

GOD'S PURPOSE IN OUR SALVATION

Titus 2:14

The sacrifice of Christ: "Who gave himself for **US**."

"That he might redeem us from all iniquity" — "Redeem" means to liberate, to release, to deliver. Here it is not the penalty for our sins that Paul was concerned about, but the power! We were slaves to sin, hopelessly in bondage to our sins. Christ died to set us free by the payment of a ransom — His own death, He "gave himself for us."

And "purify unto himself" — This is sanctification; this is holiness of life. Sin always has a defiling effect upon our lives; the Lord died to cleanse us, to make us clean, to make us acceptable to Himself!

"A peculiar people" — The idea in this word is that by His death He has made us His own. He purchased us, and we belong to Him. One grammarian translates it was meaning "*a people* selected by God from other nations for his own possession" (Thayer, p. 504).

"Zealous of good works" — The word that Paul used here is the word used to describe, "Simon, the Zealot." This is how one writer described the Zealots:

From the time of the Maccabees [second century B. C.] there existed among the Jews a class of men, called *Zealots*, who rigorously adhered to the Mosaic law and endeavored even by a resort to violence...to prevent religion from being violated by others" (Thayer, p. 271).

Paul was not suggesting that believers be violent, but he was saying that the result of the work of God in our hearts we become zealous to defend the faith by doing what pleases God, and refraining from anything that does not please Him.

And so here we have one of the major purposes Christ had when He went to the Cross, a purpose which we remember tonight as we observe the Lord's Supper. Let us pray that we will be submissive to the Lord day by day as He works to make us what He wants us to be. The Lord's Supper should remind us of this.

“THE PRECIOUS BLOOD”

1 Peter 1:18, 19

Intro: In his book, The Discipline of Grace, Jerry Bridges made this statement about the blood of Christ:

“The blood of Christ,” in connection with our salvation, is a favorite expression of New Testament writers, occurring about thirty times. It is the blood of Christ that cleanses our consciences from the defilement of sin (Hebrews 9:14); it is the blood of Christ that purifies us from all sin (1 John 1:7); it is by the blood of Christ that we have confidence to enter into the Most Holy Place--the very presence of an infinitely holy God (Hebrews 10:10). It is the blood of Christ...that turns the holy and just wrath of God away from us.

In our text for this evening we are told by the Apostle Peter that it is by the blood of Christ that we are redeemed. The types of the Old Testament anticipated the coming sacrifice of Christ. The blood of Christ speaks of the death of Christ just as the shedding of the blood of sacrificial animals spoke of the death of those animals. And it is the clear testimony of Scripture that “without the shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:22)--no forgiveness. And yet the same book of Hebrews teaches us that “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:4). The Old Testament priests offered blood sacrifices which could never take away sins. Cf. Heb. 10:11. Their value was that they were offered by faith in the coming sacrifice of a Messiah-Redeemer. And He, by the shedding of His blood, has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. Cf. Heb. 10:14.

So the Bible knows nothing of salvation apart from the shedding of blood, and the one sufficient sacrifice, the only eternal sacrifice--never to be repeated--is the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter, therefore, spoke of the blood of Christ as “precious.”

The word “precious” is an excellent translation of the Greek word, τίμιος, which Peter used in this passage.

We use the word precious to convey at least three ideas, and the same is true of the Greek word:

- 1) We speak of something as being precious because it is very rare, perhaps one of a kind.
- 2) Closely related to the above, we use this word also to speak of some thing that is very costly, perhaps so costly that it is not for sale.
- 3) It is also used of something that we love very much. We speak of our

precious family, or of our precious friends.
It is interesting to think of all of these in connection with the blood of Christ.

— **I. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT IS VERY RARE.**

We cannot speak of the blood of Christ which we are commemorating tonight without indicating that we believe in the humanity of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ was a real human being. But He was uniquely different because there never has been, and never will be, another human being like He was, and still is! He was the Son of God in the flesh. He was born of the virgin Mary. His body was just as real a human body as yours or mine. But the best person who ever lived, whoever that may have been, falls so far short of the Lord Jesus Christ that it is foolish to try to compare Him with anyone else. Although He was a true human being, yet He remained the Son of God, and this set Him apart and infinitely far above the best person who has ever lived. He is the best of all. He is absolute perfection. He was without sin. He always did the things which pleased His Father. Jesus Christ is very precious because there is no one like Him. And therefore His blood, His death, was precious, too.

