

[Leviticus 17:11](#)

Jesus' Blood - Eternal Difference-Maker

Introduction

As the church, we sing about it; we preach about it; we celebrate it. God's Word states that it cleanses us from all sin ([1 John 1:7](#)). What am I talking about? It's Jesus and His sin-cleansing blood, which is the eternal difference-maker. Yes, Jesus paid it all. His blood washes sins as white as snow. That's the good news message of the cross, the gospel. This good news can be the difference-maker for anyone, anywhere in the world, whether in the United States, Canada, Afghanistan or Africa.

Therefore, the main theme of this message is that only Jesus' blood is the eternal difference-maker. I will attempt to expound upon this theme with the following three (3) points which describes the perfect, sacrificial blood of Jesus as:

- Life-giving
- Gift of God
- Only atonement for sin

Historical Background

The book of Leviticus, written by Moses 1400-1450 B.C., frequently uses the words atonement and without blemish. These describe the purpose and attributes of the animal sacrifices. Their blood was sprinkled by the priests on the altar in the tabernacle, as atonement for the sins of the people. By the way, atonement is defined as to amend wrongdoing, or to bring into one accord.

God ordained "the Day of Atonement" ([Leviticus 23:26-32](#)), which is an important Jewish holiday, also known as Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement occurred only once a year ([Leviticus 16:34](#)) and was an annual "cleaning house" of sin. This special day pointed ahead to the cross and the perfect blood of Jesus that would be shed for the atonement for sins.

Just as blood gives life to all flesh-bearing creatures, without the atoning blood of Christ Jesus, spirit-filled creatures, people made in the image of God, people with souls like us, will die. Without Jesus, there would be no hope in this earthly life or beyond. That brings us to the first point of this message, which is the blood of Christ is life-giving - that life being eternal.

1. Jesus' Blood - Life-Giving

For the life of the flesh is in the blood ([Leviticus 17:11](#)). The word "life" in this verse can also be translated "soul", which alludes to very inner nature of the creature created by God. The soul is the part of all flesh that is the very source and fountain of life. Therefore, we see that the blood of the sacrifice is sacred and precious. That is why God prohibited the Israelites from eating blood ([Leviticus 17:10, 12 and 14](#)).

The blood is indeed sacred, precious and life-giving. Jesus says that He came that we may have life and have it abundantly ([John 10:10](#)). He also says that He is the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Him ([John 14:6](#)). This life is eternal and is a

gracious gift from God for all those who trust in Jesus ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). This also means the life-giving blood of Jesus makes the difference for people like you and me.

In fact, the reason the Lord Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper was to provide a time for the church to gather together and remember and celebrate Him. Eating the bread and drinking the cup, which represents Jesus' body and blood, is a proclamation of trust and belief in Him. He's the only One who calls sinners out of the darkness of sin and into His marvelous light ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). God's perfect love was poured out in the blood of Jesus on the cross. He laid down His life for sinners, so that people like us could live. In fact, take a look at what [John 15:13](#) says.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

[John 15:13](#) (ESV)

On the night of April 14-15, 1912, the ocean-liner Titanic hit an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland and began sinking. A Scottish pastor by the name of John Harper wrapped his daughter in a blanket, told her that she would see him again one day, and then passed her to a crewman. After seeing his daughter safely board one of the lifeboats, Harper removed his life jacket and gave it to another passenger. A survivor recalls Harper saying, "Women, children and the unsaved into the lifeboats!" As the ship began to go under, Harper jumped into the icy water and swam to as many as he could asking them to turn to the Lord Jesus and be saved. With the onset of hypothermia, John Harper slipped beneath the water having given his life for others.

John Harper must have had an eternal hope to do what he did. He must have had the hope of Jesus making the eternal difference in him, through him, for him, and even in spite of him. How about you and me? Is our hope found in earthly things or heavenly things? What makes the difference for the hope we have? Is it success, wealth or entertainment, or is it contentment in Christ? Not that worldly things are bad. But hoping in worldly things to make a difference in our lives is a delusion. In fact, we're setting ourselves up for worry, discontent and hopelessness.

But there is no reason for discontent or hopelessness in the Lord Jesus. For the believer in Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, there's a rock-solid hope found only in Him. Hope found in nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness is a true gift of God. This brings us to the second point - that the blood of Christ, which makes the eternal difference, is a gift of God.

