***The Doctrine of the Blood of Christ
RO31-02***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1977)**

We continue with our study of the topic of "Justification by Faith," which we are analyzing from our study of Romans 3:24-26. In these verses, we've already touched upon several very major doctrines. We are now going to try to tie up another major doctrine, namely that particular phase as it touches upon the sacrifice of Christ in behalf of the sins of the world.

**The Lord's Supper**

In 1 Corinthians 11, the apostle Paul presents the facts relative to the event of the Lord's Supper – the facts relative to the time that it was instituted, and its meaning. I'd like to turn to 1 Corinthians 11:23 for just a moment to read his account to you. Paul says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread. And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take. Eat. This is My body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of Me.' After the same manner also, He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, 'This cup is the New Testament in My blood. This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me.'"

These three verses present to us the historical situation of the occasion of the Passover meal where the transition was being made now to the church age, and where the Lord supper was instituted.

Verse 26: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He comes." The meaning of the Lord's Supper is to portray the death of Jesus Christ in behalf of the sins of the world. Verse 26 says that this symbolic ritual that we observe has the specific purpose of portraying the death of Christ. Therefore, the symbols, the elements that are used, are such as to stress the critical features of that death. And I want you to notice that those elements include that which represents His body, and that which represents His blood.

Verse 27: "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself. So, let Him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." Because this particular ceremony portrays such a vital act on the part of God, it must be treated with a certain respect, and with a certain dignity. Christians are warned that they are not to be partaking of this in an unworthy manner, which means that you come to the Lord's Supper without being in temporal fellowship – without having known sins confessed. This brings upon you the discipline of God. This is a very serious visual aid which God has given us, and the two elements of it are each treated as being of utmost importance in the eyes of God: the body of Christ; and, the blood of Christ.

Verse 29: "For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. And for this cause, many are weak and sickly among youth, and many sleep." The apostle points out that those who eat in an unworthy manner are holding the sacrifice of Christ in contempt, and that the resent upon them is discipline. It will be physical and emotional weakness first, and if that doesn't correct the matter, then comes actual physical disease. And if that doesn't correct the matter, then comes actual physical death. You have here in this world "sleep" a reference to the occasions when God exercises the sin unto death discipline of taking a Christian's life, and taking that believer home to heaven.

Verse 31 is the escape clause: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." So, this verse tells us that God is simply saying: "Recognize your sin. Don't come to the Lord's table without recognizing and admitting and confessing to Me this sin."

**The Physical Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ**

The presentation (I want you to notice) lays stress again upon the elements of the physical body and the blood of Jesus Christ. Why the physical body? Because Jesus had to die physically for the sins of the world. Why the blood? Because Jesus actually had to shed His literal blood for the sins of the world. The physical death resulted from the loss of the literal blood. The physical death and the shedding of literal blood are both required in the atonement. They are, therefore, both pictured in the Lord's Supper.

**"It is Finished"**

We have stressed this because there are some quarters of very reliable Bible teaching in our country today which are suggesting, because Jesus was still alive on the cross when He declared, "It is finished," that His physical death was not involved in the atonement. They are suggesting that because Jesus did not have his neck stretched back, and a knife ran across, as the animals of the Old Testament did, so that His blood was shed in that way, that His literal blood was not involved in the atonement. We've gone over this for several studies, and now we're going to try to bring it all together in the doctrinal summary of the blood of Christ. Contempt for the body and the blood of Jesus Christ in salvation brings upon the individual the discipline of God. And that is very dangerous territory to tread. So, be wise, and do not fall into that trap.

Here is why I think that we can very clearly establish that Jesus had to die physically. Although He said on the cross, "It is finished" while He was still alive, I need to tell a little more about the words "It is finished." Just as an aside, that happens to be in the Greek perfect tense. The Greek perfect tense is a tense that emphasizes that a thing has taken place in the past, and the results continue forever. The Greek perfect tense has a way of looking either at the process of the past, or as a completed result. It has both ways of looking at it.

