

Beware of Belittling the Blood

Holy Living Part 3

1 Peter 1:17-21 6-10-2012

Summary: The blood is what protects you from judgment (Passover), so returning to your Egypt (the worthless old life) is a return to the context of judgment. Be afraid of judgment, be afraid of belittling His blood (He freed you to make you holy), and be afraid to oppose His eternal work of redemption – He is very invested in it.

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1 Peter 1:17 And if as father you call on the one who judges impartially according to the work of each, in fear conduct yourselves in the time of your sojourn. 18 having come to know that it was not with perishables, like silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty conduct you inherited from your fathers 19 but with precious blood, as a lamb, without blemish and spotless – of Christ. 20 having been foreknown from before the foundation of the world, but having been revealed in the last times for you, 21 who through Him are believers in God, the one having raised Him from the dead and having given Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Introduction: The Exodus

About 3700 years ago, a guy by the name of Israel packed up his stuff, gathered his children together and moved to Egypt. And his family stayed there for the next four hundred years. During that four hundred years that family became a nation (the nation of Israel), which made the Pharaoh nervous. So he made them slaves, and treated them brutally. They did not have status as citizens in Egypt. Even though the people of Israel had never lived anywhere else in their entire existence, they were considered strangers and aliens in Egypt (Acts 13:17).¹ They were strangers and they were slaves. So they cried out to God to rescue them from their horrible bondage in Egypt.

¹ The only other time in the New Testament that the word Peter uses in verse 17 for **strangers** is used is in Acts 13:17, where it refers to this time when the people of Israel were strangers in Egypt.

God sent a man by the name of Moses to lead them out. So Moses comes to the Pharaoh and says, "I've got a message from God: 'Let My people go – or else.'"

"Or else what?"

"You don't want to know.

You don't want to mess with Yahweh, Pharaoh – just let them go."

"No – I'm not afraid of your God. I won't do it, now get lost."

That was a very dumb move on Pharaoh's part. God started raining down judgments on Egypt. The Israelites were protected, but everyone else in Egypt suffered – judgment after judgment in the form of plagues – nine of them. But even after all those plagues, Pharaoh still would not let them go.

So God finally takes the gloves off. He is going to send one final judgment that will be so devastating, Pharaoh will break. This time He is going to send the angel of death to go throughout the entire land of Egypt to kill all the firstborn – animals and people. Raise your hand if you were the first born in your family. Add to that all the kids in the nursery or children's church who are not in this room right now who are firstborn. All the firstborn of all the generations would die.

And here is the crux – the thing that is different about this judgment, is the people of Israel were not automatically protected from it like they were from the others. If the Israelites wanted to be protected from this judgment, they had to take some action. God explained to them exactly what to do, and if they did it, they would be safe. But if they didn't do it, would wake up the next morning to find that all the firstborn in the house would be dead.

Here are the instructions God gave them: Four days before the judgment came they were to pick out a one year old male lamb that was perfect – without any blemish or defect of any kind. Then the night of the judgment, they were to kill that lamb and cook it and eat it, along with unleavened bread – bread with no yeast. And they were to take some of that lamb's blood and smear it on the doorpost of their house. Then when the angel of death came to their house, when he saw the blood, he would just pass right over that house and move on to the next one. This meal was then called the Passover meal because the angel of death would pass over that house. So the very name of this meal was designed to give the people an image of God's devastating, deadly judgment passing right over their heads.

After they smeared the blood on the doorpost, they were to have a special meal where they ate that lamb. And God gave them some very specific instructions on how to eat this meal. For one thing, they were required to eat it with their running shoes on. This is the first time in the Bible we see the phrase "gird up your loins" which means tuck your robes into your belt so you can run.

Exodus 12:11 This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover.

Why did they have to eat it like that? Because there was only going to be a small window of time when Pharaoh would finally break and let them go, but then he would change his mind. So when they got the word, they needed to be ready to roll.

Well, when the angel came and the screams of shock and sorrow covered the entire nation of Egypt, and the firstborn of Pharaoh himself was dead, Pharaoh finally said, "OK - go." So Israel grabbed what they could grab and started running. Sure enough, Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his army after them. Israel made it as far as the Red Sea, but then they were cornered. Not a problem for God – He just made a path through the sea. The Israelites crossed on foot along the dried-up sea floor with walls of water on both sides. Once they were across, and the Egyptian army tried to follow them, God let the water collapse back down on them and they all drowned. And for the first time in their entire existence, Israel was free.

