

BFF400 Life from Death

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: Well, I'm snow covered. This is kind of fun. All of a sudden, we've got three, four inches of snow out there. It's a winter wonderland. How are you?

Scott: The groundhog lied to you?

Steve: Yes, I don't listen to groundhogs.

Scott: Me neither. It's springy here. It's nice and warm and sunny. Henry had his first birthday, which was amazing.

Steve: Wow. Praise the Lord.

Scott: We had to cancel most of the celebration, but we celebrated privately in our own homes and on Zoom because Henry and his mom and dad were all sick.

Steve: Oh, no.

Scott: They're on the mend now. Henry's oxygen stayed good the whole time. That was a good praise. We're happy. We're thrilled. It's amazing and a miracle. Like you said, it's awesome that he's doing so well.

Steve: Amen. How big is that bruiser?

Scott: I don't know. I think he crossed over the 15-pound mark.

Steve: At least we're talking pounds now and not grams.

Scott: He might be getting a G-tube. I guess they call it a feeding tube and that it doesn't go through his nose. That's more of a permanent thing for a while. Who knows? They're still looking into that. Anyway, kids do fine with those. It's stressful to me, but it's all progress, and he's doing well. He's cute as he can be.

Steve: Of course, he looks like his grandfather. I mean, goodness.

Scott: Not exactly. :-)

Steve: Our podcast this morning is number 400.

Scott: Wow.

Steve: What a wonderful journey. Even though I spend a good bit of time in the Bible, studying and delivering a podcast gives me another focus to do more in-depth research on different topics that we've been going through, and I love it.

It's my weekly sermon. Thank you for your part in not just the techie stuff, but working with me side by side and...

Scott: Yeah, I get to heckle you in your weekly sermon.

Steve: There you go. You get to heckle, but you also get to give some good nuggets. You do well.

Scott: Thanks.

Steve: We're a good team, so thank you, and thank God.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Father, thank You for 400 podcasts, but thank You for the fact that we could go millions just exploring the riches of Your grace and Your kindness to us in Jesus. As we contemplate the blood, I feel a little bit like we're just scratching the surface. Yet, at the same time, it's so simple. There's life from death. You died so we could live. Help us afresh today to appreciate Your ultimate sacrifice, to get another insight and to give us ears to what Your spirit is saying to us today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: We started studying the blood of Jesus a couple podcasts ago and we read through big chunks of Exodus and the Pentateuch, where God lays the foundation, starting with Adam and Eve, God bless them, their sons' conflict, and God says, "I can hear your brother's blood crying out to Me."

That opened our eyes right away. Then we have Exodus. Then we looked at Exodus and Leviticus and we jumped right up to Hebrews, which is seeing the blood on the other side of the sacrifice of Christ.

Today, I'm going to start again with what I think is one of the pivotal scriptures. It's Leviticus 17:11: "The life of the body is in its blood. I have given you the blood on the altar to purify you, making atonement for your souls. It is the blood given in exchange for a life that makes purification possible."

I think I could probably preach on that one for three weeks, that one verse, but the life of the body is in the blood and the blood on the altar was given to purify us, making atonement for our souls.

There are heavenly transactions taking place because of this blood that was given on the altar for us, and it's the blood given in exchange for a life that makes purification possible.

Whenever I think of the blood, I try not to think of it like it's some magic potion. It's almost like we can say blood of Jesus as a magical phrase. However the blood of Jesus is death and life in one phrase. It's the ultimate expression of life. The life of the body is in the blood.

It's also the ultimate expression of death because there is no blood shed unless somebody dies. We don't have life unless somebody dies for us. We don't have life unless God gives it to us through the blood of His Son.

There's so much packed in there, but I hope that when we see the blood, we see the ultimate expression of love because Jesus shed his blood in dying for us.

David in Psalm 51 sees these realities. I'm going to read five verses. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love. According to Your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

When I was teaching fifth and sixth graders at a Christian school, I discovered that a lot of the kids, even when they were reading their Bibles, did not understand what the words meant.

One day I said, "I'd like you to read one chapter of the Bible every day and write down on a separate piece of paper every word that you don't know what it means." One chapter they read had the word "blot."

Then I asked the students to look up the definition in a dictionary and write out the definition. In fact, I had them write out the definition, in cursive and then use it in a sentence using writing or manuscript. That way, we were doing penmanship and spelling and learning the scriptures. It was a wonderful time.

When they came to the word "blot," they looked up in their dictionaries and the modern dictionary said, "a stain." I realized I had assumed that they knew what it meant to blot out because when I think of blot out, I think of removing a stain. The modern dictionary said it is a stain.

We have to be careful. I'm just putting this in there for parents that are having their children read the scripture. Make sure they know what the words mean.

Blot, I had to explain to the kids what an ink blotter was, and I'm really dating myself there, but this thing with a handle and you would go back and forth and it would soak up the ink. Blot out means to remove sins, not to make stains.