2. Jesus' Blood - A Gift of God

In [Leviticus 17:11](#), God's states the following about the blood of atonement: "I have given it [blood] for you on the altar..." We need to pay particular attention to the word "given" and the words "for you on the altar". The word "given" implies that the blood that atones for sin is a gift. The words "for you" indicate that God's gift is very personal because He gave it to His people, the ones who belong to Him. Now, a gift is given freely from the giver to the receiver out of care, compassion and love. That's who God is. He gives good gifts and perfect gifts out of His great care, compassion and love. This truth never changes because He never changes ([James 1:17](#), [Hebrews 13:8](#)).

There's something very important for us to apprehend concerning the blood that atoned for the sins of God's people. The gift of atoning blood was given freely through God's grace. But God's

gift of grace isn't free. A price was paid. That price for atonement under the Old Covenant, which God made with His people at Mount Sinai, was the shedding of blood of animal sacrifices ([Hebrews 9:18-22](#)). However, the blood of animals was insufficient to cover the sins of the people, which is cited in [Hebrews 10:4](#).

*For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
[Heb 10:4](#) (ESV)*

This brings us back to the main theme of this message, which is that only Jesus' blood is the eternal difference-maker. No one or nothing can cleanse sin except the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's like the stain in an old, dirty, oily T-shirt I like to use when changing the oil in our car. The ground-in oil and dirt make that stain irremovable. No matter how hard I try to scrub and clean, the stain won't go away.

In the same way, any attempt on our part to remove the stain of sin from our lives is futile. Church-going, charitable giving, and living a "good life" won't remove sin. Only the blood of Jesus can do that. And His atoning blood is a gift of God. So, this begs the question: Why would God offer such a wonderful gift to such undeserving people like us? Here's [John 17:23b](#).

...so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. [John 17:23b](#) (ESV)

In other words, God loves those who are in Christ as much as He loves His Son, Jesus. Yes, if you're in Christ, you're loved by God that much. It's all because of His great love, grace and mercy. In fact, Scripture states that because of the steadfast love of the Lord, we are not consumed ([Lamentations 3:22](#)). That's the kind of love where God says "I know everything about you and I still love you." That's the love of God in Christ, the breadth, length, height and depth of which surpasses knowledge ([Ephesians 3:18-19](#)).

Consider this excerpt from a quote by Paul Tripp, well-known author and pastor, in his daily devotional book, *New Morning Mercies*: "God will never give up on you. He will never walk away in disgust. He will never regret that He placed His love on you. This gift of love is yours forever." Do we believe it? Do we live like we believe it?

Indeed, the blood of Jesus that cleanses, purifies and washes poor sinners like you and me as white as snow is a gift of God's love. That's why God uses imagery of a slain lamb in Scripture to give us a picture that points to Jesus' sacrificial death ([Revelation 5:12](#)). The Israelites could relate to this as they celebrated Passover. A lamb without blemish was slain; its blood was put on the door posts of their homes so that the angel of death would "pass over". The lamb's blood made the difference.

Jesus is the Lamb of God. According to God's plan, Jesus was slain and His blood is the ransom, the payment to God, which sets us free from sin. The blood of the Lamb of God makes the eternal difference. Here's a truth that is very important for us to remember. This gift of being ransomed from the curse of sin through the blood of Christ only had to be done once and its efficacy is for all eternity ([John 1:29](#), [1 Peter 1:18-19](#), [Hebrews 9:12](#)).

What a gift from God - Jesus' blood making the eternal difference; He laid down His life as a ransom for many. And that brings us to the third and final point of this message. The blood that brings eternal life through Christ, which is so graciously and mercifully given as a gift by God, is the only means of atonement for sin.

3. Jesus' Blood - Only Means of Atonement

[Leviticus 17:11](#) is a foreshadowing, pointing ahead toward Christ, when it states "for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life." There is no other way for sins to be atoned for, except through the blood of Jesus. This is what the New Covenant is all about, which we read about in Scripture. Here's [Matthew 26:28](#).

...for this is my blood of the [new] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. [Matt 26:28](#) (ESV)

The New Covenant was established when Jesus' sacrifice on the cross occurred. His blood was the permanent, perfect atonement for sin, once and for all, unlike the animal sacrifices under the Old Covenant. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would sprinkle the blood of an animal sacrifice on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, the "mercy seat", to show atonement for sin had been made. The sacrificial blood covered the people's sins by coming between them and the holy God. Unlike Jesus' one-time sacrifice, animal sacrifices were done repeatedly.