They were freed from bondage, which means they were redeemed.

Exodus 15:13 In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed.

He promised to lead them. Where? To an inheritance.

Exodus 15:17 You will ... plant them on the mountain of your inheritance

Then, in Exodus 19, God makes a covenant with the people of Israel. He has Moses purify the people and sprinkle blood on them as a sign of this covenant, and He tells them this:

Exodus 19:5 you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

They are going to be a holy nation. And God therefore requires that they live holy lives.

I tell you all that because that background information about the Exodus of Israel from Egypt is crucial for understanding the book of 1 Peter. Peter alludes to almost every one of those details in the first two chapters. Using the same terminology right out of Exodus, Peter mentions the blood of the lamb without blemish or defect, gird up your loins, purification, sprinkling by the blood, being redeemed out of bondage into an inheritance, living as strangers, be holy, because I am holy, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, and being called out of darkness.

1 Peter	The time of the Exodus
1:2 sprinkling by his blood	Exodus 24:8 Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people...
1:4 and into an inheritance	Exodus 15:17 You will ... plant them on the mountain of your inheritance
1:13 gird up the loins of your mind	Exodus 12:11 This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover.
1:16 Be holy, because I am holy.	Leviticus 19:2 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.
1:17 live your lives as strangers here	Acts 13:17 he made the people prosper during their stay as strangers in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country
1:18 you were redeemed	Exodus 15:13 In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed.
1:19 precious blood as of a lamb without blemish or defect.	Exodus 12:5 The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect
1:22 you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth	Exodus 19:10 And the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and purify them
2:9 a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God	Exodus 19:5 you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'
2:9 called you out of darkness	Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

I. Be Afraid of Judgment (v.17)

We are in the midst of a verse-by-verse study of the book of 1 Peter, and we are currently in the second major section of the book. The first section is all about our future inheritance. And the second section is about holy living. Because of the promises of our future inheritance, we must live lives of hope, which is the basis for holy living. Holy living means to be separated from sin. Because of our hope for all those glorious things, we can let go of the pleasures of this world that are not compatible with righteousness.

And so we are different. We do not live like the world lives. We have different goals, different desires, different passions, different objectives, different interests, different everything. They love sin; we hate sin. They continue in their sin, we sin and repent and turn back to God. And as a result, we are strangers in this world. And the command of verse 17, the third command in the book of 1 Peter, is that we live out this time here as strangers and aliens with an attitude of fear.

17 Since you call on a Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during your time here as strangers

Live in fear because your Father also happens to be your Judge, and live in fear because your Judge also happens to be your Father. I talked at length last time about the first part of that – the fact that God is our Judge. But it is also significant that God is both Judge and Father to us. That is important because our special family relationship with Him makes the judgment even more serious. I love reading Bob Deffinbaugh's sermons on Bible.org. Here is something he wrote that I think really captures this point:

“Years ago, my father taught Junior High in the same school where I was an elementary student. We did not see each other all that often at school. My friend Ricky and I discovered quite a legitimate way to skip class. We became school projectionists and were excused from class to operate the movie projector for other classes. This required pushing the projector on a mobile cart all around the school building. And, of course, at times we raced in the halls to see just how fast we could negotiate those 90-degree turns. One day I was doing especially well wheeling the cart around a sharp turn at high speed when I crashed—right into a teacher walking down the hall. That “teacher” just happened to be my “father.” I can assure you I received no special treatment; indeed, it could not have been worse. My father was also my “judge.”²

If you crash the cart into a teacher, the last teacher you want it to be is your father. The more spiritual privilege a person has been given, the stricter the judgment. And as sons and daughters of God we have been given much and much will be required of us.

So, as we live out our time as strangers and aliens in this world, we must live holy lives. And one of the motives for that holiness is the fear of God. I read a book recently titled *Jesus Plus Nothing Equals Everything*. It is not a book I recommend. He says in that book that we must only obey out of gratitude, never out of fear.³ Peter does not agree. Gratitude is a wonderful motive, but fear of God is also an excellent motive. And in this passage Peter gives us three things to be afraid of - Three things that we must take very, very seriously as we live out our time as strangers here. The first is the one we talked about last week – judgment. Judgments in this life in the form of discipline, and ultimately, Judgment Day, when we will have to give an account to the Lord Jesus Christ for the things done in the body, whether good or bad. That is verse 17. But the threat of judgment is also a factor in verses 18-19.

² <http://bible.org/seriespage/fearing-our-father-1-peter-117-21>.

