

Precious Blood of Christ

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Well, tax time has us looking into our financial portfolios, doesn't it? Into our treasures. And Octavius Winslow's book has us looking again this Sunday at the real treasures that are ours if we belong to Jesus Christ.

Did you make good use of that treasure, that precious privilege of prayer this past week? That was the precious thing that we saw last week, the privilege of prayer.

Every day this past week, Almighty God was ready to just listen to you and to answer you whenever you called upon him through Christ.

Well, Winslow is convinced that the treasures of the Christian are too little use. It's one thing to know about these treasures. That's what his aim is, to get us to understand our precious things. But he's concerned that we make too little use of them. That these precious things can lie buried and unused like a farmer barely eking out his existence when all the while underneath his farm is this reservoir of oil that would make him a billionaire.

[1 : 21] Well, even so, too often the treasures and the precious things of the saints are just right under our feet.

And we're not living upon them. And so that's his aim. Not just that we would know these precious things, but that we would live upon and make use of the precious things that are ours in Christ.

And so this morning we come to the next precious thing, and I trust it is something we're making use of every day of our lives. Our launching off point is 1 Peter chapter 1.

And I just don't know what the significance of it is, but I just find it interesting that Peter is the one who introduces us to a lot of the precious things that are ours. He's the one that told us how precious Christ is to us.

He's the one that speaks of our precious faith. He's the one that talks about the precious trial of our faith and the precious promises, as we'll see soon. And we see another precious thing that Peter tells us about here this morning.

[2 : 29] 1 Peter 1 and 17 through 19. Since you call on a father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from your empty way of life, handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

The next precious thing is the precious blood of Christ. The context is he's giving us a reason to live our lives here in reverent fear before the Lord.

And he points us to the high cost of our redemption. And believers were never to get over just how much was paid for our redemption. That's the point here. It's meant to motivate us to live before this God in reverent fear.

So he's talking about the cost of our redemption. That's the word. To be redeemed. And it simply means to be liberated. To be set free.

[3 : 48] And in the first century, slaves were the common picture of redemption. They were the property of their masters. But if they or someone else would pay the ransom price for them, they would be set free.

Their freedom would be bought. And they would no longer be captive and owned by another. We hear in our own day from time to time this idea of ransom, the paying of a ransom in the realm of kidnappings, don't we?

When someone kidnaps another and the kidnapped victim is held captive until someone pays the ransom. The money to set them free.

And so to be redeemed is to be set free by the payment of a ransom price. Now, believers, what have we been set free from? And that's not a rhetorical question I want to hear.

What have we been set free from? Pardon? Our sins. What else? Sin's penalty.

[4 : 58] The fear. Fear of what? Fear of hell. Fear of judgment. Fear of death. Save from this present evil age.

From eternal death. That lake of fire. Fear of death. The 1689 Confession of Faith in chapter 21 on Christian liberty has a whole two paragraphs, about a dozen things, that we have been set free from.

And it's good reading for you. I'll leave you with that. But you mentioned at least half of them. But what is it especially here that Peter tells us that we have been set free from?

Anyone? Our empty way of life. Our futile, vain, nothing but froth way of living.

And where did we receive this? Where did we get this empty way of life? From our forefathers. I got it from my father, and he got it from his father, and he got it from his father, and he got it from his father, and he got it from his father, and his father, Adam.

[6 : 18] The father of us all. So what was the way of life, the empty way of life that we received from our forefathers and from Adam, our forefather Adam? It's a life living for ourselves.

It's a life living apart from God, under his wrath, under his curse, not living with him, but going our own way, going it alone.

This is that empty way of life, living for the things of this life, not living for God, whom we were made to serve, and not living for eternity that we were made to enjoy with him.

And so it's so empty. We live a whole life, and in the end, what do we get? Eternal destruction.

What an empty way of life. It's life under the bondage of sin.

And that's the note here of why we need redemption, because we're bound, we're slaves to sin. And so this empty way of life is a life of being drug around by our noses, serving sin.

