The Precious Blood, Part 2
Selected Scriptures
90-29

As you know, if you were with us last week, we are examining together the theme, "The precious blood." Just to set our thoughts, I'd like you to turn again to 1 Peter chapter 1, a chapter in which we have been studying for many months now. And I would like to remind you of what Peter says in verses 18 and 19.

First Peter chapter 1 verse 18, "Knowing that You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from Your forefathers but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. We are digressing from a careful exegetical study of this section here for a moment just to talk about the precious blood itself.

Peter speaks of the blood Christ as precious and rightly so. It is precious because it was shed for our salvation. But it is important for us to remember that when Peter speaks of the blood of Christ being precious he has more in mind than just the fluid itself that flowed in and out of the body of Christ. When Peter speaks of precious blood he means to include Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin and he means to include all that is involved in the atonement. And we are endeavoring to cause you to understand that all Scripture references to the blood of Christ that look back at His death include the fullness of his substitutionary atoning work on the cross.

Through the years theologian and preachers and teachers, including myself have held the view that the blood of Christ, when referred to in the epistles, makes reference to the atoning work of Christ, more so than just the blood itself. However, in recent months there has been a confusing new teaching, new in the sense that it's new to this particular generation but not new in the history of the church. It has come up in the past. And that new teaching wants to identify the blood isolated from the death of Christ, isolated from His atoning work as having some very special significance in and of itself.

I pointed out last time that basically what these people are teaching goes like this. First of all they are saying that the blood of Christ was not human blood. It was supernatural blood, the blood of God. Secondly, they are saving since it was supernatural blood and not the blood of man, but the blood of God it is, therefore, eternal and incorruptible. Thirdly, they are saying in its eternal and incorruptible condition and state it was taken to heaven at the time of the ascension of Christ, some of them say, it was taken to heaven where it remains forever in heaven contained in some vessel. Fourthly, they say it is perpetually and continually being poured out on some heavenly mercy seat for the forgiveness of sins. And then the fifth and most significant part of this, as far as understanding the New Testament is concerned, they say references to the blood of Christ then in the New Testament are not symbols for His atoning work, they are not symbols for His sacrificial death, they refer specifically to His blood.

Now what makes this particular teaching so threatening is that it is held by people who claim to be and are fundamentalists, orthodox. It is held by people who are so adamant about it that they are saying, "Anyone who doesn't believe this view is a heretic." To personalize it a little bit they have called me heretic on many many occasions, both on tape, in public, to my face, and in print. The dictionary says a heretic is a professed believer who, in truth, denies the truth. A professed believer who denies the truth. So they are saying that if you do not believe that the blood of Christ is the blood of God, not the blood of a man, not even the God/man, if you do not believe that it is eternal, incorruptible, preserved forever in heaven, if you do not believe that it is being perpetually poured out on a heavenly mercy seat washing away sins even now, if you do not believe that the references to the blood; in the epistles particularly, are not direct references to the blood but are symbols of His death and atoning work, then you're a heretic. You are a professed believer who in reality is denying the truth. Now the actual truth is that none of those viewpoints are biblical. To call someone a heretic for not believing in a manufactured viewpoint is indeed far from reality.

Now last week I began to take a look at these views and examine them in the light of Scripture. I haven't tried to be academic or pedantic or difficult to understand but just really to examine very simply and very obviously, I hope, what the word of God says so that you will understand. And I want to go back to that Bible study that we started last week tonight. Now remember that last week we took the first of their view, "It was not human blood but the blood of God." And they base it on Acts 20:28, where it says, "The church of God which He has purchased with His own blood." And they say, "Therefore, since it says the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood it must be then the blood of God whose church it is." And we answered that particular argument by saying there is never a reference to the blood of God in the entire Bible. The New Testament always refers to the blood of Christ. And even though the church can be called the church of God it was purchased by the death of Christ, therefore, it is the blood of the one who purchased the church that is referred to in Acts 20:28. "Whoever purchased the church...and that is clearly Christ...as 1 Peter 1 says that, "We have been redeemed with precious blood." Whose blood? The blood of Christ. Very clearly not the blood of God.

And then we also noted that blood is produced in the bone marrow. From the time a human being is a fetus on all the blood is produced in the bone marrow. And in the case of Jesus He grew as a man in wisdom and stature, as a man was fully human, therefore, there was produced in His bone marrow the blood that flowed in His veins. It was human blood. In Hebrews we reminded you of chapter 2 verse 14, where it says that, "Christ partook of flesh and blood." He shared with the human race, and it says it, flesh and blood, Hebrews 2:14. So it is not some divine blood, some supernatural blood, some blood of God that came down but rather that which was produced in His body as He was in human form.