When Jesus says, "It is finished," He did use the perfect tense, but he was looking at the process through which he had just been, which was monumental suffering; physical beatings; the shedding of His blood; and, the dying spiritually (in separation from the Father and the son), He meant that that part of the atonement upon the cross, up to that point, had now been completed. Everything required was now finished.

So, He called for that drink to moisten He throat once more and to moisten that parched tongue. And they gave Him the sour wine. And after He had sipped on the sponge, He then made that loud declaration, "It is finished" (the past is done). Then He said, "Father, into Your hands I commend My Spirit." And then He yielded up His life. But that yielding of His life was the last stage of the atonement. So, He had to shed His literal blood, and He had to die physically.

If you hear this argument (that His physical death was not involved in the atonement), do not be carried away that the perfect tense must mean that it's already done. The perfect tense is simply looking at that emphasis of the process up to that point. And then, while the final result is included, the final result required His physical death.

So, let's summarize the doctrine, and see if we can bring it all together.

**The Doctrine of the Blood of Christ.**

1. **Old Testament Usage of the Word "Blood"**

The Old Testament uses the word "blood" 362 times. It's the Hebrew word "dam." It uses it 203 times in referring to death with violence. It uses it 103 times in referring to the blood of sacrifices. These sacrifices of animals did picture the death of Christ. It is used seven times connecting life with blood. It is used 17 times in referring to the eating of meat with blood which was forbidden to the Jews. It is used 32 times in miscellaneous ways.

1. **New Testament Usage of the Word "Blood"**

The New Testament use of the word "blood," we find 98 times. This is the Greek word "haima." It is used 25 times to indicate violent death, such as in Acts 22:20. It is used 12 times of animal sacrifices. It is use 25 times of the blood of Christ in salvation. It is used 9 times as an apocalyptic sign, as in Revelation 6:12 – the moon appearing as blood. And then it has 27 miscellaneous ways in addition.

1. **In the Bible, Blood means the Red Fluid in our Veins**

The word "blood" is used in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as the designation for the red fluid that flows in the veins of people and animals. We have this indicated in Luke 13:1 and in Acts 15:20. So, when you have the Hebrew word "dam," or you have the Greek word "haima," the first thing those words mean is the red stuff that runs in the veins of living animals and of living human beings. That is the normal; the regular; and, the first-of-all meaning. Anytime the Jews said the word "dam," and anytime the Greeks said the word "haima," the first thing they thought of was the red stuff that sustains life, which runs in the body of living creatures.

1. **Blood is the Bearer of Life**

The blood is the bearer of life in both people and animals. We have this in John 1:13 and in Leviticus 17:11. The life of the living creature is sustained by the blood. If the blood is gone, the individual dies. The blood is critical to the sustaining of life. Only so much blood can be lost, and life still be sustained. That's why in an accident, as you well know, or in a field of combat (in a military situation), the very first thing that a doctor or a corpsman on the field of battle will look to is for the bleeding. First, stop the bleeding. Then other vital functions can be dealt with. But if the bleeding is not stopped, then death is inevitable. So, the blood is the bearer of life.

1. **The Blood of Jesus Christ is Critical**

The blood of Jesus Christ occupies a central position in New Testament thought. We have this referred to under a variety of titles. We have, for example, "the Blood of Jesus Christ" in 1 Peter 1:2. We have the expression "the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19, 1 John 1:7). We have the expression "the Blood of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16, Ephesians 2:13, Hebrews 9:14). We have the expression "the blood of the Lord" in 1 Corinthians 11:27. And we have "the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14, Revelation 12:11). The question, of course, is: what does all this mean? Why do we have this frequent, repeated reference to blood in connection with the person of Jesus Christ? Exactly what does that mean? And of course, here is the area of the discussion. Is this an expression for a symbol of some kind, or is this actually the red fluid that ran in the veins of Jesus Christ, and which sustained His physical life?