[7 : 22] And what does it pay us for all this service? Death. What an empty way of life. And that's the way you and I, brothers and sisters, would be living the whole of our four score and ten years, or whatever God gives us on this earth.

It would be an empty way of life. That's the way we were living. That's the way we would be living had not redemption happened, had we not been set free.

And we're only set free by the pain of a price. Now, what was the ransom demanded to set us free from all that bound us?

We're first told what it was not. What was it not? Not silver and gold. Why would he say that? Well, because silver and gold was usually paid to set someone free.

Money was put down, and the slave went free. The kidnapped victim was released. So money was the usual price for redemption. But in this area, wealth is worthless when it comes to being captive by sin under God's wrath.

[8 : 40] Wealth is worthless in this equation. So it's not by corruptible things like silver and gold. Isaiah 52.3, the Lord says to his old covenant people who were in bondage, remember, first in Egypt, then in Babylon.

He says, you were sold for nothing, and without money you will be redeemed. And that's the picture. You will be redeemed, my people, but without money.

Without silver and gold. So that's what it was. Well, what was it? It was with the precious blood of Christ. And Peter can't think about that blood of Christ in this context without saying it's precious.

It's precious. Now, the blood of anyone is precious, costly, valuable. How much more the blood of Jesus, God's Son, as of a lamb without blemish or defect.

That's the lamb that's prescribed for the Passover sacrifice back in Exodus chapter 12. Had to be without blemish or defect.

[9 : 48] And John the Baptist said, look, there he is, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. And the Apostle Paul tells the Corinthians that Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

So this is the reference here. The lamb, the lamb of Passover. It was to be eaten inside the Israelite homes. But the blood of the lamb had to be applied on the door frames of the Israelite homes in which they were to eat the Passover lamb.

And why? Because the Lord was coming through Egypt with his destroying wrath to take the life of every firstborn in Egypt. To cut down the firstborn in every home.

And that held for Israel as well as the Egyptians. But God had made a precious and a gracious remedy for the Israelites.

That if they would apply the blood over their door frames, he says, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. Hence the name Passover.

[10:56] That was a feast kept every year to celebrate this glorious thing. That God came in wrath to punish sin. And when he saw the blood, he passed over those who were inside and trusting in that precious blood.

That was the chief Old Testament picture of redemption. Pointing to Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose blood alone could satisfy God's justice and set us free from sin's curse and domination. And so there we were, wretched slaves, unable to pay the first thing to free ourselves. And Jesus came and gave his life as a ransom for many.

He gave his life. And we're reminded in the Old Testament that the life is in the blood. Leviticus 17, 11. For the life of a creature is in the blood.

And I've given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar. It's the blood that makes atonement for one's life. You see, blood, the life is in the blood.

[12:04] And so by taking the blood, you are taking the life of the victim. And Jesus gives his own precious life's blood as a ransom for many.

Paid the full ransom price. And when by faith we trust in Christ's blood to save us, it's like applying the blood to the doorpost.

And the destructive plague of God's wrath is averted. For he says, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And what happened, what, 4,000 years ago in Egypt is going to happen again on the day of judgment.

When all of God's people appear trusting in the blood with the blood applied to them. And God will pass over us in judgment.

What a glorious truth. How precious is this blood? There's none like it. Anywhere else in the whole earth. But in this one person.

[13:08] Jesus Christ. So you can see why Peter can't speak of the blood that redeems us without speaking of it as being precious. Very quickly then, it's precious because of what it is and because of what it does.

It's precious just because of what it is. It's the blood of a pure and sinless man. Jesus is the perfect man. And that makes his blood precious.

We'd all forfeited our lives by sin. And would reap the wages of sin that is death. Spiritual, physical, eternal.

But God has been pleased to receive the payment of someone else's life in the place of the guilty. It's substitutionary curse bearing. That's what we're talking about here.