We took the second point they make that the blood of Christ was eternal and incorruptible. They base it on 1 Peter 1:18, "That we were not redeemed with perishable silver and gold but with precious blood." And they say, "Peter is contrasting perishable silver and gold with imperishable blood, therefore, the blood must be imperishable." But that is to read into the passage something it doesn't say. "Peter is contrasting perishable silver and gold with precious blood," that's what he says. He is very careful not to say imperishable blood. He is comparing the perishable with the precious. And, of course, it is implied in something that perishes that it can't be ultimately precious.

We pointed out also that it is the work of Christ that is eternal, not the fluid that flowed in His veins, anymore than any part of His sinless body was eternal in some sense. There's nothing in the Bible to

indicate that any part of His body, His hair, His fingernails, whatever it might be, was eternal. Now He is eternal and He is eternally glorified in a glorified body that is different than the body that died on the cross, and, yet, in some ways the same. It has the nails and so forth; the nail marks. We don't know about that glorified body specifically except to say in 1 Corinthians 15, "It is different than the human body. It knows no sin, it knows no curse, it knows no fallenness, it never ages, it never grows old, it is some way unique, it has no capacity to die, therefore, whatever it is it is forever." But that which was part of His human body is never said to be eternal.

We also looked at the third point that they make that it...we, at least, introduced it and I want to go back to it tonight and pick it up there. They say that the blood of Christ is perpetually in heaven being poured out on the heavenly mercy seat. That blood being eternal and incorruptible was taken to heaven where it is perpetually being poured out on the mercy seat. I want to just take you to Hebrews chapter 12 at this particular point. Hebrews chapter 12, and this is the verse that they use to support this idea that it is perpetually being poured out. Now, before we look at this point on perpetual pouring the third issue that they bring up is that it is preserved forever in heaven. And if they're going to have it preserved forever in heaven I guess they feel that something needs to be done with it so it's not just sitting there.

If you'll back into chapter 9 before you look at chapter 12 I'll kind of set this up a little bit. In Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 11 it says, "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Now that is a very key passage. That is describing Christ having completed His work on earth of redemption, ascending to heaven, appearing as the high priest of good things to come. Verse 11, "He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation." In other words He went in His glorified body into the presence of God in a greater and more perfect tabernacle. He had a greater and a more perfect body than even He had here. Not human, not made with hands, not the product of a woman's womb, not of this creation.

"And he entered in...verse 12...not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place." In other words God gave Him access back to heaven into His holy presence because through His blood He had obtained eternal redemption. Now would you please notice that these people say that this is teaching us that He entered with His blood, and they take the very clear preposition through and substitute for it the word "with." But it is not so in the Greek. It is not "with" it is through. That is by virtue of his death, not "with" His blood in hand. He entered into the true and immediate presence of God when He offered Himself on the cross and He accomplished, once and for all, the perfect redemption. And, therefore, through His resurrection was granted a new and more perfect tabernacle in which He entered the presence of God and was accepted into the holy place through or by virtue of His perfect work on the cross. Because of the merits of His death, by His ascension, He entered the presence of God having satisfied God's requirement for salvation. The reference to blood is not to His carrying in His blood. It isn't with His blood, it is through His blood. That must be carefully understood.

So, therefore, there is no reason to assume, based on those two verses, which they are using, that His blood is in heaven at all. There is no reason to assume that it was some kind of supernatural blood that would have to exist forever. There is no reason to assume it was taken into heaven, certainly not on the basis of this particular text. And, yet, they insist that it was the blood of God, that

it was eternal and corruptible, that it is presently in heaven, taken there by Christ. And in order to come to that view I think they have to do an injustice to the text. Now that it is in heaven...we come to the fourth thought in their little scheme. Hebrews chapter 12 verse 22 is a place to start. And here the writer of Hebrews is referring to heaven and he's referring to those who enter into the presence of God through faith and Christ. He is contrasting salvation by grace with the law of God and the trembling and fear that went along with the law. He says, "You're not coming to Mount Sinai. You true believers aren't coming to God through law. You are coming to Mount Zion and to the city of the living of God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel."

Now the writer of Hebrews is saying when you come to God by faith and faith has been the subject for two chapters now. It started in chapter 11 verse 1 when he introduced faith as the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. And then chronicled in chapter 11 all the heroes of faith and then in chapter 12 said, "Let us run the race of faith with endurance." And now he is saying, "When you come to God by faith you don't come to Synia, you don't come to a mountain of law, a mountain of judgment, you come to Zion and you come to the living God and you come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and there you find myriads of angels and the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and you come to God, who is the judge of all, and you come to the spirits of righteous men who have been made perfect in His presence, and you will come to Jesus and to the sprinkled blood. And so they conclude that when you get to heaven the sprinkled blood must be there. The blood must be there being sprinkled, being sprinkled.

