

Redemption by the Blood

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, April 21, 2024
PASSAGES	Hebrews 9; Hebrews 10; Leviticus 17; Psalm 40
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:11:26 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

The sacrificial system was never God demanding a meal or losing his temper over stolen fruit. It was God putting life into people who were dead and dying — and when the animals proved unequal to the job, he took on a body so he could be the donor himself, once, and never again.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ Adam and Eve were not driven from God's presence so much as barred from the tree of life. Everyone born outside the garden is born mortal — which is the problem the blood addresses.
- ◆ “The life of the flesh is in the blood.” Sacrifice was life support: covering the dead and dying with life borrowed from somewhere else.
- ◆ Israel's neighbours believed humans existed to feed the gods. Israel's God feeds his people. The direction of the traffic is the whole difference.
- ◆ Long before Calvary, God trained his people to expect a substitute — a lamb for the firstborn, a goat sent into the wilderness carrying confessed sin.
- ◆ The blood of bulls and goats was never immoral, just insufficient. It reminded people of sin rather than removing it.
- ◆ Christ needed a real body because a ghost has no blood to shed — and because what God had always wanted was an obeyed voice, not a dead animal.
- ◆ The problem was never with God and never with the law. The problem was in us, which is why the solution had to be God taking on our flesh rather than waving the debt away.

- ◆ Because Jesus' life has already been evaluated as flawless, the verdict is settled. We offer ourselves now from a place of favor, not for it.

► 1:11:26

Earlier in the service Matt had dedicated three babies and told the parents that structure and Bible memorization and church attendance are all good and all limited — children need more than discipleship, they need a savior. The message picked that thread up and pulled it all the way back to Genesis. His stated hope for the morning was that when we look at all the blood in scripture, we would see past the splatter to the intent: “I hope that instead we see the beauty of it in God’s perfect intent.”

1. Why blood at all?

► 1:17:54

Start where the trouble starts. Matt pushed back on the picture of God with what he called “get off my lawn energy,” shooing Adam and Eve out of his presence. Read the sentence again and notice what God actually guards:

“Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—”

GENESIS 3:22 ↗

God does not finish the sentence. An immortal humanity, permanently corrupted by its knowledge of evil, is a thought too horrible to complete. So the tree is what they lose, and everyone born outside the garden is born dying. The genealogy that follows says so in a refrain — *and he died, and he died, and he died* — with exactly one exception, and the thing said about him is that he walked with God. Those who walk with God live. And at the far end of the Bible the same tree turns up again, in Revelation 22, attached to the person and work of Jesus.

► 1:21:51

So why blood? Because blood is where life is kept.

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.”

LEVITICUS 17:11 ↗

Matt's image for the whole system was dialysis. Sacrifice keeps God's people on life support, covering the dead and the dying with life drawn from somewhere else. Which reverses the religions surrounding Israel, where humanity existed to feed the gods. "In Israel's story, her God takes care of his people. We feed off of what he provides."

2. God had been teaching substitution for centuries

► 1:23:16

The firstborn of every womb belongs to the Lord — and then, immediately, a way to hand something else over instead. Redeem the donkey with a lamb; redeem your firstborn sons, not as a suggestion but as a command. On the Day of Atonement, Aaron lays both hands on a goat, speaks the people's sin over it, and sends it into the wilderness. There are even crimes for which the law forbids a ransom — which quietly tells you that for others, a ransom was possible. Put the two ideas side by side, life carried in blood and one life standing in for another, and you have the vocabulary Hebrews is about to use.

3. A high priest who brings his own blood

► 1:25:40

"But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption."

HEBREWS 9:11-12 ↗

Hold Leviticus 17 next to that verse and the sentence changes shape. If life is in the blood, then when Jesus sheds his, what he is handing over is his own life — and his life is inextinguishable. That is why the redemption is eternal and does not have to be repeated. He could not stay dead. Matt's working phrase for him all morning was "divine blood donor": the priest and the provision in one person. The next verses press the comparison — how much more will the blood of Christ purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

4. The blood that makes a covenant binding

► 1:27:38

Hebrews then argues like a lawyer. A will takes effect only at death; while the one who made it is alive it is not in force. So Moses takes blood and sprinkles the book and the people themselves, saying *this is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you* (Hebrews 9:18–22). At that moment it stops being hypothetical. Matt pointed at how closely Jesus’ words track that line at the table:

“For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

MATTHEW 26:28 ↗

Covenant and will are the same word in the Greek. Jesus is saying, in the language everyone in the room already knew: I am establishing this in my own blood and body.

5. Once, and then never again

► 1:31:22

He did not enter a copy of the holy place but heaven itself, and not repeatedly, “for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world” (Hebrews 9:24–28). Then comes the line whose logic is easy to skim past:

“And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 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.”