Someone pays the price instead of us. But it must be human blood. Representing human life. And that's why the blood of animals in the Old Testament could never really take away sin.

[14:17] They could never really atone for the life of a man. Because it's simply not payment equal to the worth of the life lost. So let's say, God forbid, that someone murdered your son.

And the law caught up with him and demanded his life, as God says in Genesis 9, that whoever sheds the blood of a man, by man shall his blood be shed.

You see, one life taken, another to reciprocate justice for the life taken. And for in the image of God has God made man.

And so the law catches up with this murderer and comes to his house charging him with the murder. And he says, yes, I did. I shed his blood. Here, take my dog. And you can shed his blood for the life and blood that I have taken.

And immediately we revolt against that. And what's the revolt all about? Well, it's not equal. It was life in the image of God that was taken, and it's a dog's life offered.

[15:19] They're not equal, are they? And yet that's what we had in the Old Testament. For all those hundreds of years, it was the human beings that sinned against God with infinite offense against God.

And God was saying, well, bring the blood of a lamb without blemish or defect. But you see, it could never truly satisfy justice because it was not equal to the offense of taking, that deserved their own life to be taken for their offense against God.

And so that's why Hebrews 10.4 says, it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. It's just unequal payment. If the wages of sin is your death, no animal can ever truly pay that price.

They only did so in the Old Testament provisionally, ceremonially, symbolically, because they represented the true Lamb of God and His precious blood. That's the blood that really does take away sin.

That's the blood that is worth enough because that's human blood. And a human life was to be taken and a human life was taken. So that's what makes it precious, you see.

[16:43] It was the blood of a human being. And that's why in the incarnation, God prepared a body for His Son. And in that body, He would offer Himself as the payment of the ransom by the sacrifice of Himself.

Man sinned and in Christ, man died. And so God is satisfied. So that's the first reason the blood of Christ is precious, because of what it is.

It's truly human blood. But it's precious also because it's the blood of a pure and sinless human. If Jesus had sinned once, then what would God's justice demand?

Of Him? Anyone? Death, condemnation. For Him. So Jesus would have to die for His own sins.

Would His death have any merit for me? Not at all. No, His death will do for Him. That's the wages. And it will do for Him.

[17:52] But it will not save me. If His blood is to have any atoning value for me, it must be perfect. It was His perfect life that qualified Him to be the sacrifice to pay for my sin.

And so He was tempted and tried. In every way like we are, yet without sin. And God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us. And then judged Him in our stead.

So it needed to be human blood, but it also needed to be sinless blood. And that's what we find in the Lord Jesus.

He was the Lamb without blemish or spot. Does that not make Christ's blood precious to you? It had to be human. Yeah.

It had to be perfect. And so you were tempted and tried this week. And the ways that you're conscious of are probably about one-tenth of the ways that you were tempted and tried.

[18:58] And you failed. And I failed. And we sin every day. And think of it. The Lord Jesus, 33 years in the same tempting world.

Every day with the devil at his heels. Not once. Not once. It's because it was perfect blood that it's precious.

So it's precious then because it's the blood of a perfect man. But secondly, it's precious because it's the blood of God. Winslow says, This is a strong but scriptural expression.

And he's quoting from Acts 20 and verse 28. As Paul's leaving the elders at Ephesus, he charges them, Be shepherds of the church of God which he bought with his own blood.

That God himself bought with his own blood. And oh how that ups the value of this blood above all other bloods.

[20:03] All blood is valuable and costly. But as Winslow said, This is what stamps the atoning blood of the Savior with such dignity and virtue.

It is the blood of Jehovah Jesus. And that's why it possesses all its merit and power to cleanse from every sin. It is the blood of Jesus, God's Son, that cleanses from all sin.

It's because he is God's Son, because he is deity, that Christ's blood possesses the power to satisfy, the virtue to atone, and the efficacy to cleanse.

It's the deity of the Lamb that gives his blood infinite value and worth. If it were nothing more than the blood of man and a perfect man, his blood might be enough to pay for one man.