Some say...and I got a letter this week from a man who called me a heretic for two pages, the pastor of a church. And he said, "Don't you understand that all those things are literal, therefore, the sprinkled blood must be literal as well?" But they're not all literal. He says, "You have come to Mount Zion." That's not literal that's an earthly place. These are not all literal. And when he says to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant and to sprinkled blood he is simply referring to the work of Christ. You come to Jesus when you come to heaven. Jesus the mediator, Jesus the one who shed His blood, which blood symbolically atoned for sin. And he's drawing an analogy; a high priest in the past, go into the temple, into the holy of holies, sprinkle the blood once a year on the mercy seat to atone for the sins of the people. And he says, "When you come to heaven you come to the place where the atonement has been accomplished and symbolically where the blood has been sprinkled." There's no reason to assume that literally Jesus carried His blood there and sprinkled it around heaven.

And they would teach that there is a repeated atonement with this eternal blood going on perpetually, so it's always being sprinkled. The Anglo Catholics and the Roman Catholics, through the years, believed that in heaven a perpetual offering by Christ of His blood is taking place. But I want you to understand something. I want you to understand that this text is not telling us that there is a literal sprinkling of blood going on all the time in heaven. The picture here is coming into a new place. "You have come to a new place." It's almost as if he is saying you have come to a new tent. "You've come to Mount Zion to a new temple, to the city of the living God, to the church, to those enrolled in heaven, to God, to the spirits of the men made perfect and to Jesus, and to the place where atonement has been made." There's no compelling reason to take the sprinkled blood that is literal anymore than to take Mount Zion as literal.

Now theologically, and I want you to understand this, the sacrifice of Christ is not repeated and it is not repeatable. Go back to chapter 9 for a moment. In Hebrews chapter 9 verse 24, "Christ...I want you to note this...when Christ ascended He did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself." Now, personally, I don't believe in heaven there is a reproduction of the tabernacle or a reproduction of the temple. He didn't enter into a copy of the true one, he entered heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He's there to intercede for us. It never says He is there perpetually pouring out blood for us. Now follow..."nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not His own." Did you hear that? It is not that Jesus went into some heavenly tabernacle and like the high priest of old is often offering up His blood as the high priest offered the blood of someone other than his own, literally an animal. "Otherwise...look at this, verse 26...he would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world."

Listen, if the sacrifice of Christ has to be repeated, if the blood has to be poured out and...poured out and...poured out and...poured out and...poured out, it must be repeated to be efficacious. He would have had to do that since the foundation of the world. "But...look at it, verse 26...now once at the consummation of the ages...that's the time when Messiah came and died...He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Verse 28, "So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many." Once...once. It does a terrible injustice to the intent of the once for all sacrifice of Christ to have Him in heaven perpetually pouring out His blood in some copy of the earthly tabernacle on some mercy seat.

Look at chapter 10 verse 12, "But He, having offered...how many sacrifices?...one for sins for all time, did what?...sat down at the right hand of God." He is not going in to some holy of holies, into some mercy seat and perpetually pouring out His blood. Verse 14, "For by one offering of His life and blood he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." Listen, Beloved, Christ poured out His blood one time. There is nothing to indicate that it was perpetual, that there is some ongoing incessant, unending, continual pouring out of blood in heaven. Christ lives to suffer and die no more. He lives to bleed no more. He lives to atone for sin no more. It is the efficacy of the offering at Calvary that is perpetual, the efficacy of the one offering that is perpetual, not the perpetual sprinkling of the blood. And the sprinkled blood...the metaphor that appears in Hebrews 12 simply refers back to the atonement that God was satisfied with the sacrificial work of Christ. There is nothing in Scripture to describe Christ using His blood in heaven, nothing. He is there doing one thing for us, and that is what? What's the word? Interceding...interceding.

Now, let me get you to the final and most important point, number five. They say that blood is not a symbol for atonement; it's not a symbol for death. When I said some years ago now that the blood, when it's referred to in the epistles, primarily when the blood of Christ is made reference to, but also in the gospels on occasion, it has reference to death, to violent death, to sacrificial death. In other words, it is a term that is used as a symbol for death, for violent death, for sacrificial death, in Christ's case for his atonement. And that's what began all this controversy because these people want to say that the blood is not symbolic. In fact, there was a meeting together of a group of Baptists who came out with a statement in which they said, "That no mention of the blood of Christ in the New Testament is ever symbolic. It always means the literal blood." Well that view is not new. It was elaborated on and systematized by a man named F.C.N. Hicks, in his book called, The Fullness of Sacrifice, written in 1930. He is an Anglo-Catholic theologian. He separated the blood from the death of Christ and wanted to make something special out of the blood isolated from His death. But no such separation can be made because blood is used frequently in the New Testament to refer to

death. It is not the blood all alone as a fluid that saves us; it is the death of Christ.

