

The Precious Blood of Jesus

Valley Center Seventh-day Adventist Church

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A few days ago I did some shopping at Costco. When I came up to the cash register, I pulled from my wallet this card. It says “American Express” on it. Actually, it says more than that. It says, “American Express Gift Card.” You, my church family, gave this card to me as a birthday gift several weeks ago, and I appreciate it very much. Thanks!

But let’s say that I was confused about this card and what it represented and, thinking that I was pulling out my American Express credit card, I pulled this one out, not realizing what it was. When the cashier rings up the final purchase, I swipe the card and insist on paying for my purchases. The cashier tries to explain that I don’t have to pay for them; the credit has already been applied on the card and it is “free” to me. It’s a “gift card.” It was given to me. But let’s say that I don’t understand all this, and refuse to accept it. I insist that I must pay. You should pay for your groceries when you go to Costco.

She tries again to explain to me that there is credit on this special card and I don’t have to pay. By now the people behind me have strange expressions on their faces and their weight is shifting from one foot to the other. Totally discombobulated and frustrated, I refuse to believe what she has said. Leaving my basket there and all its contents, I walk out with my mind spinning.

Let me ask you a question. Do you think that what I’ve just told you would happen in real life? Do you think that one person in 100 would refuse the gift? Would one in 1,000? One in a million? Would anyone in the entire world do what I’ve just described in this hypothetical situation? And yet Jesus has given us something more valuable, more lasting than anything you buy at Costco. Let’s see; that day that I went shopping I bought salad and bananas, among other things. They’re long gone. What Jesus has given us will last for eternity! Yet how many people don’t value the Gift! How many refuse to believe it’s genuine. How many are standing at the cashier’s counter arguing whether it’s really true that the Gift means I don’t pay. How many are trying to somehow pay for their sins when they’ve already been paid for.

What can we do? We can say “Thank You.” By the way, thank you for the gift card. I used it; every penny of it. When we say “Thank You to God,” we say it with our lips and with our lives. We allow Him to change us, transform us to be like Him. The reason why our faith and our love are weak is because our appreciation of the great atonement is lacking. Our understanding of the great sacrifice of Jesus in coming to this earth and dying the death that we deserve is meager. We’ve

allowed the things of the world to crowd out time for study, contemplation and meditation on the great themes of salvation.

Our concepts of salvation are shallow because we don't realize the horrible results of sin. We don't appreciate the heinous character of sin itself. Many think that God was too strict and harsh in punishing Adam and Eve for just eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. In this analysis they make a huge mistake. The simplicity of the test underscores the absence of excuse for disobedience. In crossing the line to disobedience, Adam and Eve took up the armor of the arch rebel Satan and joined his ranks in fighting against the righteous government of a loving God. This act fully deserved the punishment God had promised, the fate of eternal death.

The punishment could not be avoided or set aside. The justice of His kingdom demanded action. But there was one thing that God could do; one thing that *only* He as Creator and Lawgiver could do, and that was to take upon Himself the punishment we deserved and give to mankind another opportunity to follow a life of obedience. A thrill of curiosity and consternation must have penetrated the heart of Satan as he listened to the first Gospel sermon in Eden. A thrill of curiosity and admiration must have swept across the hearts of the loyal angels as they heard of the plan devised by their beloved Commander. How could it be that He Who had spoken the world into existence would become a member of the human race? How could it be that He Who is the essence of Life would die for the transgression of man? Mysteries so deep, so profound that they challenged the mighty intellects of angels fallen and unfallen were opened that day in Eden.

It was 4,000 years later that a Baby was born in Bethlehem, beginning a life-journey on a path strewn with the thorns of apathy and rejection. Those thorns would later be gathered together and woven into a crown, which when pressed upon His gentle brow would cause the blood to flow. The Majesty of heaven bearing man's sin! Wearing his crown of thorns! Uplifted on his cross! So Christ, the world's Redeemer, shed His blood for the salvation of mankind, to give mankind another opportunity to choose His way, the way of loyalty and obedience and life.

The Bible describes the blood of Jesus in many ways. To Peter it is "precious blood" (I Peter 1:19). To John it is "cleansing blood" (I John 1:9). To Paul it is "covenant blood" (Hebrews 13:20), "justifying blood" (Romans 5:9), "redeeming blood" (Ephesians 1:7), "reconciling blood" (Ephesians 2:13), "peace imparting blood" (Colossians 1:20) and "sanctifying blood" (Hebrews 13:12). Even to Judas it was "innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). To the saints it was through His blood that they overcame the enemy (Revelation 12:11).

When Israel was preparing to depart from Egypt, the token of redemption was the blood of the lamb, placed on the doorposts of their homes. Exodus 12 is very specific as to where the blood was to be placed. The blood was not to be splashed indiscriminately. They couldn't put it just anywhere. With forethought and intent the blood was placed. The blood on the doorposts and lintel, or header. That is to say that everything that entered the house passed through the blood. What does the Bible say the "blood" does for us? It cleanses, it sanctifies, it justifies, it redeems.

Everything that enters our homes, everything that passes through our doorposts, be it written or via electronic media, needs to be filtered through the blood of the covenant. Much of what comes through the airways; perhaps we should say nearly all of what comes through the media, will be screened out as unacceptable to enter the minds and hearts of those who are preparing to live with Jesus and His holy angels. Is the “blood” on the doorposts of your home? Are you careful what enters therein?

The blood was carefully kept away from the threshold. It was not to be walked on. Even in the symbol, the blood of Christ demands our highest respect and appreciation.

“Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which He was sanctified, a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:28, 29. God help us to appreciate the precious blood of Jesus and the salvation He has given us!