

The Talking Blood (Part Two)

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 07-Nov-20; Sermon #1569

This sermon is the conclusion to *The Talking Blood* sermon that I began on the first day of this year's Feast of Tabernacles. Its main theme was to show a very small portion of what God shows in the Bible of the importance of Christ's death toward our salvation. Its importance is far more needful to our growth and salvation than we normally think. I believe it necessary to review the subject because it is one of those key subjects within Christianity's doctrinal base that is so well known it is easily accepted—perhaps too easily. And that can become a trap that leads to acceptance of the fact, but without a grasp of how it is interlocked with other responsibilities that we commit to.

Losing the respectful understanding of and appreciation of Christ's sacrifice is not something we plan on doing. But the fact of Jesus' death to pay for our sins can rather easily become just another doctrine. It is by having knowledge of it, but without our truly being emotionally attached to Christ by means of thinking that it was not really done for you personally. But brethren, it was done for us personally because we are all uniquely called by God. And this is because His death is directly tied to our calling, which is very personal because we are individually selected by God to receive our calling into His Family, and when we are called, we are no longer a nobody. So declares Ephesians 1.

Ephesians 1:7-12 In Him [that is in Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself [Our calling, brethren, is very purposeful. God is not calling us to failure and Jesus Christ's death is absolutely necessary for our salvation.], that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one [that is one body, one group, one family] all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in

Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Now, when we accept His bloody death as payment for the forgiveness of our sins, we become deeply obligated to follow Him wherever He leads and without Him, He Himself said, "[We] can do nothing."

This specific doctrine is not just another doctrine, because His death was unique among all the multitudinous number of deaths of all the persons who have lived and died on Planet Earth. You might recall that when I was giving the Hebrews sermons earlier, based in John the first chapter, describing some of Jesus' characteristics in His pre-human days, I stressed that He was absolutely and totally unique among all born, except that He nonetheless still looked like us. But He never, never, never surrendered that specific reality. And that stamps Him with a function in the minds of those who believe, because He *never* surrendered the reality that He was *always* God.

His death, like His life, was absolutely unique too because of the sinless life He lived and the fact that His God, Jesus' God, preserved a record against all of sinning mankind of His life, His works, and His death too. And that record preserved a record against all of sinning mankind all of His life—His works and His death too—and that record clearly details for mankind that among all who lived and died, this one death is also uniquely meaningful above all other deaths.

But this reality goes beyond the mere fact of His death. It is not only the fact that He died that is important, it is the fact—and please get this—that *only* His blood shed in *only* His death covers our sins. Death plays a major role in the lives of many biblical personalities. But this one death is totally unique because of whom He was—the sinless life that He lived combined with the responsibility that He was serving within God's purpose.

Now that Feast of Tabernacles message began in I John 5:6-9. It begins with the blood that accompanied Jesus giving testimony as if it was a witness in a court of what it observed during Jesus Christ's life because it accompanied Him all of His life. Now it is recorded that blood spoke, as it were, for the

very first time in Genesis 4:10, when Abel's blood cried out from the ground and God records that He heard it in such a way that the verse can be understood as if it was crying out continuously. Of the three possible witnesses available in I John 5—the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit—it is the blood that seems to have a special witness intended for mankind. In fact, verse 9 specifically states that these three are God's witnesses which have testified, that is, they are God's testifying, that they would testify of His Son. I am going to read those verses again.

I John 5:6-9 This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit [So we have a parallel group of three witnesses]; and these three are one. [That is that they are all in agreement.] And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He has testified of His Son.

I want you to turn to Hebrews the second chapter and in verse 15. I am going to begin in verse 14 because it leads into what verse 15 says.

Hebrews 2:14-15 Inasmuch then as the children [human children] have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same [Jesus did], that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

This clearly states that Jesus came to release us from the fear of death because all of our lifetime we are subject to bondage by it. That is, the fear of death. And with clear reason, because we know that all of our lifetime, for better or worse, our death is going to occur.

We are in the book of Hebrews, so let us go to chapter 9 and verse 27 as we begin to nail this subject down precisely. Jesus, it has already been stated, came to release us from the fear of death.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.

The Amplified Translation does this just a little bit differently. "And just as it is appointed for [all] men once to die, and after that the [certain] judgment."

The wages of sin is death and we have all earned the death penalty.