In fact, you have statements in the New Testament like this, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. Is there anything in the cross as wood that saves us?" Or Peter says, "By His stripes we are healed." Is there something in His physical stripes and scars and wounds that saves us? No. When he says, "By His stripes we are healed," he is simply looking at the death of Christ from the viewpoint of His scars and stripes. When he says, "It's the cross that saves," he's looking at the atoning work of Christ from the viewpoint of the cross. When he talks about blood that's just another symbol of the whole atoning work of Christ. Whether he says, "By His stripes," or by the preaching of the cross or we're saved through the blood of Christ, he has in mind the whole atoning work, not the fluid isolated from the death of Christ.

Go back to Hebrews 9 verse 13. And get ready cause we're gonna look at a lot of Scriptures quickly here. And this is what they use. "They say...verse 13...If the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those that have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh...here's the key...how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works?" They said, "There it is, right there, the blood of Christ will cleanse your conscience from dead works." Somehow that eternal fluid, up in heaven, being poured out on a mercy seat in a copy of the earthly temple, by Jesus Christ, who is still making a sacrifice of Himself, somehow that fluid cleanses your conscience from dead works. And they say, "That's where it is; right there." In order to come to that conclusion you have to take the phrase, "The blood of Christ," as meaning the fluid, the chemical fluid blood. Is that fair? No.

When the writer of Hebrews says, "The blood of Christ will cleanse your conscience he means the death of Christ, the atoning work of Christ, the sacrificial work of Christ," he isn't referring just to the blood. Listen, if the blood alone could save you Christ would never have had to die. All He would have had to do was bleed.

Now, let's follow along with _____. Peter uses the term blood of Christ. And Peter uses the term blood of Christ to refer to His death. "And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem...Acts 1:19...the field that Judas fell down and died. . .it became known to all in Jerusalem; so that in their language the field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood." Why was it called the Field of Blood? Because somebody bled there? No, it was called the Field of Blood because there a man died. There a man died. It was the field of death, simply another way to express that. In Acts 5:28; Here is the council, the high priests confronting the preachers of the gospel. And he says to them, "We give you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name...stop preaching Christ...and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you intend to bring this man's blood on us." What did they mean by that? Did they mean that you intend to douse us with the fluid? No, that's ridiculous. What they meant is, you intend to make us responsible for this man's...what?...death. Obviously, obviously, it can't mean anything else.

In John chapter 6 in verse 53, "Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh, drinks My blood has eternal life; I'll raise him up on the last day. My flesh is true food, My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh, drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." What in the world does He mean by that? Is He talking about literal fluid? Is He saying, you've got to take a chunk out of Me like a cannibal and then you've got to drink my literal blood? No. What He is saying is, "You are going to have to accept My life and death. You're going to have to acknowledge My sacrifice, my atoning

work. Take in the sacrifice offered on the cross." That's what He has in mind.

John 10 verse 17, "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again." You see that's the point. In one place He said, "You have to drink My blood." In another place He says, "You're gonna have to accept the fact that I lay down My life." In both cases He has the same thing in mind, he's talking about His death. There's nothing in the fluid that can cure sin. I mean if there was the people who beat Him and got blood splattered on them would have their sins washed away. The soldiers that drove the nails through His hands and got His blood on their hands would have their sins washed away. That is bizarre.

One writer, Stibb, says...who has written an outstanding article on the use of haima, which is the Greek word for blood, he says, "To the Jewish mind blood was not merely nor ever chiefly the life currently flowing in the veins of the living. It was especially the life poured out in death." That's exactly right. To the Jewish mind, referring to blood was referring to life being poured out in death. It was a symbol of sacrificial death. Johannes Bain, writing in Kittle's set of studies of Greek words, says, "Haima stands for death. Blood stands for death." And that, by the way, is probably the consummate source for understanding Greek words. "Writers," the article says, who speak of the blood of Christ are interested, not in the material substance but in the death of Christ." That has been the traditional view. Why, then, did they say blood instead of death? Because blood is more vivid in its expression and because it signifies the sacrificial nature in which blood was poured out.

In the Old Testament, dawm, the Hebrew word for blood, is used 360 times. Okay? Now we're not gonna go through all 360 of those but I do want to just, maybe, give you a little bit of an idea. Genesis 37, let's go back to the very beginning. Don't turn to these, just listen, write em down. Genesis 37:26, okay? "And Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood?" Now what did he mean? To kill our brother and put dirt on top of the fluid? No. To kill our brother and cover up the fact that we. . .what? We killed him. Blood there means a violent death. We have to hide the fact that we took his life. That's standard usage of the Hebrew word in the Old Testament.