If our sins are to be atoned for, something has to come between us and God. That "something" is the blood of the perfect sacrifice acceptable to God; it is the blood of Christ. Jesus is our "Mercy Seat". If it weren't for Jesus' precious blood making the difference, the "mercy seat" would instead be a "judgment seat". If that were true, we would all be in a desperately hopeless situation. In fact, Christians, of all people, would be the most to be pitied ([1 Corinthians 15:19](#)).

In C. S. Lewis' book titled, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, he paints a beautiful picture of the exclusivity of Jesus being the only One who can make the difference in a hopeless situation. At the White Witch's castle, there were dozens of people and animals that had been turned into statues of stone by the Witch. Aslan, the lion, who represents Christ, breathed on them and they came to life. Only Aslan accomplished the transformation of lifeless, hard, stone figures to living, breathing creatures with flesh. Similarly, only the atoning blood of Jesus can transform a lifeless, hard, stony heart to a soft, life-filled, heart of flesh. Here's [Ezekiel 36:26](#).

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

[Ezek 36:26](#) (ESV)

This is where sharing the truth that only Jesus' blood atones for sin is so important. Fervent prayer is needed that the Holy Spirit transform hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. Who of your family, friends or neighbors has a hard heart to the gospel? Are we really serious at La Crescent Evangelical Free Church (LEFC) about planting local churches, so that the gospel is shared right where we're living? How zealous are we at LEFC to be ambassadors of Christ; to make much of His name; to see lost souls cleansed and forgiven of sins by the blood of Christ?

Call to Examine Ourselves

What's the condition of your heart, your soul, the part of you that God provided a way for the atonement of sins through Jesus' sacrificial blood? Are you hard and stone-cold to the gospel? If so, you're in a desperate life-or-death situation. It's as if you're on the sinking Titanic. Would John Harper's words "turn to the Lord Jesus and be saved" cause you to respond in faith alone through God's grace alone?

On the Day of Atonement, the Israelites knew that even though the priests made atonement for their sins, they needed to respond in faith; they needed to humbly repent and trust God for providing the solution to their greatest problem, which was sin. Likewise, the Lord Jesus is the solution to our greatest problem, which is sin. His blood made purification for sins ([Hebrews 1:3](#)); He offered Himself to bear the sins of many ([Hebrews 9:28](#)).

Just as the Israelites were saved by the blood of a lamb without blemish, likewise we are saved by the blood of Christ, who is without blemish. If you've never done so, I urge you to trust Jesus for salvation. Your destiny can be changed right now by repenting of sin, believing the gospel and trusting Christ. Today is the day; now is the time; won't you trust Him?

And how about those of us who have trusted Jesus for many years, perhaps decades. Do we realize that His blood not only atoned for our sin, but continues to plead our case in everyday, real-life situations? Because of Jesus' blood, a marriage on the rocks can be rescued. A serious health problem can be healed. Worry-filled thoughts can be calmed. Whatever your or my situation, we need to repent of our sins, believe the gospel and trust that Jesus' blood makes the difference today, tomorrow and for eternity.

Conclusion

As human beings, we're most undeserving to be saved from our sin by the atoning blood of Jesus. There's nothing about us that makes us attractive to God. Yet, Jesus paid it all; He purchased many with His blood. His blood is the eternal difference-maker. And that's only true by God's love, grace and mercy, through the work of the Holy Spirit. That's true no matter what the color of our skin, the language that we speak, or our political, social and economic status. Here's [Revelation 5:9](#).

...for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation...

[Rev 5:9](#) (ESV)

In closing, I'd like to show a video. The lady is Jen Keres singing "Jesus Paid It All". Most of the hymn is sung in the language of the Ojibway tribe in northern Ontario province of Canada. The Keres family, as well as the Klockenga family, are LEFC supported missionaries who minister to the people of the small community of Cat Lake, Ontario. As we watch the video, let's ask ourselves: Who or what do I put my ultimate hope in? Is it Jesus' blood and righteousness or something else? Our answer will live on through eternity because Jesus' blood makes the difference. Amen. (Here's the link to the video: [Nipehtawaw Jesus - YouTube](#))