Now, a statistic stuck in my mind regarding the total number of times a certain factoid which I gave there during Tabernacles, occurred in the entirety of the Bible. I do not know who to credit this to, because it apparently was a group effort. But it stuck in my mind because it impressed me with the number of times that the inference and the fact of death is assigned to men. This factoid is this: the Bible states an astounding 427 times that atonement, redemption, and forgiveness from sins is directly stated or inferred in many ways, but death is the only means by which sin against God can be covered. And it is covered by only one Person's death in the shedding of His blood and that is Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 12:22-24 [The apostle is speaking to you and me.] But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

God refers us back to Abel just as a point of reference. But Jesus' death is better than Abel's.

Death is not something we relish thinking about, but we must do so on occasion because God forces it. Remember that figure 427 times. God forces us to think about one death, the death of His Son. The first reference to blood was Abel's and then again specifically to the church just before the end time book, Revelation, and then specifically, God ties Jesus' death to Abel's unjust murder. They have something in common.

The message for us today is the blood of Jesus Christ. One specific portion of blood which has been shed for our sins. In fact, the sins of the entire world. Now we must trust in His blood because it is determined by God Himself that it is Jesus' bloody death which covers our sinfulness and redeems us —His and His only! That is vitally important. Without Him and His blood there is no salvation for anybody because God assigned that blood—that *specific* blood.

Jesus' conduct as a man reveals His perfection. But the shedding of His blood in His unjustified murder pays the penalty for our sins—if we repent and believe. That is a stark reality of our life—one portion of blood if we repent and believe.

Now we should comprehend that a great deal hangs on God's merciful judgment along with our believing and sincere repentance. I am going to turn back to the book of Isaiah once again, to the first chapter. But I am not going to read the whole chapter, just the first verse and then verses 18 and 19.

Isaiah 1:1 The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

We can tell that God is pretty disgusted at Israel's behavior. And so this He says:

Isaiah 1:18-19 "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land."

Since God is true in His evaluations, we should be able to judge that because Israel's historical record is so consistently, horribly bad something has to be accomplished on the part of the persons that He is speaking to. And if we understand, He is speaking to us in verses 18 and 19 as well. Something must be done on our part to aid in the erasure of the sinful filth accumulated through our personal sinfulness and that is actively, faithful, obedient living in hope of Christ's death through the shedding of His blood, shown by

turning from sin by means of a deep, abiding, appreciative, and thankful respect for the painful death He suffered though completely innocent.

I am going to re-read verse 19. "*If you are willing* and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land." Something must be done on our part to erase the sins, even though Jesus was the one who died to pay the penalty.

Now I have been told that if one takes a red filter and puts it over a red object, the red object will appear to be white when looking through the red filter. In like manner, when God applies the blood of Jesus Christ to our sins, the sins come out white. That is what He said in verses 18 and 19. Because the death-dealing agent has been neutralized.

The term the Bible uses to illustrate this neutralization off sin's death-dealing power is *atonement*. It is the same word that we usually associate with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Passover and the Day of Atonement have much in common. A major difference, though, being one of application. Atonement's focus is universal in scope, whereas Passover's focus is deeply personal.

The English word "atone" literally means "at one," but it is used in the sense of "to reconcile." Listen to these definitions. Atonement is used in the sense of to "reconcile," "expiate," "make amends," "to supply satisfaction for," or "to pay for." I wonder how the relationship was ever made between atonement and *kaphar*, but the primary meaning of the Hebrew word that it translates, *kaphar*, means "to shelter," or "to put a covering over." It is also translated, that is, *kaphar*, into the English word pitch, purge, and when it is translated into those words, it is used in the sense of cleansing, appease, pacify, reconcile, be merciful, forgive, pardon, or disannul.

I am giving you an awful lot of definitions because this subject is very, very important. It is the difference between salvation and the Lake of Fire, and only one particular portion, one specific portion of blood of all who have ever lived, is what does the cleansing.

Each of these uses, as you might be able to see, do not mean exactly the same action. There is a relationship, though, and they do loosely blend. A generality, though, is this: the Hebrew term tends to focus on the means or

the action, whereas the English translation, "atone," specifically focuses on what the action accomplished. That is very important to our well being. Now let us go back even further to the front of the Book, something that you are quite familiar with, but it gives an excellent description in Genesis 6. God is instructing Noah regarding the ark, and He says,

Genesis 6:14 "Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch."

I think you will find that the *King James Version* would also say the same thing, although it translates it a little bit differently. The *King James Version* says "You shall pitch it within and without with pitch." Now that term "pitch" is translated from *kophar*, which is a derivative of *kaphar*. Noah covered the ark with pitch to keep the floodwaters from where Noah and his family were. The pitch covering did what it was applied to accomplish, and the Flood was God's judgment against the sins of an evil world. But Noah and his family were safe because they were indeed sheltered, covered as it were, by the pitch. Now we are going to go to the book of Psalms as we put this whole theme together.