1. **Literal Interpretation**

The principle of literal interpretation demands that references to the blood of Christ be normally taken as literal. Let me read 1 Peter 1:18-19 once more. It's a pretty good example of this contrast. This refers to precious metals. Are those actually real, literal metals? Yes, they are. Then he also compares that, and immediately refers to the blood of Jesus Christ. How shall we take that? As a symbol for something, or as the literal actual blood in His body? "For as much as you know that you are not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain manner of life, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot."

So, here you have it in a twofold. You have real metals. And nobody would think of not reading this version and saying, "Silver and gold. Well, that refers to silver and gold." What he is saying is that we are not saved with money. We are not saved with precious metals. But we are saved with something else. It is something equally precious. And he calls it: "The precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Now, what would you normally interpret that to mean? The metals are real; and, the blood is just as real. And it takes a violation of abnormal, exegetical, hermeneutical principles for us to say "Yes, verse 18 speaks about silver and gold. Those are actual, real, literal precious metals, but when we get to verse 19 and speaks about the precious blood of Christ, that's a symbol for His spiritual death. That doesn't actually mean His real literal blood." That violates the principle of literal interpretation. Spiritualizing the blood of Jesus Christ into a symbol of His spiritual death, then, is simply an arbitrary conclusion. You simply decide you want to do this because of something else that you think the Scriptures indicate.

1. **Animal Blood was a Symbol for Christ's Blood**

The Bible links the Old Testament sacrifice shedding of animal blood to the New Testament shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ in sacrifice. We have gone over this in detail (Hebrews 9:7, Hebrews 12:14-25, Hebrews 10:4, Hebrews 11:28, Hebrews 13:11-12). All these passages relate what Jesus Christ did to what was pictured by the Old Testament animal sacrifices, whose actual blood was really shed. As a matter of fact, you'll remember that John 1:29 presents Jesus to the Jews as the Lamb of God. Why would He be presented as a Lamb? Because He is to come as a sacrifice, and you cannot have a sacrifice if literal blood is not shed. The Old Testament animal blood was the type (the picture) of the New Testament blood of Christ. He was the fulfillment (or the anti-type). But both are literal. The animal blood of the Old Testament was the type (the picture). Jesus Christ and His blood was the anti-type, or the fulfillment.

1. **The Old Testament Animal Sacrifices**

The New Testament references to the blood of Jesus Christ derive meaning from the Old Testament animal sacrifices, especially on the day of atonement, which we have in Leviticus 16. Jesus Christ brought the one efficacious sacrifice for sins. All of the references in the Old Testament to animal sacrifices were simply a covering temporarily. They did not really remove the sin problem. A person was not really forgiven His sins. He was forgiven on credit for what Christ was going to do. But the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ really removed sins.

All of this was portrayed by the animal sacrifices. Therefore, we look at the animal sacrifices, and we learn something as to the meaning of the death of Christ from them. We learned what was important in the death of Christ from them. We see that, first of all, an animal had to be perfect, because that represented the sinlessness of Christ. We see that an animal had to die. He actually had to give his perfect life, being guilty of nothing, in behalf of someone who was guilty of sin. And we saw that the animal in the Old Testament could not die by strangulation, drowning, poisoning, suffocation, or anything of that nature. He had to die by a method which would shed His blood.

Incidentally, do not be disturbed because Jesus Christ, as I say, was not actually executed by having His throat cut as the animals did. That wasn't the important point. The point was that He had to shed blood, and He did it by the methods of the day in which He was executed by the Roman method of crucifixion. And the important thing of the animal sacrifice is the death as the result of the shedding of blood. That is the critical thing. The life is in the blood. When that blood spurted out from that animal, it made a clear visual declaration that a life had been given which was innocent for one which was guilty. That was the point. And that alone is what the animal sacrifices were portraying. The references to the blood of Christ derive their meaning from these Old Testament types.