³ Tullian Tchividjian, 153.

Returning to the Place of Judgment

Because of all those references to the Exodus, there is no doubt in my mind that the description of the unblemished lamb in verse 19 is a reference to the Passover lamb in the original Passover. And that lamb was not seen as a payment for sin, but as a deliverance from bondage in Egypt, where judgment was about to fall. They were protected from the angel of death because they were in a house that was marked with the blood of the Passover lamb.

And Peter is saying, “We are in that same situation.” The “Egypt” from which we were delivered was the worthless way of life of our fathers. So unholy living is a return to Egypt. The implication is, “Live in fear of going back to Egypt, because you were redeemed from there with blood that protects you from judgment.” In other words, “Be afraid to go back into a context of judgment.”

Imagine a firstborn Israelite on the first Passover. He picks out that perfect, unblemished lamb, brings it into his house, follows all God’s instructions, slaughters it on the day of Passover, smears the blood on the door post of his house, and then goes out to spend the evening in his Egyptian neighbor’s house. That would be suicide. Peter is telling us the same thing Jude tells us:

Jude 1:21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

Do not go back to the bondage you were freed from – that is the place where God’s judgment falls. That blood is the only thing standing between you and God’s wrath. The last thing you want to do is step out from under the protection of that blood. When we choose to voluntarily re-enslave ourselves to the sin we have been freed from, we not only dishonor the price that was paid for our freedom, but we place ourselves right back into the context of judgment.

So, live out your time as strangers here in a posture of fearing God. Why? Because of the threat of judgment. But that is not the only reason. In verses 18-19, Peter gives us a second reason to fear. And it has to do with the magnitude of the price that was paid for our redemption.

II. Be Afraid to Belittle His Blood (vv.18-19)

18 ... it was not with perishable things, like silver or gold that you were redeemed from the worthless way of life you inherited from your fathers 19 but with precious blood, as a lamb, without blemish and spotless – the blood of Christ.

He starts with that which cannot redeem – silver and gold. Before you sell yourself out to some earthly pleasure ask yourself, “Can this thing redeem me? Does it have the power to pull me out of bondage?” If not, then do not ever prefer it above something that does have the power to redeem. And there is only one thing that fits that description – the precious blood of Christ.

I ended the sermon last week with the statement “Living an unholy life - after the pattern of our old life – is a denial of the preciousness of Jesus’ blood, which should strike terror in the heart of anyone who loves God as Father and fears Him as Judge.” I would like to expand on that a little. Why is it a denial of the preciousness of His blood? Can’t I say, “Look, I still believe His blood is precious – I just want to continue in this sin”? No, we can’t say that, because He shed His blood for the purpose of rescuing us from our sin.

Free to be Holy

That is what our freedom is for. You see, it is very, very important that we understand the purpose of our freedom. We have been redeemed – freed from bondage - He made us free – free to do what? What is it that I am free to do now that I am a Christian? Sin? Was my problem that I was in bondage to the Law, and now God has released me from that so that now I am free to disobey Him if I want? Absolutely not.

1 Peter 2:16 ...do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as slaves of God.

We are not free to disobey God; we are not free to act in evil ways. So what is it we are now free to do? We are free to obey God. The thing that enslaved us before was not God's Law. What enslaved us was our sinful passions – that is what we have been freed from.

Titus 2:14 He gave himself for us to redeem us (free us) from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Because of our ignorance about God, our desires were messed up and so we craved sin and did not crave righteousness, and that was our prison. And now that we have been set free from that prison, and we are no longer slaves to our sinful passions, we are free to obey God. God did not redeem us in order to give us the freedom to just do whatever we want. He paid a dear price to make us holy.

Redeemed from our Forefathers' Ways

And that is fantastic news – especially for those of you who did not have godly parents. Sometimes people think if they had bad parents, their life is forever messed up. Sometimes people think they are forever locked in sin because of so-called “generational sins.” Their parents and grandparents handed down some sin that they just cannot escape. Other people think they will not be able to properly understand God because their father was not godly. They say, “What I inherited from my parents was something that I cannot escape.” But look again at verse 18.

18 ... you were redeemed from the worthless way of life you inherited from your fathers

Peter is saying, “I know that the life your fathers handed down to you was worthless, empty, unholy – but the precious blood of Jesus Christ has the power to redeem you from bondage to that.”

So, what was I freed from? Unholy living. Now I am free from that. Free to do what? Live a holy life. What was the price of my freedom? The precious blood of Christ. That is why living an unholy life is a denial of the preciousness of the blood of Christ. Every time I sin I am despising Jesus' blood.

