



Hebrews 10:4

(4) For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.
King James Version

Do we grasp a serious ramification of this statement? It was *never* possible for animal blood to remove sins! If it was not possible in Paul's day, it was not possible in Old Testament times either. *No one*, including the Old Testament heroes, was ever forgiven through an animal sacrifice, nor was anyone saved by [works of the law](#). [Forgiveness](#) and [salvation](#) by [grace](#) were not new to the New Testament.

The offerings were continuously repeated and detailed portrayals of what sin does - it kills - and what Christ's sacrifice would accomplish - reconciliation with [God](#). [Hebrews 10:3](#) says they served as reminders of sin. They were and remain as teaching vehicles since their spiritual purposes are shown elsewhere in God's Word. [Hebrews 10:5-10](#) adds:

Therefore, when He came into [the world](#), He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come - to do Your will, O God.'" Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the body of [Jesus Christ](#) once for all.

How can a person truly live by every word of God if he casts these things aside as useless to daily life? How do they apply to us today? They apply in the spirit, which is their true intent. Jesus Christ is the object of each of the offerings, that is, they portray His activities as a man. However, three of them, the burnt, grain (or meal), and peace offerings, do not deal with sin. Only the trespass and sin offerings depict Christ's death

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for our sins.

Very briefly, the whole burnt offering pictures Jesus Christ's total devotion to God. His life was completely consumed as an offering to God every minute He lived. It pictures His fulfilling the first of the two great commandments of the law ([Matthew 22:37](#)): Jesus loved God with all His heart, soul, and mind.

Along with the burnt offering, the [meal offering](#) represents Christ's dedicated service, but this time to man, fulfilling the second of the two great commandments (verse 39): He loved His neighbor as Himself. Sharing His consuming [love](#) for God showed His consummate love for man.

The [peace offering](#) represents the fruit of all of Jesus' sacrificial labors on behalf of God and mankind, including those symbolized by the sin and trespass offerings. The peace offering shows God, the High Priest, and man fellowshiping together, sharing a common meal in peace and thanksgiving.

Before leaving Jesus' example, we need to consider whether we are ever tempted to think that Jesus dream-walked through life like an actor on a stage. Do we ever feel that He must have had it easy because He was also God, and so could easily overcome any temptation that crossed His path? While it is true that, even as a man, He never stopped being God, He was also a man and thus encumbered with human feelings, and that nature within Him opened the door to sore temptations. [Hebrews 2:16-18](#) reflects this, as does [Hebrews 4:15-16](#).

It is important on several fronts to allow this reality's impact to affect us. Why? Because Jesus is our example, and we are to follow in His footsteps. Even though He was the Son of God, His Father did not lay out an easy course for Him. For instance, He rarely escaped almost continuous confrontations by angry people. By itself, this was a great burden. The pressure from this trial culminated in His crucifixion and all it entailed.

Jesus had to work at succeeding in His responsibilities. Each day was a sacrificial offering for Him on behalf of God and men. Thus, He is our example in this too. He gave of Himself, laying down His life for His friends, not only as an offering for sin, but also in daily service as a servant.

It will become clear that He did not engage in this labor so we could escape the responsibilities of our assignments. If we are to walk the same path behind our Example, does it not follow that we will face the same basic difficulties He did? God promises that our responsibilities will be in measure to our gifts ([1 Corinthians 10:13](#);

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[Romans 12:6-8](#)), but He did not do it all for us.

Do we not have work to do to follow Him? Once a person is converted, can anybody keep the commandments for him? Can a person be a proxy for another before God? Can anyone live any part of life for another? People can do things on another's behalf, but they cannot live life for anybody else.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Is the Christian Required to Do Works? \(Part One\)](#)

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[Offering, Meal](#)

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[Offering, Sin](#)

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