Psalms 78:38 But He [God], being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them.

Note the word forgave. It is, in the Hebrew, *kaphar*, the first *kaphar* that I mentioned. This is the Hebrew term most frequently translated into the English word "atonement" and the overwhelming majority of times it appears in the book of Leviticus. But I am going to give you one cautionary note. It is helpful to understand that every time the word or the term atonement appears, it does not automatically mean that sin is involved. That is one reason I gave you all those definitions because sometimes sin is not involved. Rather atonement, in this case, is showing that God is satisfied, that is, when He does not it is translated as "covering." But God is satisfied. In fact, usually because of the offerer's devotion as shown in the offering that he is making.

We are going to go back to Hebrews again. Just a simple and very clear statement but it makes a couple of things clear regarding atonement. There are some forms and some levels of atonement that we have to contend with.

In this here, implying cleansing by means *other than blood*. That is one of the reasons why I said just because the word "atonement" appears sin may not be involved in that section there because a cleansing is taking place involving water, fire, incense, and gold. I am going into these things so that you understand that the only thing that forgives our sins is God's mercy and the blood of Jesus Christ. It takes *blood* for the forgiveness of sin. I will repeat this. Understand this: *There can be no forgiveness of a sin without a death occurring*. God made sure that sin and its wages is serious.

There might be several reasons, but I am going to concentrate on one major one. And it is because of the "sneaky goodness" of our carnal nature that we tend to minimize the overwhelming seriousness of our sins, and this is because our carnal nature, as long as we can find security in what we consider to be our decency or respectability, we find ways of softening or completely averting our guilt to something like an unplanned event that merely happened by chance and we were to some degree involved. We thus try to forget it because our carnal nature is deceiving us or overlooked our participation in the sin as nothing.

Sin is a powerful drug, suppressing the memory of it, that is, of sin. But this is one of the most deceptive traits of sin. It lures us into concentrating on our good deeds we have done. It is like we put all of our sins in a box, bury them deeply within us, and then sit on the lid for good measure. This is why I said, our carnal nature is really and truly sneaky. But you know what often happens? We find that the lid leaks and remembrance of them—our sins—keeps coming back, sickening us psychologically with all sorts of forms of mental illness. And when we do remember them again, we tend to repeat the process and again minimize their importance.

It is our carnality playing games with us. We give playful names to our sins and attempt to minimize them as trivial. We call them our "mistakes," and that is, in reality, not wrong. They indeed were mistakes, but it is often avoiding the issue when God is in the picture in our life. We say to ourselves things like, "I didn't mean any harm." "It was all in fun." "I was just trying to have a good time." We laugh and say, "Well, that's what makes me an interesting person to be around." We may insist to ourselves, and sometimes

openly to others, that what we do is our own business, as if we could somehow contain the consequences of our sin because we fail to remember that God says that "a little leaven leavens the whole lump."

Our carnal mind does this in order to take some of the sting from our consciences to thus obscure the importance of sins and the truth is, in our heart of hearts, our carnality does not really want to confront the moral purity of Jesus, because if we are compelled to accept the seriousness of our evil we will excuse ourselves by transferring the blame elsewhere. That is our carnality at work again. It was our father's or mother's fault, or the crowd that we ran with, or it was circumstances that dragged me right in. This is why Jeremiah 17:9 reminds us that "The heart is deceitful above all things and incurably ill." Have we accepted that definition? It is deceitful above all things—above everything! Our mind has that potential. It is incredibly subtle when it attempts to defend itself against an uneasy conscience after it has been taught some capacity for deceit.

But brethren, the blood speaks. It is a constant rebuke to this tendency to make light of our sins. An innocent victim, Jesus, was slain in order that I/we may be purified of sin. Something has to shock us out of our insensitivity. Now here is God's estimate of sin's seriousness. Here is what sin really does. It does not *merely* kill. Someone, anyone can die because of something that is truly accidental. But in Jesus' case, His own rejected Him murderously, and in a hateful manner, crucified His Son as reflected in the attitudes of the Jewish leadership and the mob who shouted at Pilate, who wanted to release Him, that "We have no king but Caesar." That is how vicious they were.