In 1 Kings 2:5, it says, "Now you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner, to Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed; he also shed the blood of war in peace. And he put the blood of war on his belt." Now that does not mean that he smeared blood all over himself. It simply means he killed people in battle. He killed people in battle. That is a very typical reference to blood. There are many many more that I won't take the time to go over.

But let me give you some statistics. Three hundred and sixty times the word blood appears. Two hundred and three times in the Old Testament it refers to violent death, 203 times. One hundred and three times it refers to sacrificial death. So 306 times out of 360 times it refers either to violent death or sacrificial death. In the Hebrew mind, in the Jewish mind, all...all linguistic scholars that I have read on the Old Testament will say that the use of blood refers to violent death or sacrificial death most frequently unless it is talking about the actual fluid.

In the New Testament...we'll go to the New Testament...the word haima is used 98 times. And I want to give you some insight into it. All right? Now you might want to follow me in the New Testament if you can, Acts 22. You're gonna enjoy this because this is really gonna open all the windows for you. Acts 22:20, Paul here giving his testimony, "And I said...verse 19...Lord, they themselves understand

that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in Thee...Paul talking here. . .and when the blood of Thy witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the cloaks of those who were slaying him." Let me ask you a question. How did Stephen die? Stoned to death. When someone was stoned to death large boulders were dropped on their upper body. Their head was crushed. Their chest was crushed. There is no reason to assume that the actual fluid of Stephen's body was actually shed. He didn't die by bleeding to death. He was crushed to death. But when it says, "When the blood of Thy witness Stephen was being shed," all that means was when Stephen was being what? Killed. That's just another expression for a violent death, another expression for a violent death. No blood was shed there of significance, or, at least, we wouldn't assume so in a stoning. And, certainly, he didn't bleed to death. He was crushed. No doubt his skull was crushed.

Look at Revelation...we're gonna jump around...chapter 6, revelation chapter 6. "Here you have in the fifth seal. . .verse 9. . .under the altar those who have been slain because of the word of God." These are the martyrs that have died in the tribulation. "And these dear saints of God are crying out to God and their crying out...in verse 10...Lord, holy and true, how long will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood?" Now what do they mean? Somebody bleed us and we want vengeance. No, somebody what? Killed them. They're crying out to God that justice be brought against those who killed them. And the reference there to avenging our blood is simply a reference to their death. It makes no sense to insist on a literal blood shedding, as if everybody who died bleeds. It simply says in verse 9, "They were slain because of the word of God and the testimony, which they maintained," irrespective of how they died. And the reference to avenging their blood is a reference to avenging the violent death they died as martyrs.

Go back to Luke chapter 11:47, "Jesus says, "Woe to you! You build the tombs of the prophets, and it was your fathers who killed them. Consequently you witnessed and approved the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs." In other words, you hypocrites, your fathers killed the prophets and you build monuments to them. "For this reason...verse 49...the wisdom of God said, "I will send to them prophets and apostles, some of them they will kill, some they will persecute, in order that the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation." Whoa, what statement. What a statement. When he says the blood of all the prophets are we to assume that all the prophets bled to death? No. All it means is the death of the prophets. "From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah," means from the death of Abel to the death of Zechariah, which sweeps over the range of history of the Old Testament. From the first persecuted martyr to the last persecuted priest, you're gonna be responsible for all of their deaths. Clearly those references to blood in this passage, both in verse 50 and 51, are simply references to death. They all died in different ways. In fact, of Abel it says his brother slew him and it says his blood cried out from the ground. Does that mean his literal blood cried out? Of course not, it means the responsibility for his death cried for vengeance.

Look at Acts chapter 18. Acts chapter 18 and verse 6, Paul comes to preach, down from Macedonia he comes to Corinth, he begins to preach, and in verse 6 says, "When they resisted and blasphemed, he shook his garment, said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads." Now you tell me, is that literal? Is that literal? Is he saying, "I hope you get a leak in your head?" I mean that kind of thing would be absolutely ridiculous. What he is saying to them is, "When you die you're gonna be responsible for your own death. When you die you're gonna be responsible for it. When you perish

you're responsible. I'm not responsible. I'm not responsible." Why? "Because I have preached to you the truth. I have discharged my responsibility. Your death, your violent death, your being judged by God is your own fault." By the way, blood there is used to refer to spiritual and eternal death, certainly not bleeding. Not bleeding.

Now what I've just shown you are some references to blood that are general, not related to the blood of Christ. Those passages I just gave you: Acts 22:20, Revelations 6:10, Luke 11:51 and Acts 18:6 refer to blood in a way that is obviously referring to a violent death. But now let's look at the blood of Christ, specifically as a phrase, all right? Get ready.

