



Around the Word Bible Study

Lent, 2016

The Blood of Christ Hebrews 10:11-25

The grace of God and a good conscience:

"It is, therefore, the intent of this petition that God would not regard our sins and hold up to us what we daily deserve. But we pray that He would deal graciously with us and forgive, as He has promised, and so grant us a joyful and confident conscience to stand before Him in prayer . . . Such a confident and joyful heart can spring from nothing else than the certain knowledge of the forgiveness of sin."

—Martin Luther
(*Large Catechism*, Explanation to the 5th Petition of the Lord's Prayer)

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Session 4: "The Blood That Gives Access"

The God of Scripture is dangerous. It is not safe for sinners to be in His presence. One of the best illustrations of this comes from the famous C.S. Lewis stories – *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. In the story Mrs. Beaver is preparing the children to meet the great Lion, Aslan. One of the children asks Mrs. Beaver about Aslan, "Is he quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion." Mrs. Beaver replies, "That you will dearie and make no mistake . . . if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly." Another of the children chimes in, "Then he ISN'T SAFE?" Mr. Beaver replies, "Who said anything about being safe? Of course he isn't safe! But he's good, he's the king."

God isn't safe, but He is Good. And in that Goodness He has graciously provided us with safe access to His presence in the flesh and blood of His Son. In fact, our text from Hebrews this evening says that we have boldness to enter the holiest place (that is that inner sanctuary where only the high priest had been allowed to go). We enter into the holiest place – into the place of God's manifest presence – by the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ.

Opening: Psalm 16

¹Preserve me, | O God,*
for in you I take | refuge.

²I say to the LORD, "You | are my Lord;*
I have no good a- | part from you."

³As for the saints | in the land,*
they are the excellent ones,
in whom is all | my delight.

⁴The sorrows of those who run after another
god shall | multiply;*
their drink offerings of blood I will not
pour out or take their names | on my lips.

⁵The LORD is my chosen portion | and my cup;*
you | hold my lot.

⁶The lines have fallen for me in pleasant |
places;*
indeed, I have a beautiful in- | heritance.

⁷I bless the LORD who gives me | counsel;*
in the night also my heart in- | structs me.

⁸I have set the LORD always be- | fore me;*
because he is at my right hand, I shall not
be | shaken.

⁹Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being
re- | joices;*
my flesh also | dwells secure.

¹⁰For you will not abandon my soul | to
Sheol,*
or let your holy one see cor- | ruption.

¹¹You make known to me the | path of life;*
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures for- | ever

more.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Read Hebrews 10:11-25

v.11-14: ¹¹ Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹²But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Read Psalm 110 (esp. v. 4), Hebrews 5:1-10, and Hebrews 7:11-28 (for the back story, see Genesis 14:17-24). Christ does not come from the priestly line of Levi. Instead He is referred to as a "Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek." What is the difference between the Levitical priesthood and Christ's service as priest? How does the former foreshadow or point to the latter? How does the latter fulfill and make obsolete the former? (Hint: both involve the use of blood.)

Read Psalm 110 again (esp. v. 1), and then see Genesis 3:15. Who is the ultimate enemy Christ makes into a footstool?

v.15-17: ¹⁵And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

¹⁶“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,”

¹⁷then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

In the Book of Concord, the Smalcald Articles (Part III Article VIII, 10-13) says, “Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil.” ¹¹ For even to Moses God wished to appear first through the burning bush and the spoken word, and no prophet, whether Elijah or Elisha, received the Spirit without the Ten Commandments. ¹² John the Baptist was not conceived without the preceding word of Gabriel, ¹³ nor did he leap in his mother’s womb until Mary spoke. St. Peter says that when the prophets spoke, they did not prophesy by the impulse of man but were moved by the Holy Spirit, yet as holy men of God. ⁵ But without the external Word they were not holy, and the Holy Spirit would not have moved them to speak while they were still unholy. They were holy, St. Peter says, because the Holy Spirit spoke through them.”

Consider Hebrews 10:15 and the verses that follow above, along with 2 Peter 1:21 (See also Deut. 18:18). Where do these texts point us to receive the testimony of the Holy Spirit?

Read Jeremiah 31:31-34 (part of which is quoted in Hebrews 10:16-17). How does the blood of Christ figure into God’s Word here? In what sense is access to God being granted through God’s work?

v.18: ¹⁸Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Read Psalm 32 (esp. v. 1-2 & 5) and Romans 4:7-8. See also Matthew 5:17 and Romans 10:4. How does the work of Christ and the forgiveness of sins bring an end to the need for sacrifices?

v.19-22: ¹⁹Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full as-

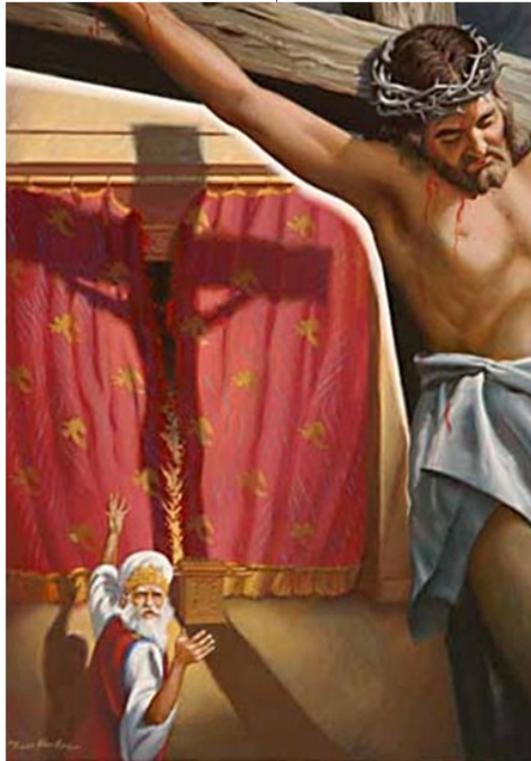
Bible Study

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urance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Read Exodus 26:31-34. What was the significance of the temple veil/curtain? Notice also the detail that goes into its conception and construction. What was its purpose?

See Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, & Luke 23:45 and their context. How does Hebrews 10:91-22 help to show the significance of the tearing of the temple veil/curtain? To what are we now given access?



The general confession of sins during the Divine Service is introduced by these words: “Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.”

How does understanding the context of Hebrews 10:22 and the significance of the tearing of the temple veil/curtain help provide us with a deeper appreciation for what happens in Confession and Absolution?

v.23: ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Read Psalm 1; Matthew 28:19-20 (esp. v. 20); John 8:31 & 15:4-16 (esp. vs.7 & 10); Hebrews 3:1-2, 12-19; 2 Corinthians 9:13-15; 1 Timothy 6:11-21; and 2 John 1:9.

What do these verses teach about the importance of holding fast to the confession of faith we’ve been given in the Gospel?

v.24-25: ²⁴And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

How does the understanding that Christ’s blood has gained us access to the riches of God’s grace lead to the admonition given to us here by the author of Hebrews? (see also Psalm 122:1, Acts 2:42-44, & Romans 10:14ff.)

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