

The Blood that Sanctifies: What Sacrifice Looks Like

When **you think of sacrifice** what do you think about?

- **Carcasses of animals** being thrown on fiery altars?
- **Giving up something** you want to do, for what someone else wants to do?

What Did Sacrifice Look Like In The Old Testament Period?

- **Different types of animals** sacrificed depending on the purpose and the financial means of the person bringing forward the offering. Even bread and wine were brought forward for sacrifice.
- There were **different purposes** for the sacrifices
 - **Whole burnt offering** = as an atonement for sin in general
 - **Sin offering** = asking forgiveness for a specific sin or wrong action
 - **Peace offerings** = as a thank offering in gratitude for what God has done
- **Why this ceremony was called** “sacrificing?”
You “**give up**” the animal to be your substitution
- What did a **sacrifice look like** in Old Testament times? **Lots of blood**, and fire and smoke.
- **Many** Old Testament sacrifices **had to be made** to bring forgiveness for sin and take away guilt.

The Event That Changed the Look of Sacrifice

But then **the day came** when all those animal and grain sacrifices were **no longer needed**. The day came when one sacrifice was made that made all those other **sacrifices obsolete**. The day came when Jesus made a **once-for-all-time sacrifice**.

- Jesus fulfills the **prophetic intent** of the animal sacrifices
 - Jesus sacrifice was all **about blood and gore**.
 - Jesus was sacrificed **outside of the camp** – humiliation of the cross
- Sacrifice is about **giving up something** you want to do, for what someone else wants or needs.
- He did this to **take away the sin** of the world.
- **Atoning** for our guilt
- So that we may have **eternal life**
- All the **gore and blood**, so that we may be **made clean** in God’s sight

So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹Heb 13:12 ESV

- Now we can **come into God's presence**, because Jesus made us holy

Jesus' sacrifice is the only one that makes all **those animals sacrifices** in the Old Testament **mean anything**

What do Sacrifices Look Like Today?

But the time for making sacrifices is **not over. Wait a minute, Pastor.** Didn't you just say that the necessity for animal sacrifices is over?

Yes, it is over **for gaining forgiveness**, to make us **clean and holy** before God's eyes. These sacrifices for forgiveness and atonement **are done.** We **can't add any sacrifice** to what Jesus did on the cross.

But another **type of sacrifice is still required** of us Christians. Listen to our epistle message:

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.²

We need to make a Sacrifice of Praise

On first thought this is **talking about worship**, but if we **take it deeper** we are talking about a sacrifice that is honoring God and thus **pleasing to God.**

How do we do that? Doing **works of service** that God finds **acceptable and pleasing** of his children. **As this biblical passage brings out, acknowledging God** in all we do:

- Whether it is what we say
- Never neglecting to do the right thing
- Always sharing what you have with others

What do these sacrifices look like? One command that our Hebrews writer brings up both at the beginning of the passage and the end is **remembering and obeying your spiritual leaders.**

¹ Hebrews 13:12 ESV.

² Hebrews 13:15-16 ESV.

God is watching how well you are sacrificing in the area of submitting to the church's leadership. He knows that if you are having **trouble obeying** a leader **you can see**, how much more trouble will you have obeying a leader **you cannot see** – in other words, Him.

In learning to obey our pastors, this **passage brings out**

- Pastors have had to sacrifice a lot **in their own lives** and so do the lives of their family. We need to **emulate** that in our own lives.
- They are **responsible for your spiritual lives** – God holds them responsible for your spiritual life. We as pastors are going to have to **give account** someday for how we treated you, so make this **future day** of accounting a joyful time, and not when God mentions your name before your pastor, your pastor is not saying, “**oh, yeah, about Frank.**”
- If you are **at odds** with your pastor, the bible says that is of no **advantage to you**.

The writer of Hebrews commands to **remember your church leaders**. A few ideas come to mind:

- Remember those that are responsible to preach the Word, **week in, week out**, in sickness, family difficulties, and in times of personal stress.
- Remember that the **office of the keys** is the hands of the church leadership.
- Remember to include the pastor **in your good times** and bad times, so that he may celebrate or commiserate with you.
- Remember to include the pastor in your times of **generosity** and in **his** poverty.
- Remember to help the leader **bear the burdens** of the church.
- Remember **to respect the office**, even if the man in the office is not worthy of respect.
- Remember to always keep the pastor in your **daily prayers**.

Are you getting the picture of what our sacrifices should look like?

Our epistle reading summarizes it well. Jesus made the **once-for-all sacrifice for us** on the altar of the cross.

Now that Jesus' once for all sacrifice has sanctified us, **we live lives of sacrifice with our words, and by doing what is good in God's eyes**.

Midweek, Lent III (Oculi)

Hebrews 13:7-17; John 17:17-23, Psalm 32:1-11

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