

This Sunday

Opening Song

Offering, Testimonies

2 Vibrant songs

Words from the Lord or Corporate Prayer

Pastor Message

Lord's Supper

Under the Blood of the Lamb

One or two powerful worship songs

March 7, 2010

Easter Series – What Jesus accomplished at the Cross

Part 2: Under the Blood

1. Starting at the beginning, Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with God. Why?
 - a. There was no such thing as sin, disobedience, or evil in their lives.
 - b. But God had set apart one thing that they could not have, and He permitted them to have free will, to choose to love Him or reject Him, because without free will, love would not be love but slavery.
 - c. Lets look at the account of the fall:
 - a. Genesis 3:11-21 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me-she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." V21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*
 - b. "I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."
 - i. Hiding – is the result of shame. Fear is the result of sin.
 1. Nakedness represents unrighteousness, lacking the proper covering or clothing to stand before God. Nakedness in the bible symbolizes humiliation and shame. Adam and Eve were ashamed because of their sin. The conscience was warped and their pride turned to shame, and their relationship with God was corrupted.
 - ii. And yet, they hid AFTER sewing fig leaves for garments? Why? Because it was insufficient to cover their need, their unrighteousness that now glared so horribly.
 - c. "Who told you that you were naked?" Guilt, shame are results of sin. Our conscience is a gift from God. Woe to us when we suppress it! We are corrupt indeed when we cannot feel, see or feel our sin.

2. Justification by Fig Leaf

- a. **Self-Justification – trying to make oneself good enough for God.** Attempting to produce righteousness by our own efforts.
 - i. The need is legitimate. The goal is correct – “cover your shame!”
 - ii. The desire to be in right relationship with God is good!
 - iii. But it is insufficient.
- b. Fig leaves are everywhere today: performance, religion, moralism, spiritual experiences, possessions, power, signs and wonders, humanitarian acts, talent, intelligence...but none are sufficient to cover our nakedness before a holy and perfect God.
 - i. The bible says that a sinner is clothed in “filthy rags.” Our own acts of righteousness are filthy rags.
 - ii. And even the saint, the person made right with God grows cold and comfortable and we forget the ugliness of sin and our total unrighteousness. We forget we have none of our own. When we seem to progress in holiness, b/c we measure it, we are going the wrong direction.
- c. The penalty God proclaimed for eating the prohibited fruit (sin) was death. So how might we approach a holy God when we have sinned? Because we all have sinned!

3. First blood sacrifice – the covering.

- a. God provides their covering (atonement) which means to cover over their nakedness, their insufficiency to approach Him, to cover over their sin. God used animal skins that HE PROVIDED for them. That was sufficient to have a relationship, although quite broken.
- b. Gen 3:21 *Kapheth* from an unused root meaning to cover - “*The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.*”
- c. Bloody sacrifices became the backbone of the Old Testament.
 - i. Inside the Ark of the Covenant in the wilderness was the book of the Law. (stone tablets). Over the cover of the Ark was something called the mercy seat, where God was said to have His Presence. And on the Cover of the mercy seat, between God and the Law was where the blood was to be applied. Each year, on the “day of atonement” that blood was renewed.
 - ii. Note:
 1. Animal blood didn’t take away the sin of the sinner, it only “covered” (atoned for) it. Man was still considered a sinner. It provided what was necessary to FORGIVE the sin committed and to approach God.
 2. The sinner was looking forward in time to the day when the Son of God would apply His own blood on the altar of Heaven itself and proclaim “it is finished!”

Bible is a bloody book, Christianity is bloody, the plan of salvation is bloody. If you take the blood of Jesus out of the gospel, you have no gospel. You have no forgiveness, and might as well burn all the churches to the ground, for our message is worthless without the blood of Jesus! We aren’t redeemed and forgiven and atoned for by gold, or silver, or works or performance, but only, only by the blood of the Lamb! It is Jesus Christ or nothing!

4. **The word Atonement in the Old Testament meant that the blood of the sacrifice came between you and the wrath/punishment your sin deserved and God.**
 - a. The life of the animal (its blood was the sign of its sacrificial life) was exchanged for your life.
 - b. But the NT, the word atonement is incomplete in describing what Jesus did for us.
5. **Romans 3:25-26** “*God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement (expiation), through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished - he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*”
 - a. In the New Testament the word Atonement is incomplete.
 - b. It is clearest from Hebrews 9 & 10, and while this is a lengthy reading, it explains the difference between what the Old Testament did and what Christ did on the Cross:

- i. Heb 9:19-10:4 *When Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. ²⁰He said, "This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep." ²¹In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. ²²In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. ²³It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. ²⁵Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸so **Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people**; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*
- ii. ¹*The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming--not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ²If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. ³But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, ⁴because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*
- iii. Heb. 10:19 *"because by one sacrifice he (Jesus) has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."*
- c. Because Jesus did far more than merely "cover" our sin as in the Old Testament. He paid for it, the bible says that He EXPIATED it.
- d. **Expiate means to erase, make as if it was never there.**
 - i. **The OT sacrifices** never took away sin, they only covered it.
 - ii. The concept of atonement in the OT is partial, and finds its completeness in Christ's sacrifice...as His blood cleanses, covers, removes, redeems and restores.
- e. The sin of the Old Testament worshippers was only put under the blood of the animals as a temporary measure until the Messiah was to come and permanently do away with sin.
 - 1. In reality, it is Himself for us before God in Heaven. He ever lives to make intercession for us!
- f. Isaiah 61:10 looked forward to this day:
 - i. *"I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness"*
- g. It is not just the king who is naked. **THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE IS NAKED!** Humankind has fallen from God. In our sin we are unrighteous or "naked" before God. God's holiness is beyond us. We fail to be as perfect as His Law demands (James 2:10). We need a covering that will permit us to stand before the Lord faultless. The greatest tragedy is, to think that one is covered, when in God's sight, one has nothing on! No matter how much one believes or others pressure one to believe they are clothed, a little child can see through the pretense. In the same way, no matter how many may tell you that you are clothed with righteousness, unless you trust in Christ, you are still naked.
- h. Won't you be clothed in Christ, covered and cleansed by His blood by receiving Him by faith?
- i. In a moment we will celebrate the Lord's Supper, the act in which we commemorate the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf. As you envision the broken body of your Savior and the shed blood, remember, if you belong to Him, He has done away with your sin, He has made it as if it never

were. He has cleansed you whiter than snow! No more guilt, no more shame. Only joy in His Presence!