Let's go back to Romans chapter 5, Romans chapter 5 verse 9, "Much more then...Paul says...having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were sinners we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we'll be saved by His life." Now notice he says two things. Verse 9, he says, "We have been justified by His blood." Verse 10, he says, "We have been reconciled by His death." They both refer to what? Same thing. Two different ways of referring to His atoning work. If you say that, "We are justified by His blood," and it means the fluid then you have to have two parts to salvation. The fluid justifies you and the death reconciles you. And now you have really convoluted salvation. You've got the death doing something and the actual fluid doing something. That's not consistent with what the Scripture teaches. To say that, "We have been justified by His blood," is the same as saying we have been reconciled by His death because, folks, to be justified and to be reconciled means basically the same thing. To be justified means to be made right with God. To be reconciled means to be made right with God. Blood, therefore, and death must be synonyms because what they produce is the same thing. Okay?

How bout Ephesians chapter 2 verse 13? Ephesians chapter 2 verse 13, "Now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near...near to God, near to the covenant but God is the real object...you have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ." Now what does that mean? What's that mean? It can't mean anything but His atoning sacrifice, His whole work. Let me show you why? Okay. If we had been brought near by the blood that is brought near to God, verse 12 says that, "The unbelievers are without God." Verse 13 says, "In Christ Jesus we have been brought near to God...implied...by the blood." Look at verse 16. "And it says that he reconciles us in one body to God through the...what?...cross.

Now, if we're gonna make the blood literal what do we have to do here? Make the cross literal. It's talking about the same thing. In verse 13 we were brought near by the blood. In verse 16 we had been reconciled to God through the cross. What is different about being brought near and being reconciled? Nothing. Being brought near to God is the same as being reconciled to God is the same as being right with God. So whether you say it's through the blood, through the death, through the cross, you're saying the same thing. You have to be saying the same thing. They're used interchangeably.

Colossians chapter 1 verse 20, "And through Him," he says, that is through Christ the Father reconciles all things to Himself." How did God reconcile us to Himself? How did He make us right with Him? How did he draw us near? He made peace through the blood of His cross. Now, Beloved, a cross has no blood. It simply stands for His painful sacrificial death in which he atoned for sin. You see what happens if you try to make the blood literal everywhere, you really get into some problems?

First John chapter 5 verse 6. Now listen to this. "This is the one...namely Jesus the Son of God mentioned in verse 5 then verse 6 says, "This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood." Coming by water, what does that refer to? Christ's what? His baptism. Coming by blood, what does that refer to? His death, his sacrificial death, his death on the cross. It can't mean anything else. "He came by water...this is My Beloved Son, hear him...He came at the cross and accomplished our salvation."

Revelation chapter 1 verse 5, "And Jesus Christ," it says, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, the ruler of the kings of the earth To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His...what?...blood." He released us from our sins by His blood. Listen, blood must mean death because there is no forgiveness of sin without death. The wages of sin is death. When the writer of Hebrews says, "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin." Does he mean without somebody bleeding? No, he means without somebody what? Dying. It's obvious. Chapter 7 of Revelations verse 14, "And I said to him, "My Lord, you know." He said to me, "These are the ones who came out of the great tribulation, they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb." Now you tell me if blood on a robe makes it white? Can't be literal. Makes no sense. It simply means that they have been cleansed through the sacrificial atoning work of Christ. Chapter 12 verse 11, "Salvation...verse 10 says..."Salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come...this is a loud voice out of heaven...the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down...namely Satan...who accuses them before our God day and night. And the saints literally overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb." What does that mean, literal blood? No, because of His sacrificial death, because of His sacrificial death.

And then Revelation 19:13, Jesus in His second coming judgment, He comes, His eyes are a flame of fire, His head has many diadems or crowns. He has a name written on Him, which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood." What does that mean? He's coming back to do what? Judge. It's the blood of those He slays, the blood of those He slays. Some commentators feel that it's the blood that He shed on the cross, symbolic. Either way it embraces His whole atoning work. He comes either as the one who is blood stained; symbolic of His great atoning work, or He comes as the one who is blood stained; symbolic of His great judgment work in which He will slaughter the nations of the earth in unbelief. Obviously the blood of Christ embraces His whole atoning work.

Now, as we bring this together again let me take you back through...go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 10. There're some other Scriptures that will enrich your thinking. And I'm gonna go really quick. First Corinthians 10:16, communion service, "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ?" Does that mean we share in the literal blood? No, it means we share in His atoning work, in all that He accomplished through the sacrifice of Himself. Chapter 11 verse 27, "When you come to the Lord's Table and you eat and drink unworthily you are guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord." In other words if you mock the cross you take your stand with those who took His life, with those who took His life.