Despising

And please understand – when I say, “despise” – I am not talking about hatred or animosity. That is not what “despise” means. The word “despise” in Scripture means *to think little of*. If you say, “I don't hate the blood of Christ – it's just that it doesn't come to mind at the moment of temptation.” That is what despising means – it does not come to mind. You think little of it. It is not big in your thoughts. Unless someone calls it to your attention, you are just not thinking about it much.

And thinking little of the precious blood of Christ is a serious matter. And in Matthew 6:24, Jesus was very clear that if you think much of this world, you will think little of Christ, and if you think much of Christ, you will think little of this world. You cannot make much of both.

So our sin makes a mockery of the precious blood of Christ. So Peter points us to the preciousness of His blood because it is that preciousness that motivates us to avoid dishonoring Him by thinking little of the price He paid.

1 Corinthians 6:20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

III. Be Afraid to Resist His Redemption (vv.20-21)

So be afraid of Judgment Day. And be afraid to belittle the blood of Jesus Christ. And then one more motive to help us fear God. In verses 20-21 Peter turns our attention to God's eternal plan.

20 He was foreknown from before the foundation of the world, but revealed in the last times for you, 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

So God the Father did four things to God the Son.

1. Foreknew Him
2. Revealed Him
3. Raise Him
4. Glorified Him

And they come in two pairs – foreknew and revealed in verse 20; raised and glorified in verse 21. Let's start with verse 20. If anyone ever asks you what is the longest verse in the Bible, you cannot really get longer than verse 20. It stretches from **before the foundation of the world** all the way to the **last times**. The whole, massive sweep of humanity is bookended by the two actions of the Father – foreknowing Jesus and revealing Jesus. And everything that happens in between – the creation of the world, the fall, the history of Israel – thousands of years of history – all of it was for the purpose of bringing about His eternal plan for Jesus Christ to redeem humanity.

Open Theism

God has been planning this forever. In Phillip Yancey's book *Disappointment with God*, the title of chapter 7 is blasphemous. Here is the title: "God learns how to parent." Yancey's view is that God's parenting method in the first eleven chapters of Genesis just did not work, and God finally improved His parenting technique with the decision to call Abraham. Philip Yancey teaches that the Garden of Eden was a parenting experiment that went wrong. God did His best, but could not have foreseen what would happen. He did not know humanity would fall into sin. That heresy is known as Open Theism – the idea that God does not know for sure what will happen in the future. People like Philip Yancey, Clark Pinnock, Greg Boyd, John Eldridge (who wrote *Wild at Heart*) – say that God did not know mankind would fall into sin. That is their way of getting God off the hook for the problem of evil – God never saw it coming.

But if that is true - if God didn't know the Fall would happen, why did He plan, from eternity past, for Jesus to die? Why create a vaccine for a disease you do not even know is going to exist? Redemption is not God slapping a patch on something that unexpectedly went bad. It was God's Plan A right from the beginning. It was the reason He did everything He did. Redemption is the centerpiece of all God's glorious work.

God is Invested in This

Let me ask you something – what happens when someone gets in your way when you are trying to accomplish something? Isn't it true that your reaction depends on how invested you are in the issue? If I have an idea and I want to do something, and the people around me start resisting – if it is something that I am not really all that passionate about, have not spent much time or effort on, do not feel real strongly about it – I can just let it go. Seems like a good idea to me, but if the people around me don't like the idea – fine, I can let it go.

But what if it is not a small thing? What if it is something I feel really passionate about? What if I have spent years of my life preparing for it, and it is right at the core of my whole mission in life? Get in my way now and it's time for bulldozer mode. (At least that is how it should be. Many times I fail at this – I get real bull headed on some minor little thing and insist on my way. And then on some real important thing I hit resistance and just take the easy way out and fold rather than persevering. So I am not saying I always get this right – I am just saying that generally speaking, the more invested a person is in something, the more passionate he is about that thing, the more he will tend to plow through resistance.)

Now let me ask you this – how invested is God in redemption? How much time and effort and expense have gone into His purpose in making you holy? It has been on His mind ... *forever!* Literally – throughout eternity past, God was planning this – planning your holiness. These four things that God the Father did to God the Son show us an eternal purpose that is a freight train that you do not want to oppose or resist.

