

# The Blood of Jesus

**Baxter T. Exum (#1566)  
Four Lakes Church of Christ  
Madison, Wisconsin  
October 4, 2020**



## **\*\*COVID-19 SPLIT SERVICE\*\***

It's a blessing to be with you this morning! As usual, I hope all of you have the elements for the Lord's Supper today, either from home or on the table in the entryway. We plan on partaking of the Supper immediately after we study the word of God. And following the Supper, we plan on singing one song, "I Love You, Lord" (#943), before we head outside to do our socializing in the great outdoors. It is important that we head outside immediately after singing.

As our custom has been, we are starting our study today with a summary of God's plan for our salvation. God sent his only Son to this earth to live as one of us and to offer himself as a sacrifice in our place. We respond to God's gracious gift by believing the message, by turning away from sin, by publicly confessing our faith in Jesus as the Christ, and by allowing ourselves to be buried with him in baptism for the forgiveness of sins. At that point, the Christian life begins, and we live for him.

And once again, we have several examples. These come to us from Muhindo Enosi, a friend of a friend who is a gospel preacher in Kampala, Uganda. Over the past several days, eight people have been baptized on a campaign to Kyabikuha, a nearby village. We remember how there were a total of eight people on the ark, and so we hope and pray that good things will continue to happen in that village and that the gospel will continue to spread in Uganda.

This week we return to our series of lessons on BLOOD. We started last week with an overview of blood in the Bible, and we are studying this in response to a request from two of our members who have been joining us on the telephone every week. As you might remember, one of our members had a blood transfusion a month or so ago, and that got them thinking about the importance of blood in the Bible. So, last week we started with an overview of those 400+ references to blood in the word of God. We learned that life is in the blood, we learned that blood is a substitute, and we learned that blood has been used to seal or ratify covenants. And as we closed our study last week, we noted that this framework from the Old Testament merely foreshadows what was coming with the sacrifice of God's Son.

And so, this week, we continue by looking very specifically at the blood of Jesus. We know that by looking at blood our doctors can learn quite a bit about us. Several years ago, I got back into the habit of seeing a medical professional on a yearly basis, and a “highlight” of that yearly visit is getting my blood drawn. Thankfully, it hasn’t been as bad as I remember it from earlier in my life. It’s been very quick and almost painless the last few years. The results are posted on MyChart within a few hours, and then I get a follow-up message from my nurse practitioner. As most of you know, my bloodwork has improved over the past few years, as I’ve continued with the weight loss (still down around 55 pounds over the past three years). The weight loss is something we see on the outside, but the bloodwork reflects what’s happening on the inside. A few years ago, my nurse practitioner told me I need to be eating more walnuts and avocados. She told me to move. I made those changes, and my bloodwork continues to improve. It’s a change that can be graphed. Blood doesn’t lie, apparently. We learn a lot from blood.

And so, with this in mind, this morning we plan on looking very carefully at the blood of Jesus. Last week, we mentioned that the word **“blood”** is found more than 400 times in scripture. Well, 100 of those references are found in the New Testament, and about half of those refer specifically to the blood of Jesus. This morning, then, we’ll be looking at the blood of Jesus, and specifically, we’ll be studying the question: What does the blood of Jesus actually do? According to scripture, why is Jesus’ blood so important?

And once again, we won’t be sticking with one passage (as we usually do), but this will be more of an overview of the blood of Jesus in the New Testament. We’ll be looking at the blood of Jesus from six perspectives. And again I would invite you to turn with me to the passages we’re considering. As with last week: Do not lose heart! I’ll give the reference, and I hope you can turn with me to the passage.

## I. And we start this morning with the truth that the blood of Jesus **FORGIVES**.

The first reference comes in Hebrews 9. Again, Hebrews is a book that seems to be aimed at Christians from a Jewish background who were being tempted to fall back to Judaism, so we have quite a bit about the Law of Moses in Hebrews. And in this context, Hebrews 9:22 explains, ***“And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”*** That’s a reference to the Old Covenant. The corresponding reference to Jesus’ blood in the New Covenant comes in Matthew 26. In Matthew 26, Jesus is introducing the Lord’s Supper, and in Matthew 26:27-28, the Bible says, ***“And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.’”*** I want us to notice that Jesus’ blood was poured out for many ***“for forgiveness of sins.”*** But I also hope we notice that his blood was ***“poured out.”*** I know, sometimes we might say that his blood was “spilled.” Some of our songs might say that. But I hope we notice that it wasn’t spilled, it was ***“poured out.”*** The shedding of Jesus’ blood was no accident, but it was offered, it was poured out on purpose. He came to this earth for this reason. The blood of Jesus forgives.

## II. We also find that the blood of Jesus **WASHES**, it **CLEANSSES**.

The first reference comes in 1 John 1. In 1 John 1 we have a comforting promise. Notice, please, 1 John 1:7, where John says, ***“...but 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 cleanses us from all sin.”*** And thankfully, this is not just a one time washing, but it is continual. If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus continually cleanses. It’s been compared

to windshield wipers on a car. As Christians, we will sin. We are human. But forgiveness is continually available as we walk in the light.

The other reference comes in Revelation. In Revelation 7, one of the elders spoke to John and asked, ***“These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?”*** And John answers in Revelation 7:14 by saying, ***“My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*** We don’t usually think about blood cleansing. Blood is one of the most difficult stains to remove. And yet, as we learned last week, blood truly does cleanse. And that’s the picture we have here. Blood washes, it cleanses. As we sometimes ask as we sing, “What can wash away my sins?” And the answer is, “Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” Or in the words of another song we sometimes sing, “There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel’s veins. And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains!” Blood cleanses.