Now God illustrates and makes it clear through the shedding of His Son's blood that forgiveness is not a casual matter. All too often, God is thought of as an indulgent, easy-going parent who is more than ready to let bygones be bygones. He picks us up when we fall. He gives us a friendly pat on the back, tells us this will not count against us, and sends us on our way with a carefree heart. And this is supposedly love. But where is a merciful and understanding and sympathetic love for the Son?

However, let us think about this from God's point of view. Did you ever think of the Son's crucifixion from the Father's point of view? That it might be the very intensity of His love for the Son that makes it difficult for Him to

forgive us? We did that to His Son! Did you ever think about the Father's feelings for His Son, who was put to His death though totally innocent?

Suppose it was your child. Suppose a person known to you as being an untrustworthy ne'er-do-well was carelessly driving through your neighborhood that had clearly-marked 25 mile per hour speed limit signs. But this person was zipping through at 50 MPH, oblivious of the concerns of others. And suddenly your child, your *only* child, darts from between two parked cars or from behind a bush, and the driver cannot stop. And with a sickening thud, he runs into your child. Witnesses pick up the child delivering it to the hospital, and the medics find the child alive but your child will be crippled for the rest of his life. And thus, even though the child is not killed outright, the sin may very well cripple the parents psychologically for a long, long time.

The one who caused the sin discovers the child is yours and comes to you seeking forgiveness. He appeals, and they may grant it, but it will probably not be easy. Your son will not be going to school, perhaps never getting married, never raising a family, or earning a living. You will be caring for him every day. If you were casual in your forgiveness, it would mean that your child, *your child*, means little or nothing to you. An easy forgiveness would not forgive the cause of the accident. And so there must be a love strong enough that you would forgive, at least two saying the words. But at the same time, there must be honest enough that God could begin to lift the burden of your grief, somewhat truly lifted from your mind.

Turn with me to the book of Matthew in chapter 26. Jesus, speaking to the apostles, says:

Matthew 26:28-29 "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But, I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Atonement through Christ's blood indeed covers our sins. But at one and the same time, *justice* must also be satisfied and repentance occur in the sinner, because God is not going to just roll over and acquiesce to the request because He too made a tremendous sacrifice to make that forgiveness

possible. Do we think of God as being without feelings when He forgives? Father and Son are one, and Jesus cried out because the Father had abandoned Him during His very painful death. How do you think that struck the Father's heart when that occurred? Do we think of the Father as also going through some measure of painful agony as He observed His only begotten and innocent Son agonizing in pain.

Look with me in Acts the 20th chapter.

Acts 20:25-28 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

When the blood talks, what does it say? Notice the association that Paul makes that Jesus was God when He died for man's sins. Of course, He still is God, and the church of God is His purchased possession. This organization, the church, came into being at tremendous cost. Maybe this is a rather crass analogy, but for some it is almost as if God walked to the counter, plugged down the blood, and was given a package of redemption in return. And now He offers it to us—freely! This world's Christianity says it cost Him His Son for a brief period of time.

Romans 3:24-26 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

No brethren, it is not really free. It is not without cost. How much pain did it cost Jesus? How much pain did it cost the Father? Somebody, many paid because there is a cost to us who have taken advantage of this proposition

that God offers. However, it is indeed *generously given*. God does not have to be forced. He is not stingy nor reluctant in giving it, but only as we meet the conditions of faith and repentance. And though most will be saved, there is no such doctrine as universal salvation. It is not free either, because *we must sacrifice ourselves* in order to give up our carnality. Now that is far less a cost than if we had to pay the price Christ paid because we, too, would die.

Propitiation is the English term that describes this forgiveness process. Propitiation is sometimes directly translated into the English term "atonement." But in so doing, it is describing a *process* rather than a word-for-word translation. Propitiation more expansively and literally means "to gain the favor of," "conciliate," "make calm," "make concessions," "satisfy," and "reconcile." The noun form of the term in Hebrew for that word means—do not forget this term—"appeasing force." God is appeased because in some way the pressure is applied to Him to forgive. Appeasing force indicates that which motivates God to deal with us personally, patiently, forgivingly.

I John 2:1-2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation [He is the appeasing force!] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

We have an Advocate, it says in verse 1. An advocate means one who intervenes for, in behalf of another. Our advocate brethren is the *blood* of Jesus Christ, which cries out to God to give man mercy in the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the means of putting away sin and establishing righteousness. Man is never said to be able to appease God with any number of offerings, as even religions where men offered gifts in an attempt to appease their god.

Hebrews 10:3-7 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. Therefore, when He came into the world [Jesus did], 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—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do your will, O God.'"