HEBREWS 9:27–28 ↗

► 1:32:36

The two halves only connect, Matt said, because Jesus is genuinely one of us — our man on the inside — walking the human path of death and judgment. And walking it perfectly. “He’s already been evaluated as flawless. He’s already been evaluated as glorious, the Lord of glory, and that will never again need to be re-evaluated.” Which leaves him nothing further to accomplish and one thing left to do: appear, and save utterly those who belong to him.

6. What God was actually after

► 1:34:23

Here the message widened out into the prophets, because the Old Testament keeps saying the offerings were not the point. “I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice.”

“You will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.” And most bluntly, through Jeremiah, God says that when he brought them out of Egypt he did not speak to their fathers about burnt offerings at all:

“But this command I gave them: ‘Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.’”

JEREMIAH 7:22–23 ↗

“He doesn’t need to eat,” Matt said. “He wants his children to obey his voice.” Which sets up the strangest of all these texts — Psalm 40:6–8, where a psalmist writes that sacrifice was not required, and then says of the law, *in the scroll of the book it is written of me*. Odd words for a man to write about himself.

7. “A body have you prepared for me”

► 1:38:10

Hebrews 10 opens with the tell: if the sacrifices had worked, they would have stopped. They did not stop, so what they supplied every year was a *reminder* of sins rather than a removal of them — “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” Matt was careful about what that does and does not concede. It is not that shedding blood was the wrong instinct. It is that a goat is a goat. “It lacks the quality and the substance to forgive sin and remove it.”

► 1:41:27

And then the author of Hebrews puts Psalm 40 in Jesus’ mouth. Not as an allusion — as a direct quotation from him:

“Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, ‘Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, “Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.”’”

HEBREWS 10:5–7 ↗

Why does he need a body? “So he can shed blood. If he was just a ghost performing miracles and teaching people how to be better people, there would have been no blood.” But the body is also where the obedience happens. No one else could completely obey the voice of God, so what Jesus offers is not only his blood for our forgiveness but a whole perfectly lived life for us to be joined into. Then the priests, who never once got to sit down, and the priest who did:

“by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified”, sealed by the Spirit’s own testimony — “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

8. The problem was never God, and never the law

► 1:44:46

Matt zoomed out to name where the fault actually lies, since so much of the fear people carry about this subject assumes it lies with God. He is not the one with issues to work out. He is not hungry for a lamb. The law was not a draft he later regretted and quietly scrapped. “There was no problem with God. There was no problem with the law. So where was the problem?”

► 1:46:51

With us. The wages of sin is death, and none of us was born in the garden. Which is exactly why the remedy could not be an amendment to the law or, in Matt’s phrase, an “abracadabra declaration” — *yeah, okay, whatever, y’all come in*. Something real had to be done in real flesh, “otherwise he wouldn’t have done it.” The cross is not God finally getting his pound of flesh. It is God supplying, at his own expense, the one thing we could never produce.

9. Which leaves us offering ourselves from a place of favor

► 1:49:03

Matt closed on the practical turn, and on a distinction worth keeping. Not every sacrifice in the Old Testament was about sin; a great many were about honor. So we still bring ourselves — living sacrifices — but the accounting has already been settled elsewhere. His picture for it was a courtroom where your lawyer and the judge are in collusion on your behalf, and the case is airtight. You give him everything you have and everything you are, he said, “knowing that you’re saved, not so as to be saved.” From favor, not for it.

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- [Genesis 3:22](#)
- [Genesis 5:24](#)
- [Revelation 22:2](#)
- [Leviticus 17:11](#)
- [Exodus 13:13](#)
- [Leviticus 16:21](#)
- [Hebrews 9:11–12](#)
- [Hebrews 9:13–15](#)
- [Hebrews 9:18–22](#)
- [Matthew 26:28](#)
- [Hebrews 9:24–28](#)
- [Hebrews 9:27–28](#)
- [Hosea 6:6](#)
- [Psalm 51:16](#)
- [Jeremiah 7:22–23](#)
- [Psalm 40:6–8](#)
- [Hebrews 10:1–4](#)
- [Hebrews 10:5–7](#)
- [Hebrews 10:11–14](#)
- [Hebrews 10:17–18](#)
- [Romans 6:23](#)
- [Romans 12:1](#)

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Before this message, what did you assume all the blood in the Old Testament was for? Where did that assumption come from?
2. Matt described sacrifice as dialysis — God putting life into people who are dying, rather than people feeding God. What changes if that direction is right?
3. God told Jeremiah he never asked for burnt offerings, only for an obeyed voice. Where are you offering God activity when what he has asked for is obedience?
4. Hebrews says Jesus sat down because the work was finished. What do you still catch yourself standing up to offer again?
5. Living sacrifice from favor rather than for it — name one thing this week you will do differently because the verdict on you is already settled.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZfmnu6OwMU&t=4286s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.