

Heb 9:24-28
“No Joking Matter”

The only thing that satisfies the wrath of God against sinners biblically is the shedding of blood. Lambs, bulls, goats, rams and doves without blemish (Leviticus 1-17). Why the shedding of blood? Well, life is in the blood. **Lev 17:11**, “For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.” (NKJV) The Old Testament sacrificial system was no joking matter. It was a bloody affair and was to be taken very, very seriously for by this system atonement was made for the sins of the people. Atonement, payment for sin to God. It is this system that the Hebrew writer is addressing in effort to convince his Jewish audience that the sacrifices of animals are no longer needed because Jesus Christ, by his death, fulfills this requirement of God. And through faith in him one is cleansed of his/her sin for eternity and thus, no need for an ongoing sacrificial system. Sin is a serious issue that must be dealt with and can only be remedied by the shedding of blood, and not just any blood. Ultimately, the blood of Jesus. The spilling of Jesus’ blood is no joking matter, neither is it trivial. With this in mind let’s turn our attention to our text of focus this morning and in normal fashion I have three observations to share.

First, Jesus sacrifice was an eternal phenomenon. V24 “²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.” In our modern context the idea of blood sacrifice is barbaric. The thought of killing innocent animals today for the atonement of sin to God sounds ludicrous. The only

reason this is the case, in my opinion, is because we are far removed from the practice. As a practice, temple sacrifices ended permanently when the temple of God was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans and theologically the practice became null and void following the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. But make no mistake about it, we are who we are, disciples of Jesus Christ, the people of God, because he was sacrificed for our sin like a lamb led to be slaughtered. Only the shedding of innocent blood cleanses one of sin. Like the earthly practice of the high priest entering into the holy places with blood not his own, Jesus entered heaven in the very presence of God with his own blood on our behalf, becoming our eternal sin sacrifice, cleansing us of our sin and paying our sin debt.

Heb 9:22 “²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” (ESV)

Eph 1”7-9 “⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.” (ESV)

2 Cor 5:21 “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (NKJV)

Second, **Jesus’ sacrifice it is eternally efficacious. V25-26** “²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Sin’s reign has been ended by Jesus’ death and resurrection. Unlike the blood of another (bulls, lambs, rams, etc.)

that the high priest would offer, Jesus offers himself, his blood. The blood of Jesus literally washes our soul of sins residue, and we need but one washing. Confession is a reoccurring practice but regeneration that happens by our washing through genuine faith in Jesus is a one-time occurrence. The work of salvation has been done, it is complete and there is nothing for us to add to it. All we must do is believe. "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe; sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow." No need for continued washing because Jesus' work on the cross was an eternal phenomenon. Thus, eternally efficacious.

1 Cor 6:9-11 ⁹ "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (ESV)

1 John 1:7-10 ⁷ "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." (ESV)

1 Peter 2:24 ²⁴ "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed." (ESV)

Final observation, Jesus' sacrifice **assures all who trust in him a home with him in eternity.** **V27-28** ²⁷ "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

Have you seriously considered your own death? Have you seriously considered what Christ saves you from? Do you take seriously the promise of his second coming? If you answered yes to these questions, then how has that changed how you live? If you answered no to these questions, then it is time that you do so. I was browsing the internet on this matter and came across a blog by Randy Alcorn of Eternal Perspective Ministries and he writes the following, “Death is life’s greatest certainty. Death will come, whether or not you’re prepared. But death is not an end—it’s a transition that will bring us face to face with our Creator. It’s the absolute certainty of our death that gives the gospel its urgency.” **How we live here, what we do here matters because there is an eternity. An eternity with God/Jesus and an eternity apart from God/Jesus in hell.**

Psalm 90:11-12 “¹¹ Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? ¹² So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.” (ESV)

John 3:35-37 “³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” (ESV)

John 14:1-3 ““Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (ESV)

The spilling of Jesus’ blood is no joking matter, neither is it trivial. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**