— **II. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT IS OF INFINITE VALUE.**

This is to be seen in the fact that what God has provided for us in the blood of His Son cannot be purchased with money. If a man were to gain the whole world he could not exchange it for his salvation because salvation is not for sale. It cannot be earned. It is not given as a reward. So the most outstanding work that any individual might do would never be sufficient to win the blood of Christ. And it is the blood of Christ, and only the blood of Christ, which is the price of our salvation. We can have it as a free gift because God offers it to us sinners by His grace. We come, as Isaiah the prophet said in Isa. 55:1, “without money and without price.”

III. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT IS VERY DEAR TO US.

— It is precious to us because God has done for us by the death of His Son what we never could have had in any other way. We often sing that old Gospel song,

Nothing can for sin atone, nothing but the blood of Jesus;

Naught of good that I have done, nothing but the blood of Jesus.
O **precious** is the flow that makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus.

— We love the Savior because of what He has done for us. And the more we know about our salvation, and the more we realize the awfulness of our sins, and the more we know about our Savior, the more we love Him.

In the second chapter of this first epistle of Peter said this: “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” Another translation which really means the same thing is this: Unto you therefore which believe is **the preciousness**. He loved us first and shed His blood for us, and now we love Him in return. I know that I speak for you when I say that the Lord Jesus Christ is most precious to us. He is the altogether lovely One. He has made peace with God for us. He has put away our sins. He paid the price that we could never have paid, and we love Him for what He has done for us.

— But we also love Him for all that He is--His holiness, His mercy, His wisdom, His meekness and gentleness, His love and compassion, His great faithfulness. We may see things in each other which we know are not right, but that is never the case with our Lord Jesus Christ. The better we know Him, the more we love Him.

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me,
And purchased my salvation on Calvary's tree.
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

The blood of Christ is “precious” not only because of what it has done for me and to me, but the blood of Christ is “precious” because it is His blood, the blood of our dear Savior, the blood of the Son of God.

But let me add one more point before I close.

— The blood of Christ has accomplished many things for us: the forgiveness of our sins, the imputation of God's righteousness, our reconciliation with God, and many other things. But Peter, in our text, has emphasized

one thing that is ours because of the precious blood of Christ. And let me point it out for you.

IV. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE BY IT WE HAVE BEEN “REDEEMED...FROM YOUR [OUR] VAIN CONVERSATION RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM YOUR FATHERS” (1 Pet. 1:18).

Let me read this verse as it is translated in the NIV:

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed **from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers.**

Peter was writing to Jews, Jews who had been saved and who had been scattered throughout the Roman Empire because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In our Lord's day the Gospel had been so corrupted among the Jews, corrupted by their leaders, that they had been led to believe that money did play a part in their salvation--along with Sabbath observance, circumcision, and other things related to the Law. Their forefathers had handed down to them an “empty way of life” because they were trying to obtain salvation by what they did, and not by what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for them. How tragic it must be for people to seek for salvation in the wrong way, only to wake up in eternity and find that all they did amounted to nothing!

We Gentiles have been in somewhat the same condition. A religious life without Christ is an “empty way of life.” The NASB calls it “your futile way of life.” The NKJV translates it, “your aimless conduct.” There is no peace, no hope, no assurance for the person who is seeking to gain salvation by his own efforts, or by the improvement of his own character. All human works are an “empty way,” “futile,” “aimless”--because they are not taking you where you want to go--to heaven. They are keeping you from seeing the hopelessness of your own condition, and will lead you straight into hell.

Concl: By the precious blood of Christ we have been redeemed forever from ever thinking that we can have even a small part in our salvation. We have faith in the broken body and precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ because God has given us faith. Now we live for Him, not to add to our salvation, nor to make our salvation more secure, but we live for Him because we know that it is by His precious blood, and by that blood alone, that we are saved and on our way to heaven. That is why we know that His blood is precious, and this is why we love Him.

Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, from Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands, can fulfil Thy laws demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress, helpless look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to Thy fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die.

There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains.

Dear dying Lamb, **thy precious blood** shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more.

Let us pray.