1. **Christ's Blood on the Cross was Sacrificial**

The literal blood shed by Jesus Christ on the cross was sacrificial in nature. Hebrews 9:12ff indicate that what he did was in the nature of a sacrifice. If it's in the nature of a sacrifice, then blood has to be present.

1. **The Blood of Jesus Chris has no Magical Powers**

The blood of Jesus Christ has no magical powers in itself. Any contact with the actual blood of Christ would not have produced some miracle. If some person, in Jesus' day, had somehow received the drop of the blood of Christ upon his blind eyes, it would not have given Him his sight. There were no magical powers in the blood of Christ as such. The blood which He said was simply lost in the dust of the ground, and it was gone.

But there is a value in the literal blood of Christ because of who He was. He was a sinless God-Man, and because His blood was shed while the sins of the world were upon Him, the blood of a sinless person, being shed for those who were guilty, had great merit. Jesus Christ was not only man, but He was God. The hypostatic union brought Him two natures in one person. Therefore, when His blood in His humanity was shed, because it was the blood of a perfect person, the Son of God, what you have, in effect, was the blood of God being shed. That's why the blood of Christ is significant. Because it was the God-Man's blood, you had upon the cross the actual blood of God being shed.

Adam had a pure blood stream. When he sinned the thing that was contaminated, in part, of his physical being was the blood stream. Therefore, from then on, the contamination of the bloodstream has brought disease and physical destruction, including ultimately death to the human race. The reason people die is because the bloodstream of Adam was corrupted.

What happened with Jesus Christ was that He had a pure blood stream. Jesus Christ was born without sin. His blood stream was pure. He never would have died. He would have lived physically forever. There would have been no termination to His physical life. Therefore, that's why He had to control, and determine, and go through the process of the physical draining of His blood to bring about the physical death. And because it was a non-corrupted blood which was being shed, it had merit before God for paying for the sins of the world. That's the reason some other person could not have died for your sins, because anybody else could have only shed blood which was contaminated by sin.

So, the blood of Jesus Christ in itself has no magical powers, though it is of great value because it is the blood of the God-Man.

1. **The Blood of Christ other than on the Cross**

The blood of Jesus Christ shed at any other time, than when he was bearing the sins of the world, had no redemptive value. As you know, the enemies of Jesus tried many times to kill Him, but He would not permit it. For example, this occurred in John 10:17-18. But at the right time, Jesus did permit His life to be taken. In John 18:4-12, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He finally said, "OK, now you can take Me." He permitted them to bind Him. He permitted them to set Him on the road, through the process of beatings and punishment and the various actions which would drain his blood, which would lead to his death. But had that blood been shed at any other time, it would have had no redemptive value. But because it was shed at the moment that God placed upon Him the sins of the world (it was in the process of the atonement), it had merit in paying for the sins of the world.

1. **The Animal Sacrifices had to be Killed by the Shedding of Blood**

The Old Testament animal sacrifices, portraying the atonement of Christ, always had to be killed by the shedding of blood. That process was part of it. Death by some means which lacked the shedding of blood was not acceptable. For this reason, Hebrews 9:22 and Hebrews 11:4 tell us that forgiveness of sins is not possible if literal blood is not shed. So, the shedding of blood was critical to the forgiveness of sins. It was so in the animal sacrifices. That gives us a clue that it was important in the death of Christ. And shedding of blood short of the physical death of the animal was not acceptable with God (Hebrews 9:22). The animal had to shed blood to the extent that he died.

So, was Jesus Christ did not die by having His throat cut, as the animal sacrifices did, nevertheless, He did shed His blood.

1. **The Reason for Christ's Physical Body**

Jesus Christ was given a physical body specifically to offer it in sacrifice for sins by the shedding of literal blood (Hebrews 10:5, Hebrews 10:10). Those passages tell us that the reason He was given a body was so that He could offer it up and sacrifice. He could not offer it up in sacrificed by strangulation. He could not offer it up in sacrifice by drowning. He could not offer it up in sacrifice by poisoning. He could only offer it up in sacrifice by having blood shed from His veins to the point of death.