One life in the place of one man. One man in the place of another man. But because it's the blood of the Lamb who is infinite God, his blood is able to pay the ransom price, not just for me, but for all of you.

[21:27] Indeed, for a number that John says no man could count. A multitude that no man could count. Because he's God, there's enough merit in his blood that all his people can say to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us to be a kingdom and priest to serve his God and Father.

Revelation 1.5 There's enough value that a whole multitude of sinners have washed their robes and made them white in this blood. Precious, precious blood of Christ.

Precious, you see, because of what it is. The blood of the perfect man. And the blood of one who is God. Well, it's precious because of what it does and we could be here for a long time thinking of what the blood of Jesus does.

We had for our precious thing last week, prayer. And we enjoyed that this week, didn't we? At any time, at any place, we came into the presence of God.

How did we get there? Through a new and living way. Through some blood that was offered to open up this way. It's the precious blood of Jesus that won for us this precious privilege to get our prayers to heaven.

[22 : 52] There are many things that this blood does for us, but most significantly it saves us. It's just the whole of our salvation depends upon this precious blood.

That was said over and over in the Old Testament. The pictures of salvation kept pointing us, kept pointing the Old Testament saints to the precious blood of Christ that would be shed in the future. Winslow, what an impressive spectacle would meet the eye of the devout Israelite as he entered the temple to worship. Think how different it is from the scene that you encountered when you walked in the doors today.

He would see blood everywhere. It would be like he arrived on a crime scene. And blood on the knives and hands and robes of the priests, blood on the slain animals, blood on the altar, blood on the sides of the altar, blood in the bowls of the altar, blood flowing around the altar, blood sprinkled on the people.

And in that blood, the penitent heart would confront the impressive truth that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.

[24 : 14] And then it was seen in the Passover ceremony, wasn't it? When I see the blood, I will pass over you. And when Jesus came, there he is, the Lamb of God.

And he taught in John 6 that whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

It really does give life. That's what he's saying. And then he dies as God's Lamb during Passover.

And after the resurrection, the apostles fill the earth with the message of salvation through the blood of Jesus, the one perfect sacrifice for sin.

So all of our salvation, we owe it to this precious blood. Romans, let me just give you a few verses.

Romans 5, 9, since we have now been justified by his blood.

Why are you right with God? Because of his blood. Ephesians 1, 7, in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. We've been set free through his blood.

[25 : 21] Colossians 1, 20, making peace through his blood shed on the cross. So we have peace with God. We're reconciled. Revelation 1, 5, to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.

They've washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. So his blood justifies it. It redeems it. It reconciles. It purifies. It washes. It satisfies God's justice.

It propitiates God's wrath. It pacifies God's wrath. And in all these ways, the Bible is telling us that it's only through the atoning blood of Jesus that we are saved and that we have any of the blessings of salvation.

So I mentioned prayer, but you can take any blessing that is yours in Christ and you can bring it back to this, that you have it because precious blood was shed for you.

Let me just mention one other area as to what does this blood do? Not only what it is, but what it does.

[26 : 25] And Winslow brings us here. It cleanses our consciences. Now he's talking to Christians as well as non-Christians, but especially here to Christians. Winslow has a pastoral concern for us as he comes to apply this truth.

And he says that our fault, as God's people, lies not so much in the lack of appreciation for the value of Christ's blood. Surely we all would say there's no price that we could put on the blood of Christ.

It's priceless. It's precious beyond telling. We have that appreciation. But Winslow says, no, our lack is not a lack of appreciation.

For its value. But it is a lack of ongoing application of it to our consciences. It's the applying of this blood to our consciences.

And here he says, how few there are of the Lord's people who are walking with the blood upon the conscience. Isn't that good? Are you one of those, of God's people, that wherever you go, you are walking with his blood upon your conscience?

[27 : 36] You're aware. This precious blood shed for me. And to this defect of not having his blood upon our conscience, he traces various deficiencies in the Christian life.

