed for us. So I've just really bombarded you in some ways with references to the privileges that are ours because of the blood of Christ being shed for us.

And I trust you see the relevance of that coming tonight to partake of the Lord's table together. Because it's here that we remember the shedding of Christ's blood for sinners like us.

[23 : 43] one of the things that happens as we partake of the Lord's table is that the Holy Spirit works to spiritually nourish and feed our faith. It is a means of grace that God gives to us to strengthen our faith and to nourish us.

So one of the ways that happens is by contemplating these realities. The significance of what we're doing should contribute to our spiritual nourishment tonight.

You shouldn't be passive as we partake tonight. When that bread comes around you should be thinking of the body of Christ that was hung on a cross for you as that cup comes around.

You should be meditating on all of these things. You won't be able to fit all of them in in that space of time. Meditating on what it is that the blood of Christ has done for you. It's forgiveness of sins.

You've been ransomed. You've been washed. You've been set free. Meditate on those things as you partake of these elements tonight. And so we exercise our mind and by faith contemplate the significance of what we're doing and who we're remembering.

[24 : 51] And that's why I want us to think of his blood tonight. As those joined to Christ it's our privilege to enjoy him and the benefits that he obtained for us.

And thinking on him and his work and all of these blessings should strengthen and nourish our faith. So may God indeed feed and nourish us as we remember and partake and celebrate what Christ has done for us in his death.

I hope you praise God tonight for the blood of Christ. That that cup holds some significance for you more than maybe it would have than before we started tonight. Not again that there's anything new here but I hope you see the betterness of the blood of Christ and all that's accomplished.

And if you've not trusted in this Christ you can tonight right where you sit. you can be washed clean in the blood of Christ. And here is some really remarkable imagery.

When we get blood on our clothes it stains it. We want to get it out. The blood of Christ doesn't stain us. It washes us clean from all of our stains.

[25 : 59] It's the flip of what we might expect blood to do. And you can be washed clean tonight right where you sit crying out for mercy. You can come under the blood and find yourself forgiven.

And if you have done that you're trusting in him child of God as we come to this table delight in these realities associated with the shedding of Christ's blood. As we said at the beginning nothing can take these realities away from you.

Nothing. So indeed we have reason for worship and praise. We praise him that he sent his son and that Jesus' son laid down his life to be sacrificed to have his blood shed for sinners like us.

He's worthy. And so may we have our faith strengthened in partaking of these realities tonight. Amen.