In Hebrews...I want to give you a few key Scriptures, some of them we've already looked at but I need to draw them back to your attention just to pull the final thoughts together. In Hebrews chapter 9 verse 14, it says...we read it earlier..."How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God cleanse your conscience?" "And he then...verse 15...becomes a mediator of a new covenant, in order that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions...you see the point? Blood in verse 14, a death has taken place in

verse 15. They mean one and the same; blood must equal death. Now look at verse 16. And here's how he explains it, "For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it." Literally here were a will or a testament. Someone give a will, it's no good until the person who gave it dies. A covenant or a will or a testament...verse 17...is valid only when men are dead." Now follow, verse 18, "Therefore, even the first covenant was not inaugurated without...what?...blood." What does that mean then? Has to mean death. He just said that. Can't mean anything else. Not blood, death, he just said it. A covenant is no good except for death and so a covenant is validated only when inaugurated by blood, which must mean, cannot mean anything else other than death. That is one of the key passages in this whole discussion.

Hebrews 13 verse 11...I didn't know how much time I had so I'm going back picking up a few Scriptures for you. Hebrews 13:11, "For the bodies of those animals whose. . .looking back at the sacrificial system in the Old Testament. . .whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate." Again, it has to mean His death; it has to mean His death. The animals were killed, their blood was sprinkled, Jesus, through His own blood, means through His own death, suffered outside the gate. Outside the city of Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:4...one more in Hebrews. Got a few more. Got a few minutes. Hebrews 12:4, "You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood." What does that mean? "_____ in your striving against sin." Well you say, "What's the point?" Well look back what it says. "Christ...verse 2...endured the cross." He endured the cross. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood. In other words, He died; you haven't had to do that. That's what that means. Shedding blood there simply means He died a violent death. You can be faithful. You haven't had to strive against sin to the point where you had to die a violent death have you? It's not as bad as you think is what he's saying. "Consider him...verse 3...who endured such hostility so that you don't grow weary and lose heart." You haven't suffered unto a violent death. You see shedding blood has to do with a violent death.

I can't resist taking you to Matthew chapter 23. And I want to wrap this up in a solid way so that it really will be helpful. Matthew 23:29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Jesus says, "You build the tombs of the prophets adorning the monuments of the righteous and say, "We'd been living in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets." What does that mean? What does that mean? Killing them. Killing them. The next verse says it, "Consequently you bear witness against yourself that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets." Shedding the blood means murder. That's what it means. And verse 34, "I'm sending you prophets and wise men...just like we read in Luke 11...some of them you will kill and crucify, some you will scourge in your synagogues, persecute from city to city. Upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, and the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar." Again, the idea of blood means murder, violent death, sacrificial death, those kinds of things.

Then Matthew 27, Judas threw the silver back...you remember he went back to the temple threw the silver back? So guilty. The chief priest took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of...what?...what does he mean?...it's the price of murder." It's the price of betrayal that ends in murder, that's exactly what he meant. Nothing else would make sense. And that's why verse 8 says, "The field was called The Field of Blood." They used the money to buy the potter's field that became the Field of Blood or the Field of Murder, the Field of Violent Death, for the one that was betrayed with the money was violent in his ultimate end,

in that Christ was violently killed. He too was violently killed as he committed suicide, as well. No wonder it was called the Field of Blood, the Field of Violent Death, for the money that bought it was for that purpose and the man who died there died violently. In verse 24, "When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he didn't want to be responsible for what happened to Jesus, he said, "I'm innocent of this Man's blood." What did he mean? I'm innocent of his death. "And all the people said, "His blood be on us." What did they mean? Did they mean pour his blood on us? They meant, "We'll take responsibility for His death." That was the Hebrew term, they understood it, they knew it meant violent death. "Kill him and we'll take responsibility.

Now some people say, "Well but you see the Old Testament typology has the priest going in and sprinkling the blood. So Christ, like the priest, He has to go in and sprinkle the blood too." You can't press that. You can't press that analogy too far. And there's nothing to indicate that Christ actually sprinkled His blood and you certainly don't want to press the Old Testament ritual.

Let me go back to Leviticus 16 and tell you what the priest did. Okay? Verse 15 of Leviticus 16, "He'll slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, to sprinkle it on the mercy seat in front of the mercy seat." Verse 24...I'm just picking up some highlights..."He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place, put on his clothes, come forth, offer his burnt offering, the burnt offering of the people, make atonement for himself and for his people. And he shall offer up smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar." Verse 27, "The bull of the sin offering, the goat of the sin offering, whose blood is brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, they shall burn their hides, their flesh, their refuse in the fire. Then the one who burns them shall wash his clothes, bathe his body with water, and afterward come into the camp." Now you tell me whether Christ has to do all that when He gets in there too? You can't push that. The high priest made an atonement and brought the atoning blood before God and it satisfied God. That's all that has to be translated into the New Testament work of Christ. You can't have Him doing everything in reduplication of what the Old Testament high priests did on the Day of Atonement.