1. **Christ's Blood Symbolized a Sacrificial Death**

References to the blood of Christ are not simply symbols for His death, but to a specific sacrificial kind of death (1 Corinthians 5:7). You can't just say that these expressions that we have so many times about the blood of Christ simply means His death. It means something more specifically. It means the sacrificial lamb or blood.

1. **Jesus Christ Gave His Blood For Us**

Jesus Christ presented His literal blood in sacrifice of Himself on the cross as the perfect Lamb of God for the sins of the world (Hebrews 9:12ff). He, in this way, fulfilled the Old Testament animal types, His literally dead. Testify to the fact of his literally death.

1. **The Great Day of Atonement**

The sacrificial ritual on the great day of atonement portrayed the necessity for the literal blood of Jesus Christ in the atonement (Leviticus 16:30, Leviticus 23:27, Hebrews 9:11-14). In the ceremony on the great day of atonement, the high priest had to actually walk into the holy of holies, and he had to actually sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat. He actually had to take literal blood, and actually sprinkle that literal blood. It was on the basis of the blood of that animal that he was even able to enter the holy of holies. Later on, Jesus Christ was able to enter heaven as our High Priest on the basis of the blood which He shed. He could not have entered heaven unless His literal blood had been shed, and had been the basis for his entrance to heaven. Had the high priest under the Mosaic order dared to enter the holy of holies without that animal blood as the basis of his entrance, he would have died on the spot. Had Jesus Christ dared enter heaven as the bearer of sin without the literal blood that He had said, He would have died on the spot.

So, the literal blood on the great day of atonement was very critical. Remember that the holy of holies in the tabernacle represented heaven, and the entrance of our High Priest Jesus Christ into heaven had to be on the same basis that the high priest entered the holy of holies on earth. It took the literal blood to do that.

1. **The Passover Lamb**

The analogy of Jesus Christ to the Old Testament Passover lamb demanded shedding His literal blood as part of the atonement(1 Corinthians 5:7). Jesus Christ represented the Passover lamb – that lamb which was going to cause the death angel to pass over the Jews. It took the literal death and the literal shedding of the blood of that Passover lamb. Nothing else would do.

1. **The Literal Blood of Jesus Christ for the Atonement of Sin**

The literal blood of Jesus Christ was shed profusely in the course of the atonement for sin. As we have seen, going over this in detail, He not only bled, but He bled profusely. He bled in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44). He bled considerably from the physical beatings (Matthew 26:67, Matthew 27:26). You remember that the scourging by the Roman soldiers was with a whip that had sharp pointed objects at the tips. They were designed to cut. In other words, the end of the whip became a knife, so they were actually tearing the flesh.

I don't know whether you've ever been with somebody who's just been in an accident. I was standing next to a man who had just been in an automobile accident, and the doctor was there. They had just brought him in. And the cutting of certain arteries was so evident there, because they were just little geysers. And the doctor was looking like he was stomping out brushfires everywhere. It was kind of a shocking thing to me. He would reach over, and he would grab that and clamp it over, and he'd move over to something else, and another one would break through. This blood is spurting all over the place, and he's grabbing veins and arteries to stop the flow of blood.

Now, who stopped it when Jesus Christ had those particular parts of His physical structure cut by the end of that whip? He was spurting blood. He wasn't just oozing blood. He wasn't just dripping blood. When the end of that whip caught certain veins and certain arteries, He was spurting blood until it coagulated and stopped. Again, He was controlling His breath. He was the God-Man. The deity of Christ was in full control of the moment of His death. He was not allowed to bleed so completely that He would have died before He was on the cross bearing the sins of the world.

So, the physical beatings caused a considerable loss of blood, as well as the crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29). This again broke loose areas of profuse bleeding, as well as the nail wounds in the hands and the feet (John 20:25, John 24:39-40).