We know that David wrote that Psalm after he was confronted by Nathan about the sin of adultery and murder. David appeals to God and asks Him, "Remove this from me. Wipe out these stains. Cleanse me from my sins. Wash me." The only way He can do it, and we know the solution, is the blood of Jesus.

Isaiah 1:18 reinforces this concept. "'Come now and let us reason together,' says Jehovah, 'though your sins are as scarlet, red, they will be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.'"

Isaiah 53 points to the way that our sins are blotted out, and our stains are removed. We have sins that are red and they become white. "He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

"He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed

away. We have left God's path to follow our own, yet Jehovah laid on him the sins of us all, like a lamb that has led to the slaughter. He did not open his mouth. He bore the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors."

With that background, now we read John 1:29. "The next day he," John the Baptist, "saw Jesus coming toward him and said, (I don't think he just said it, I think he bellowed it) 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.'"

I don't think he had an inside voice. I think John the Baptist, living outside, eating locusts, wild honey. I mean, this guy was amazing and when he saw Jesus coming toward him, I'm sure he didn't whisper this because he saw what Isaiah saw. He saw what David saw. He saw what was foreshadowed in Exodus, Leviticus, and Genesis. "Behold God's Lamb who takes away the sin of the world!"

Later John reiterates this concept in 1 John 2. "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin, but if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ the Righteous, He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Now that word "propitiation" doesn't just roll off the tongue. I don't think we need to spend some time on it. Propitiation does two things. It appeases wrath. It takes the penalty. It also incurs the favor of the person who was offended. Jesus did both. He knew that when we sin, we die.

He knew that the Father, who is completely just and righteous and good and holy, has to punish sin. There's wrath from heaven against sin but then Jesus takes that wrath, He takes all the just punishment that our sin deserves and calls for. Then He appeases, he conciliates, He steps up to the plate and He endears us to His Father. He does both. He takes away the wrath, and he incurs our favor. The blood of Jesus removes our sin AND makes us near unto God.

With this new understanding, let's read Romans 3:24-25: "God, in His grace, freely makes us right in His sight. He did this through Jesus Christ when He freed us from the penalty of our sins, for God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin."

People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood and I'll add two words. Jesus was the one that took the wrath and restored us to our relationship with our Father. He propitiated for us.

I'm going to close with Revelation 1:5: "Jesus Christ is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us." It's Revelation 1:5.

There's so much happening with the the sacrifice of Jesus shedding His blood? For those of you that are conversant in Narnia terminology there is deeper magic, when Jesus laid his life down for Edmund on that rock. Aslan was willing to pay the price,

being slain on the rock, so Edmund could be free, and similarly so that you and I can be free."

He advocates for us. He conciliates us to the Father. He restores us to the favor of our good God and our just God by paying the appropriate penalty.

OK, there you go, Scott. It's time for a nugget.

Scott: Yeah, I think you're right when you said at the beginning that we can...This is just scratching the surface of this topic because I looked up, just typed in the word "blood" in the Bible gateway thing. It's 392 verses that specifically mention the word "blood," and then you had some verses that didn't mention that word, but clearly you're talking about it.

I found in 1 John 5, if you start in verse 5, "Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood and it is the Spirit who testifies because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water and the blood, and the three are in agreement."

I don't know what all that means, but the Spirit, the water and the blood testify.

Clearly, you can spend a lot of time on that, I'm guessing, if you dug into that verse.

Steve: You're right. As magnificent as the blood is, it's one piece. The spirit is a piece, and the water is a piece. There's three that are testifying. I think that it's worth exploring, but not with one minute left in the podcast.

Scott: There's a little inspiration to dig into your Bible yourself.

Steve: Amen. For anybody that's listening, that was 1 John 5:5–8. Powerful stuff. Well, let's thank God. Father, thank You. You saw our need, and You sent Your Son to meet our need. You saw our hopeless plight. You sent Your son to pay a price that we could not ever pay. We were lost in our sins, and we did not have the ransom. We didn't have anything. You sent Jesus to do what needed to be done.

I think we're going to spend a lot of time in eternity just thanking You for what You have done. We're going to start right today. Thank You, Jesus, for saying yes to the Father's plan. Thank You, Spirit of God, for contributing and witnessing to the power of the blood.

Thank You, Father, for being willing to sacrifice Your own begotten son, Your incredible relationship broken as Your son separated from You on the cross. You did that because You loved us, and You wanted to be restored to us.

Thank you, Jesus, for being the propitiation. Thank you for paying the price, and thank you for restoring us to our debt.

We worship You. We believe in You. I pray that You will help us all to count and treat and reckon the blood as holy. It's way beyond our understanding, but open our eyes

to it more and more. The mystery and the power and the efficacy of Your sacrifice in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.