Now, to conclude, seriously. Romans 3:25, Listen to this, this is so rich, Romans 3:25, "Speaking of Christ Jesus...verse 24...Christ Jesus...this is a salvation section..."The redemption that is in Christ Jesus...verse 24 says...whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith." Now watch this, verse 25, "Whom God displayed publicly...that is one possible translation of pro ef a ta. It can be translated that way. God set forth openly, made a public spectacle. By the way, that's in contrast to the Levitical sprinkling on the mercy seat, which was hidden from the sight of everybody. It wasn't a spectacle, nobody saw it. So there's no parallel there. But in contrast to the hidden sprinkling by the high priests on the Day of Atonement it could mean Jesus was openly displayed, openly displayed as propitiation. Pro ef a tacould also mean and it could be just as well translated, purposed or for ordained. And it would read this way, "Whom god for ordained as a propitiation." Say, "What's the point?" The word propitiation can mean mercy seat. Now let me give you a perspective.

I believe there's only one mercy seat in heaven and that mercy seat is Christ. And if you translate it, "Whom God openly displayed as a mercy seat," or if you translate it, "Whom God for ordained to be the mercy seat in His blood," then you will understand it. That would indicate that it is not that Christ offered some blood on some mercy seat, as if there is some reproduced tabernacle there. But that He Himself in His blood is the mercy seat Himself. I believe that is the way to interpret that, that God publicly showed Him forth or for ordained and purposed Him to be the mercy seat in His blood. He

didn't take it to heaven. He doesn't dump it on a mercy seat. He is the mercy seat. That corresponds perfectly to 1 John 2. It says it. First John 2, "For He Himself is the propitiation, the hilasterion...same word...the mercy seat for our sins." He is the mercy seat. He is the mercy seat. The only one in heaven is Christ Himself who in His blood satisfied God.

Well, I hope that helps. I hope you understand what the Scripture teaches about the blood of Christ. In 1 John 1:7, do you remember that verse? "If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son keeps on cleansing us from all sin." I don't believe that's teaching, that it's perpetually being poured out...perpetually being poured...perpetually being poured out. No. It was poured out one time and it's efficacy keeps on cleansing us perpetually.

What's the greatest chapter in the Old Testament on the atoning work of Christ? What is it? Isaiah...what?...53. Read it, you will find no occasion of the word blood in that chapter. It focuses on His death. What is the clearest, most concise presentation in the New Testament of the gospel? What is it? First Corinthians 15. I read it to you. "Now I make known to you brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain...here it is...for I delivered to you as of first important what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." That's the gospel. Doesn't mention the blood. Doesn't have to. It mentions His death. It mentions His death.

Yes the blood is precious because His death is precious. Yes we don't want to minimize anything precious, certainly not the blood of Christ. But it is very sad when people go off emotionally over what they misperceive because someone is misrepresenting it. To say that Christ was less than fully human is wrong. To say that there was some eternal character to impersonal blood that has left it uncorrupted throughout all of eternity is not taught in Scripture. To say that that fluid is now in heaven and that it is being poured out somehow on some mercy seat cannot be supported Scripturally. And to say that the New Testament writers, referring to the blood of Christ 30 times, always meant only the fluid is just not true. They had in mind his death very clearly, very clearly. And all of that kind of fuzzy and incorrect thinking takes the focus off the truth, that Jesus, the perfect God/man died and went to heaven, having once for all accomplished our redemption and is now resting at the right hand of God interceding for us, not carrying on some perpetual priestly function. There's no heresy in believing what we believe it's just what Scripture teaches.

Let's pray. Father, we've covered so much tonight and I just thank You for these dear people who have come to listen so faithfully. I pray that these things will be clear in their hearts and minds and that in the volume of Scripture we haven't lost the flow. It's so simple Lord. The blood of Jesus was the blood of Jesus, as human as He was human, as perfect as He was perfect. There's no need for the blood of Christ to exist now; it did its work. No need for it to be poured out on some imaginary mercy seat. He is the mercy seat. He is the sacrifice. He is the high priest. He is all and all. No need to repeat what is unrepeatable.

Lord, we thank you for the precious blood; precious because His death is precious. The sacrifice of Himself as an atonement for our sins is precious. And we do not treat likely the sacred, sacred reality of the sacrifice of our dear Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org

COPYRIGHT (C) 2016 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).