Little zeal for holiness. A lack of assurance. A lack of peace and joy and communion with Christ. He says, without this blood on our consciences, as we walk about through life, we get spiritually sick. We're drained of our vigor. It makes us easy prey to Satan's assaults and the world's seduction. And he traces such things to the absence of close dealing with the atoning blood.

So the precious blood of Jesus was shed once, but it is to be applied over and over and over to our conscience. And so Winslow calls us to the constant application of the blood of Christ.

To wash often in this fountain. To take fresh looks of faith upon it. And even to listen to it.

[28 : 45] To listen to the precious blood. Think how much our daily peace and rest depends upon this blood. We're constantly tempted and tried, as I said, sometimes falling.

And even though we start out our day praying and wanting to live for Christ, yet we come to the end of the day often with regrets for things said and done, things left undone, things not done well.

And with a moment's reflection at the end of the day, we find that we can't make it through one day without soiling our garments in this world. And so the Holy Spirit convicts us and our own conscience bears witness of our sin.

And we feel guilt and we feel sorry for our sins and we feel remorse and regret and our peace is interrupted and perhaps even our communion with God. And it's then that we need a fresh visit to this open fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins.

There to wash and be clean even as you wash your body at night. Winslow says, don't neglect the bath for your soul.

[30 : 00] Bring it back to this blood. Because if the blood of goats and bulls sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean in the Old Covenant, if that blood of goats and bulls sanctifies them so that they are outwardly clean, ceremonially clean, how much more then will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God cleanse our consciences from acts of death that we might serve the living God.

This blood really cleanses the conscience. Why? That we might serve the living God. which is to say we really don't serve the living God as we ought unless we are those people walking around with blood on our consciences.

It's in the freedom and the cleansing of the blood that I'm set free from myself and my sin and my guilt to where I can focus on what I'm supposed to why I'm here why I draw breath today to love that God with all my heart and to love my neighbor as myself.

I've got the blood on my conscience. That's what we need that we might serve the living God. Well this blood Winslow says has immediate effectiveness.

So he tells us upon the first twinge of conscience run at once to the precious blood of Christ.

Winslow again many of the Lord's people postpone an immediate confession of sin and application to the blood.

[31 : 31] and our postponement is our own great loss of peace and joy and comfort and holiness and happiness in the Lord. So no postponement no putting off this coming again confessing and thinking about the blood that was shed for me.

You remember the ten plagues in Egypt. the first was the water turned into blood and seven days later Moses announced to Pharaoh the Lord's words if you refuse to let my people go I will plague your whole country with frogs and the Nile will team with frogs they'll come up into your palace and into your bedroom and onto your bed into the houses of your officials and on your people and into your ovens and needing troughs the frogs will go up on you and your people and all your officials and he hardened his heart and so that's exactly what happened.

Frogs came up and covered the land they couldn't walk without stepping on them they were everywhere and Pharaoh was miserable and as we see this pattern developing in the ten plagues he begs Moses and Aaron to pray to the Lord to take the frogs away and he would let them go into the wilderness to worship God and Moses said to Pharaoh I leave it to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs so I'm going to leave that to you Pharaoh when do you want me to pray and take the

frogs away and the most staggering word in the Bible what did he say tomorrow tomorrow you want one more night with your frogs in bed you want one more night of this mess why not today and I am smitten why would I spend another moment with guilt of sin upon my conscience when immediately today

I might know the cleansing blood of Jesus assuring me that his blood has indeed atoned for all the sins of this day that I have committed and I can lay my head down upon my pillow in peace and joy and assurance and comfort with nothing between my soul and the Savior and how many times I have said tomorrow tomorrow oh its effectiveness is immediate get to the fountain at once with the first twinge of guilt and then Winslow says listen to that blood and here he's referring to Hebrews 12 and verse 24 where we're taken into heaven and there our high priest is ever pleading for us his own precious blood before the throne of God and