So, the literal blood of Jesus Christ was shed in a considerable quantity in the course of the atonement. I think that this occurred to the point where shock set in, and ultimately brought about His death.

1. **Christ's Death was from the Beatings and the Blood Loss**

The death of Jesus Christ on the cross was then the normal result of the beatings and the great loss of blood which He experienced. He did not commit suicide. Jesus lay down His life for the sins of the world in the sense that He permitted, at a certain point in His life, sinful men to take Him and to murder Him. He knew the moment of death. He knew the moment that His body would die, and He announced it in Luke 23:46. The deity of Christ was in full command of the proceedings of His death. And as the God-Man, He chose the moment of death (Matthew 27:50, John 19:30).

In other words, His deity control the results of what had been done to His physical body, so that He paced it to the point where (while the normal course of death was coming as a result of what was done to Him), so that it was done at the moment that the deity chose for that to happen. The God-Man was in full control.

The verses here in Matthew 27:50 and John 19:30 are rather unique in the Greek. We won't go into that this morning, but they use words that indicate that He delivered over, by His own volition, His life at this point. It is different than the other two gospels in the expression. Here it is a definitive declaration that He specifically gave over His life. So He was, as the God-Man, in full command of the proceedings of His death.

1. **The Old Testament Animal Sacrifices**

The Old Testament animal sacrifices simply portrayed the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world without distinguishing between His spiritual and physical deaths on the cross (Matthew 27:46, John 19:33-34). The animal sacrifices represented both the spiritual and the physical deaths of Jesus Christ. They did not distinguish between them. The animal sacrifices only portrayed one thing: death. That is characteristic, particularly in the Old Testament. It doesn't separate between the material and the immaterial like the New Testament does. It was simply death. And the specifics of the deaths we know from other Scriptures.

1. **Jesus Ransomed Believers from the Power of Satan**

By His spiritual and physical deaths, Jesus ransomed believers from the power of Satan (Acts 20:28, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18ff, Revelation 5:9). He redeemed us from the power of the slave market of sin under Satan's control.

1. **The Lord's Supper**

The Blood of Christ and salvation is stressed separately in the memorial of the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-28, Corinthians 11:23-26). Since the bread symbolizes His literal body, the wine symbolizes His literal bread in salvation. Both body and blood are emphasized in the Lord Supper as essential to salvation. The whole Lord's Supper could have been presented simply as the body. The body is what died. The body in itself was the main thing. But the Lord's Supper does not do that. It makes a specific point of having an element that represents the body, but another one that represents the blood. That's a clue to us that both are important and necessary in God's eyes.

1. **The Purging of Sin was at the Point of Application**

The purging of sin in the Old Testament did not come at the point of shedding the animal's blood, but at the point of application (Hebrews 9:19-22, Hebrews 12:24). In other words, the purging came at the point of application. The fact that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world doesn't mean that everybody is going to be saved. In the Old Testament, the application of the animal sacrifice was by pouring the blood out at the base of the altar (Leviticus 4:7); by smearing it on the altar (Exodus 29:12); by sprinkling it on the altar (Exodus 29:16); by sprinkling it on the high priest (Exodus 29:21); by sprinkling it on the temple veil (Leviticus 4:6); and, sometimes even by sprinkling it on the people. It was at the point of application that a person received benefit from the sacrifice.

In the New Testament, the application is the result of believing in Jesus Christ as personal Savior (John 6:53-56, Acts 16:31). In John 6, Jesus says, "You must eat My body. You must drink My blood." He means that by an act of faith, you must receive these two factors that have been provided, and that were involved in your salvation. Therefore, Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Believe what? Believe in this sacrifice, and these elements of that sacrifice.

So, Christ's sacrificial blood will justify all who appropriate for themselves His sacrificial death. This is Romans 3:25, which is the passage we began with.

