



Around the Word Bible Study

Lent, 2016

The Blood of Christ Hebrews 13:7-16

On our constant need for the Sacrament:

"If every time the blood is poured out it is poured out for the remission of sins, I ought to receive it always, that my sins may always be forgiven me; because I constantly sin, I constantly need to have the remedy."

—St. Ambrose of Milan

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Session 6: "The Blood That Sanctifies"

In the days before Jesus the altar was a place where animal blood sacrifices atoned for the sin of the people. It was where they found their sanctification. More importantly, it pointed to the promised real atonement for sin which was to come. We have an altar that requires no further sacrifice. Jesus Christ died once for all! We have an altar that we gather around **not** because we are entitled, but because we have been made worthy (sanctified) to gather around it by the blood of the one who sacrificed himself to save us.

Opening: Psalm 32

¹Blessed is the one whose transgression is for- | given,*
whose sin is | covered.

²**Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no in- | iquity,*
and in whose spirit there is | no deceit.**

³For when I kept silent, my bones wast- | ed away*
through my groaning | all day long.

⁴**For day and night your hand was heavy up- | on me;*
my strength was dried up as by the heat of | summer.**

⁵I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my in- | iquity;*
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the iniquity | of my sin.

⁶**Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you | may be found;*
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not | reach him.**

⁷You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from | trouble;*
you surround me with shouts of de- | liverance.

⁸**I will instruct you and teach you in the way | you should go;*
I will counsel you with my eye up- | on you.**

⁹Be not like a horse or a mule, without under- | standing,*
which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
or it will not stay | near you.

¹⁰**Many are the sorrows of the | wicked,*
but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts | in the LORD.**

¹¹Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O | righteous,*
and shout for joy, all you up- | right in heart!
**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 13:7-16

v.7-9: ⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.

Verse 9 comes on the heels of a series of admonishments (Heb. 13:1-6) concerning living the Christian life. What is the significance of wrapping up this line of thought with an admonishment to remember and imitate their leaders? Who are their leaders and ultimately by whose authority are they leaders? (see Lk 10:1-20, especially v.16)

How does v. 9 above also follow from Jesus' own teachings? (cf. Luke 21:8) How does Paul's own expression of such admonition help to more fully understand what is at the heart of these concerns? (see 2 Timothy 4:1-5, especially v.3)

What does all of this have to do with being sanctified by the blood of Christ? (See 1 Cor. 6:1-11, especially v.11, & Heb 2:1-18, especially v.11. Notice how each contains admonitions to Christian living or adherence to Christ's Word which are referenced in connection to sanctification by Christ's salvific work. Notice how sanctification is always being done **to** us and not **by** us.)

v.10-12: ¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest

as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

To what altar does v.10 refer? See 1 Cor. 10:16-21 & 11:23-26.

Read Leviticus 4:11-12 & 21, 6:9-11, 8:17, & 13:45-46. What kinds of things and people were taken outside of the camp? What significance does this give the fact that Jesus was crucified outside the gate?

If we have no right to eat at the altar, how is it that we are able to do so? See v.12 above; see also Luke 15:19-32. On what grounds the Prodigal Son was worthy of restoration?

Chrysostom: "That I may not then be the means of increasing your condemnation, I entreat you, not to forbear coming, but to render yourselves worthy both of being present, and of approaching. Tell me, were any king to give command and to say, "If any man does this, let him partake of my table," say, would ye not do all you could to be admitted? He has invited us to, to the table of the great and wonderful King, and do we shrink and hesitate, instead of hastening and running to it? And what then is our of salvation?" (Homily 3 on Ephesians 1:15-20).

v.13-14: ¹³Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. ¹⁴For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

Read Matthew 16:24. What does it mean to take up our cross? With what Old Testament religion is "the camp" associated? What point is the author making by directing us outside of "the camp" and toward "the reproach he endured?" How does Hebrews 11:23-26 give us some more perspective on this? (Also, consider what the consequences were for a Jew who converted to Christianity in 1st Century AD)

To what "city that is to come" is the author referring? (see Gal. 4:25-26, Phil. 3:20, & Rev. 21:2)

v.15-16: ¹⁵Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Read Psalm 50:23 and Psalm 51:17. How do these two verses (and their respective contexts) help us to understand the nature of sacrifice and the praise we are to give to God?

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Read Psalm 51:15. From where does our praise truly originate? Read 1 Corinthians 13:3 and 1 Peter 4:10. How do these verses help us understand v.16 above?

Read John 17:19, 1 Corinthians 6:11, and Hebrews 2:11, 10:10 & 14. How do these verses help dispel the idea that our sanctification comes through our doing of good works, but show that good works and our sanctification are the fruit of faith given by God? How does this help us see that we do as v.16 admonishes us not out of compulsion but because we have been freed to do so?

Read Revelation 1:4-6 (especially v.5-6). What does our sanctification by Christ's blood make us?

St. Ambrose: "Moreover, the world was subjected to him [God] through the law, because by the prescriptions of the law everyone was indicted and by the works of the law no one is justified. In other words, through the law sin is recognized, but its guilt is not relieved. The law was shown to be harmful since all are made sinners, but when the Lord Jesus came, he forgave the sin for everyone, which no one could avoid, and he blotted out the bill of indictment that stood against us by the pouring out of his blood [Col. 2:14]. This is what Paul says [Rom. 5:20], "the sin abounded through the law; but grace superabounded through Jesus." For after the entire world was placed in subjection, he took away the sin of the entire world, just as John testified, saying [John 1:29], "Behold the Lamb of God, be-

hold, the one who takes away the sin of the world." And so let no one glory in works, because no one is justified by their deeds. But those who are righteous have it as a gift, because after the washing [of baptism] they were justified. It is faith, therefore, that frees people through the blood of Christ: "blessed are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" [Ps. 32:1]," (Epistle 73 [to Irenaeus], as quoted in Apology IV:103, The Book of Concord, pp. 137-38)

Closing: Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed (LSB, 437)

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