The blood of Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins working within Him. So the New Testament shows man incapable of offering anything to placate God because God is a righteous God. He cannot be persuaded by any other payment than the blood of Jesus Christ. And the blood of 10 million animals is not worth one drop of blood of one ordinary human being created in the image of God.

Remember that I stated all the way back in Isaiah the first chapter that something must be done to reconcile God and man. It would not be right for God to accept such an inadequate offering for anybody in this room or anybody in His Family. It was necessary for God Himself—in the form of Jesus Christ—not man, to do something to deliver us from our sins. And thus it was our Creator Himself who became the offering and was able to satisfy God's righteousness. Or we might say God's sense of judgment.

But as we are seeing, this is an offering of such magnitude that it pays not for just one person's sins but the sins of all for all time. But brethren, it is even more than that. Turn back to I John 1. Notice carefully what it says in this verse.

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light [talking about Christ], we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Let me give you a little bit of an explanation here. The place of the payment, the expiation of our sins, is the crucifixion, and the means is Christ's life. Or we might say, His blood, because the life is in the blood. But the virtue of His propitiation extends beyond merely being a private experience of those of us who are partakers of something that happened in the past, that is, His crucifixion. We are going to read another verse in I John 2, verse 2, where the word propitiation appears.

I John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Now, in order to get this thoroughly and understand it, you have to read I John 1:7 together with I John 2:2. Now I John 2:2 shows that Christ's death

is involved. But I John 1:7 shows *His life is also involved* in our forgiveness. Verse 7, this is in chapter 1, can be translated, "His blood *is cleansing us*," showing us that atonement in chapter 2 and verse 2 is a completed act, a statement of fact, but chapter 1, verse 7 is showing us that it is an *ongoing process*. The propitiation, the appeasing force, abides in us as a living and dynamic Personality. Christ is in us! The apostle John thus sees propitiation as a cleansing from sin, a process, not merely a past work of justification or reconciliation that gets us accepted in God's present.

And it is interesting to note a difference, then, between Paul and John in their approach to this subject. In Paul's writings, Paul defines propitiation as closely connected with the righteousness of the law. In other words, as a more legal act. In John's writing and this epistle, he defines it in association of ongoing love in a relationship of the Father and Son with us now being joined within His Family. Now, so much so the two, Paul, on the one hand, and John on the other, become interchangeable realities necessary to each other with the explaining of the other. The answer to this is that though both words are independently different in literal definition, in actual practice the terms love and propitiation in some contexts are interchangeable in what is accomplished. I know that this is a pile to try to define and get to understand, but it is important to our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Now if you think the only thing that matters is your relationship with God and that He is the only one you have to answer to, you are probably only on first base in understanding what love is and what the appeasing force is. Both love and propitiation are appeasing forces. Therefore, if we do not understand, how can we be formed into His image if we do not even understand what we are to become? What are we to become? We are to become one with the Father and the Son. That is what Jesus says in John 17. And when John speaks of God being love, he also means that He is the means of reconciliation.

II Corinthians 5:18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation [meaning church members].

This is part of our ministry to each other and to the world. But I think that one of the major things that we forget or overlook is this an important

statement within the Scriptures that the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace by those who *make* peace. And in order to make peace, we have to become an appeasing force. Now, I do not believe that in many cases we begin to realize how much our relationship with God hinges on how we treat our brother. John also says,

I John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God **must** love his brother also. (emphasis added)

The term brother here (here comes more!), cannot be limited to those in the church. Do not ever let anybody tell you "it is only God and me" as though nothing else matters in our judgment, because it is our relationship with our brothers that is the primary area of our judgment because that is the environment in which we operate our lives. And if we desire to be in a good relationship with God, truly reconciled to Him, it will be because the blood has paved the way for our attitude toward our brothers and how we treat them, because we are using His Spirit to be an appeasing force—a force for the covering of sin.

Remember, love, an appeasing force, covers a multitude of sins. It says that right in John's writings.

(We have just scratched the surface of this subject.)

But when the blood of Jesus Christ speaks, what does it say? It says, "Without My testimony before God there is no appeasing force to deny God's righteousness and holy justice. There is no covering for your sins. There is no reconciliation with God. There is no redemption. Without My testimony there is no justification. There is no receiving of God's Holy Spirit. There is no further cleansing into sanctification, no reconciliation with my brothers, whom I have involved in my sins and therefore no hope."

Is it any wonder, then, that someone would say that no matter where you cut the Bible, it bleeds. Is there any wonder then that blood appears 427 times as either the direct or indirect means of our salvation? These are things to seriously ponder and give God thanks for these constant reminders.