Hebrews 12 takes us there into that scene in heaven and says that we have come into this presence of God and the angels and the joyful saints and all the rest and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel what did the blood of Abel speak remember when his brother Cain murdered him and God said that he could hear the blood coming up from the ground crying for vengeance Abel's blood for vengeance pleadeth to the skies but the blood of Jesus for our pardon cries it cries forgive him oh forgive it cries and let that ransomed sinner not die you see the blood of Jesus speaks a better word so get your mind into heaven and hear that blood of Jesus precious blood of Jesus that is ever there as if it has a voice that God hears because it's always pleading for my forgiveness well that's that's true but your conscience needs to get there you see that's what that's what

[36 : 24] Winslow's saying yes the blood of Jesus is there yes the high priesthood of Jesus is going on 24 7 all your life but unless you lay hold of it by faith and bring your mind to it you won't enjoy the sweetness and the fruit of it so get to the fountain it has a sanctifying effect upon our hearts bathing as Winslow said bathing frequently in the fountain of Christ's blood not only cleanses the conscience from sin it also intensifies the heart's thirst for holiness because if this is what my sin costs my savior and I'm thinking about that it suddenly becomes harder for me to sin and that's that's the that's the benefit one of the many benefits of this blood so he says keep your heart oh believer much beneath the cross your conscience in frequent and close contact with the blood and the slightest touch of sin will make you restless and unhappy until you've confessed and God is forgiven this is this is the secret which alas few see or care to know of preserving the garments white amidst pollution of preserving the mind serene amidst turmoil the heart happy amidst sorrow the life radiant and the spirit and happy

Christ loving and Christ like oh the wonders of the precious blood of Christ well don't settle for any other method of cleansing you know that's the that's the bottom line of all false religion that it's something other than the blood of Jesus that makes a man right with God it's something he does but here's the one true religion it all rests upon this precious blood how many of you remember Ruth Klaus yeah some of you know her she used to attend a different church a large denomination and she left that denomination and she told me one day why she said John they took the blood out of the hymnal now you pick up your hymnal and just thumb through it and see how many references there are in it to the blood of Jesus why is that why do the people of God love to sing dear dying lamb thy precious blood will never lose its power until all the ransomed saints of God are saved to sin no more what can wash away my sins nothing but the blood of Jesus what can make me whole again nothing but the blood of Jesus over and over why why do they sing this way because it really is precious and there's nothing else that will do for us and that's the song by the way that we'll sing in heaven that's what they're singing there in heaven to him who has purchased us for God with his blood so don't settle for any other method of cleansing glory in the blood of

Jesus Christ that was a deal breaker for Ruth bless her soul and I trust it would it would be a deal breaker for us because we're counting that blood precious and so Friday night we're going to be here again Lord willing and gather as Christ's people what are we doing we're going to take the symbol of this precious blood in our hands and drink it we will drink a cup of blessing because he drank the cup of cursing for us we will drink not the blood of Jesus he shed that on Calvary once but we will take up a memorial a reminder of that blood and we will glory in Jesus Christ and we will rejoice and sing of the precious blood that has saved us and that is saving a multitude of sinners that no man can number so hold that blood precious and get there often man this this hits me folks and I'm the stupid

Pharaoh saying tomorrow and just studying this this week has helped me to get there sooner and I trust that it will do that for you as well let's pray Lord we confess that we are often so foolish we have such riches beneath our feet and we live upon so little of it and so we stumble around and we we know so little of peace and joy and assurance and comfort and power and vigor when you've done enough to keep us rejoicing in the Lord for all eternity so bring take away the clouds and bring clarity to our hearts and lead us back often even throughout the day but let us get to this open fountain every day and get the blood upon our conscience that we might serve you better we might offer up our lives as living sacrifices to you and you deserve this from us having shed your precious blood

Lord Jesus we love you for it we want to know more of it and even today would you lead us into greater worship of you because of your blood we ask in your own precious name amen