1. **The word "Blood" is Sometimes Used Figuratively**

The word blood is sometimes used figuratively for the atoning work of Jesus Christ – His work is a whole (Revelation 19:13, John 6:53-56). One element of the atonement here is that the shedding of blood is used to represent the whole work. The blood of Christ cannot be viewed simply as His death. It was just one element viewed for the whole atoning work.

1. **"Sprinkled Blood"**

The phrase sprinkled blood in Hebrews 12:24 means the application to the believer of the death of Christ for sins.

1. **The Substitutionary Death**

Without the substitution in death of an innocent life for the guilty one, there is no forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). It took the innocent life of Christ (His physical death).

1. **Blood on the Lintel and Door Posts**

Blood on the level and door posts in Egypt protected the firstborn from physical death, symbolizing the protection of the blood of Christ from eternal death (Exodus 12).

1. **The New Testament Church**

The New Testament church is built upon the redemption provided by the literal blood of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28). Paul, in speaking to those elders from Ephesus, very specifically said to them that they were to care for congregations which God had placed under their authority, and which Jesus Christ had purchased with His precious blood. That was the basis of the church, and of the local churches that they were caring for. Every local church as the result of the literal blood of Christ shed in its behalf.

1. **The New Testament**

The New Testament, or the New Covenant, is based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:24, Hebrews 9:16, Hebrews 10:13, Mark 14:24). The Old Testament covenant was built upon literal animal blood. The New Testament covenant is built upon the literal blood of Christ.

You have this problem of trying to spiritualize in the New Testament what was literal in the Old Testament.

1. **Temporal Fellowship**

The shed literal blood of Jesus Christ given in death is the basis for the believer’s maintenance of temporal fellowship. 1 John 1:7-9 tells us that it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sins. Your temporal fellowship is the result of the fact that His literally blood was shed. It was not just that He died spiritually on the cross, or that He died physically.

1. **Christ's Blood Gives Access to God**

Christ's blood makes possible life in God's presence. It gives access to God (Hebrews 10:19, Ephesians 2:13, Ephesians 2:18).

1. **The Tearing of the Temple Veil**

Here's a very critical point. I think that this point is very definitive on the whole discussion. The veil in the temple was not torn until the atonement was completed with the physical death of Jesus Christ (Mark 15:37-38). The veil being torn indicated that now man had complete direct access to the living God.

Let me move ahead just for a moment here to what will be taking up next time: the latter part of Romans 3:25. The first part says, "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation in His blood through faith, and then to declare His righteousness (this declares that God was not sinning for the forgiveness of sins that are passed) through the forbearance of God;" that is, that God was forgiving sins to Abraham when nobody had ever paid for Abraham's sins. Was that an act of righteousness on the part of God? Paul is declaring here that what has happened in the death of Christ demonstrates that God was not unrighteous in forgiving sins on credit, because the price was to be paid in the future.

Now, when was that price to be paid? It was not indicated. But this much was clear: that when the price was paid, a person had access to God. That veil that was over the holy of holies (where the ark of the covenant dwelt, and where God the mercy seat was, and where God Himself dwelt and communed with the people) – that was off-limits to human beings because human beings were only forgiven on credit.

So, the point of the tearing of the veil, I remind you again, was a declaration that now sin had actually been paid for – not on credit. The atonement had actually been accomplished.

Isn't it interesting that when Jesus shouted out, "It is finished," the veil was not torn? And if the argument that the physical death of Christ is not part of the atonement is true, then the veil would have been taught at that point. Had He said, "It is finished," and the veil been torn, then we would have said, "Well, the veil exposed the holy of holies. That meant that atonement was complete. Man now had direct access into the presence of God, and Jesus Christ was still alive. His physical death was not involved."

But that is very clearly not the way it happens in Scripture. Matthew and Mark both had these in consecutive verses. He declared that the job was finished. He commended His spirit to the Father. He died, and the veil was torn – in that precise order. So, the veil in the temple (point 32) is a very critical point. The veil in the temple was not born until the atonement was completed with the physical death of Jesus Christ.