### III. As we continue, we also find that blood REDEEMS.

To redeem is to buy back. I have a pile of coupons by my chair at home and also in the car, coupons that we hope to redeem. I’m looking forward to making an exchange – 25% off at the new Goodwill in Verona, 50% off a pizza at Toppers, buy-one-get-one turtle sundae down at Culver’s, and so on. To redeem is to buy back, to make an exchange.

And our first passage here comes from 1 Peter 1. In 1 Peter 1:18-19, Peter makes the argument that we need conduct ourselves in fear during the time of our stay on this earth, ***“...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.”*** The blood of Jesus redeems. A swap has been made. His blood purchases our freedom from sin.

The other reference connecting Jesus’ blood to our redemption comes in Acts 20. In Acts 20, Paul is meeting with the elders from Ephesus, on the beach at Miletus, and as he talks to these men, he warns them to protect the congregation from those who would dare change the divine message, and in Acts 20:28, Paul speaks to these elders and says, ***“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”*** In Acts 20, by the way, we have all three of the terms referring to elders being used interchangeably. Paul calls for a meeting with the ***“elders”*** of the church, and here in verse 28 he refers to the fact that the Holy Spirit has made these men ***“overseers,”*** and he tells them to ***“shepherd”*** the church of God – ***“elders,” “overseers,”*** and ***“shepherds.”*** These three terms all refer to the same group of men. But what we get out of this passage today is that God ***“purchased”*** the church ***“with His own blood.”*** An exchange has been made. The blood of Jesus redeems.

### IV. The next big idea today is that the blood of Jesus RECONCILES or BRINGS TOGETHER what was once separated.

The next passage comes in Ephesians 2. In Ephesians 2, Paul is writing about the benefits of being ***“in Christ,”*** and when we come to Ephesians 2:12-16, he says, ***“...remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in***

***ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.*** The blood of Jesus reconciles, bringing us back together with God, healing that broken relationship. But this passage also teaches that the blood of Christ brings together Jews and Gentiles. The blood of Christ brings people together. In Christ, we are one. His blood has removed the barrier. We should also consider Colossians 1:19-20, ***“For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”*** The blood of Jesus reconciles.

#### V. The next big idea is that the blood of Jesus SANCTIFIES.

To sanctify is to make something holy, to set it apart, to make it special. The blood of Jesus makes us holy, it makes us different. We have a few passages in Hebrews for this one, starting in Hebrews 9 as the author compares and contrasts the sacrifices of the Law of Moses to the sacrifice of Jesus. Notice, please, Hebrews 9:13-14, ***“For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 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 to serve the living God?”***

In the next passage, in Hebrews 10:29, the author is warning about the danger of going on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth. Notice, please, Hebrews 10:29, ***“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”*** It’s not the main point of the passage, but we do find here that the blood of Jesus sanctifies us.

The last passage on this one comes in Hebrews 13:12. It’s part of a larger discussion, but even on its own, we have another reminder that the blood of Jesus sanctifies. Notice, please, Hebrews 13:12, where the author says, ***“Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.”*** So again, the blood of Jesus sanctifies. We are set apart or made holy by the blood of Jesus.

#### VI. The last big idea for us to consider this morning is the fact that the blood of Jesus JUSTIFIES.

And in Romans 5 we have one passage on this one. It’s a chapter where we’ve been previously in this study, but now we come to Romans 5:8-9, where Paul says, ***“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.”*** We mentioned this a week or two ago in our Wednesday class, I believe, that when we’ve been ***“justified,”*** it’s just-as-if-I’d never sinned. It’s not just forgiveness, but it’s as if the offense has been completely wiped away, as if it never happened. We have sinned, but because of his blood, we have been declared innocent. We have been acquitted. The blood of Jesus justifies.

#### Conclusion:

This morning, we have had the awesome privilege of studying the blood of Jesus. I am thankful for the request that came in from two of you who join us on the phone each week. We’ve done the overview, we’ve looked specifically at the blood of Jesus. I’ll be heading out to see my sister in Washington this afternoon, so Aaron and John will be preaching the next two weeks, but I hope to conclude this brief series the week after I get back, by

looking at how we APPLY the blood of Jesus in our lives. His blood has the power to do these things, but how do I make sure his blood does these things for me? We hope to look at that on Sunday, October 25, if the Lord wills.

By the way, Sunday, October 25, is also the day we'll be having our first snowflakes here in Madison. Some of you know that we take "bets" in our family as to when we will see the first flake. October 25 is my day. My wife always chooses her birthday, November 7. So, if you see a flake in Madison while I am gone, I hope you will let me know. And please keep me in your prayers as I travel.

As we close our study, let's go to God in prayer:

Our Father in Heaven,

You are the one and only, the great and awesome God. This morning, we are thankful for the blood of Jesus and for the power his blood has.

We continue to ask your blessing on those who have been diagnosed with the virus. Be with those who are caring for the sick. We are thankful for the advances that have been made over the past few months. Be with us as your people, that we might be able to serve and encourage.

Be with the shepherds of this congregation. We pray that your word and your saving grace would continue to be preached and that your kingdom would continue to grow here in Wisconsin's capital city.

We come to you with these requests in the name of your son Jesus. AMEN.

To comment on this lesson: [fourlakeschurch@gmail.com](mailto:fourlakeschurch@gmail.com)