As we have pointed out, the body of Jesus Christ was provided for the specific purpose of suffering and dying for the sins of the world (Hebrews 10:5, Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 10:20). Compare that to the animal deaths referred to in Hebrews 10:4. Our access as believers into God's presence is through the physical death of Jesus Christ. He symbolized the torn veil. So, we're told that we have access to God through the body of Christ as the veil.

Jesus is declared as giving His physical life for His sheep in John 10:15. Jesus said, "I lay down My life." Now, what on earth did He mean? He said, I lay down My life for the sheep." For what purpose? Obviously, John 10 is talking about salvation. Jesus said, "I lay down My life for you so that you might have salvation." There's only one way you can normally take that. He meant His physical life. While it is true that there was spiritual death involved as well, which we know from other Scriptures, He was simply, there again, speaking in the terms that Jews generally spoke. They just said, "Death." They didn't distinguish between spiritual and physical death. They just said "death" for sin. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." It doesn't distinguish that it is both physical and spiritual death.

So, Jesus died physically for our sins. We know that, in part, from 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, which tells us that He was buried physically, and He was resurrected physically. The whole pattern, there again, of logical, consistent interpretation, says that if He was buried physically, and He was resurrected physically, He must have died physically for our sins, because all of these are part of it.

1. **Entrance into Heaven**

As entrance into the holy of holies of the temple was by means of the literal blood of animals, so entrance into heaven is by means of the literal blood of Jesus Christ.

1. **The Doctrines of Salvation**

Finally, the last point in this summary is that the great doctrines of salvation are all based on the literal blood shed by Jesus Christ in His atonement for sins. We won't go into reading these verses now, but I would certainly commend them to you. You would discover that the blood of Christ (and again, taking it in its normal meaning – His actual, literal blood) is the basis of all of the great doctrines connected with salvation. So, if we did not have this literal blood shed, we would not have the salvation that Hebrews calls "so great salvation."

* 1. **Forgiveness**

There would be no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of the literal blood of Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:28).

* 1. **Sanctification**

There would be no sanctification (setting apart to eternal life and eternal security) without the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2, Hebrews 2:10-11, Hebrews 9:13-15).

* 1. **Redemption**

There would be no redemption from the slave market of sin without the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 5:9).

* 1. **Propitiation**

There would be no propitiation without blood, as we have seen in Romans 3:25. There would be no peace with God without the literal blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:1, Ephesians 3:3, Colossians 1:20).

* 1. **Reconciliation**

There would be no reconciliation without the shedding of the little blood of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:20-22).

* 1. **Temporal Fellowship**

There'd be no temporal fellowship without the shedding of the literal blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7-9).

* 1. **Justification**

There would be no justification without this literal blood (Romans 5:8-9).

* 1. **Heaven**

And worst of all, there'd be no entrance into heaven without the shedding of the literal blood, as Hebrews 10:19-20 tells us.

So, all the great doctrines related to salvation are all structured on the fact that Jesus actually shed His literal blood.

So, when Romans 3:25 tells us that God has set Christ forth as the propitiation (or the satisfaction) in His blood; that is, that Jesus Christ satisfied the justice of God which demanded that sin be punished, Jesus Christ satisfied the righteousness of God, which demands that everybody who goes to heaven must be as perfect as Jesus Christ, and must have absolute righteousness. When it says that this demand in the character of God was satisfied by the blood of Jesus Christ, we can only understand it in one way – the actual, literal, shed blood, because it was uncorrupted blood, and it was required for our salvation. If Jesus Christ had not shed that blood in the process of the atonement we could never go to heaven. If He had not actually died physically, that veil could not have been torn in half, symbolizing our entrance into the presence of the living God. Therefore, we could never have gone to heaven without His physical death.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

[**Back to the Romans index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/romans.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)