The Only Way

When it says Jesus was foreknown – that is not just a reference to knowledge. When God foreknows something that points to His plan and purpose regarding that thing. And God’s eternal plan and purpose regarding Jesus was that He would accomplish redemption through His bloody death on the cross – which makes Jesus the only way to the Father. That is why no other religion can save you, because no other religion has God suffering punishment in your place for your sin, which means you have to be punished for your own sin. And so Jesus is the only way to salvation.

Through Him You Believe

21 through Him you are believers in God who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him so that your faith and hope are in God.

Through Jesus we are believers in God; through Jesus our faith and hope is in God. God raised Jesus from the dead and glorified Him. And part of the way He exalted Him was by making Him the only way to salvation.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus is the only way to God. People pray to God all the time, imagining that He listens, but He doesn’t. They are speaking to the air. Their hopes that maybe there is a God on the other end who is somehow hearing those prayers – is a dream, a superstition. Human beings cannot just approach God by simply wishing it to be so. Sinful human beings could no sooner approach a holy God than you could travel to the inside of the sun. God is utterly unapproachable by anyone who has any sin whatsoever. God will not accept their worship, which means He will not accept them. The only worship God will accept is perfect, spotless, unblemished, uncontaminated, holy worship.

“How is that possible?”

The Only Way to Acceptable Worship (Unblemished)

Go back to verse 19.

19 [...redeemed] with precious blood, as a lamb, without blemish and spotless – the blood of Christ.

The significance of **unblemished** and **spotless** is to say it is acceptable to God. There are two kinds of sacrifices – those that are acceptable to God and those that are unacceptable. That is one of the first things God ever taught us. Right off the bat, at the very beginning of the Bible, in the first instance of worship ever recorded, God gives us an account where two offerings were given, one was accepted by God and the other was rejected. Most people today have the attitude that God is lucky to get any worship from them, and ought to be thankful for what He gets – no matter what it is. People give God the scraps and leftovers of their lives, and offer that as worship. They give him their leftover time after all their TV watching is over, their leftover strength after they do all their recreation, leftover money after they pay all their bills, leftover energy after they do the things that are really important to them – treating God like a dog who is getting a bonus if he gets to lick up the scraps of food off the plate after they are done eating.

Malachi 1:8 When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the Lord Almighty.

Not even human authorities will accept leftover scraps.

Next April 15 try telling the IRS, "Sorry, I realize my tax bill is \$10,000, but all I've got left right now is about \$500 – but hey, at least I'm giving something." See if that flies. You will go to jail.

God will not accept any blemished worship. Well, guess what – ALL our worship is blemished. Everything that rises out of our corrupted hearts is imperfect. So our only hope is a perfect sacrifice.

That is the significance of the spotless lamb. The reason Peter makes such a point of Jesus' blood being like the blood of spotless, unblemished, perfect lamb is to emphasize the fact that Jesus' sacrifice was accepted by the Father. And so it is only through Him that we can be acceptable to God. If we have faith – if we trust in Him and hope in Him, then Jesus' perfect sacrifice will be credited to our account.

God set it up that way to honor His Son. Millions of people think they have faith in God, but Peter says, "No, it is only through believing, and trusting, and hoping in Jesus that you can be a believer in God."

Our Privileged Place in History

All that was hidden from the prophets of old. God has been planning this and working this since before the beginning of time, but only now, in these last times (the time between the first and Second Comings of the Messiah) has it been revealed. Why did God reveal it to us? Abraham did not get to see it, Moses was in the dark, David did not get the honor, the prophets searched intently and with the greatest care and God said, "No, this is not for you to see." Then He reveals it to us. Why? It is all part of His eternal plan to make us holy. It is all part of this project He has been working on throughout the history of the world to create a beautiful, spotless bride for His Son. That is how invested God is in this redemption thing.

Greater than Creation

It is the greatest thing He has ever done. Is there anyone here who marvels at the creation? Are you impressed with the stars and galaxies, or the human body, or anything else in creation? Thomas Watson: "Great was the work of creation but greater the work of redemption. It costs more to redeem us than to make us. In the one there was but the speaking of the Word, in the other there was the shedding of blood. The creation was but the work of God's fingers, Psalm 8:3. Redemption is the work of His arm, Luke 1:51." The jaw-dropping wonders of the Creation are nothing compared to redemption. The death and resurrection and exaltation of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ; and all that God accomplished through that work, dwarfs the creation. And God's purpose in doing all that was to make you holy.

The Importance of Living

It is amazing to me how important our behavior is to God. We are like ants – microscopic nothings running around on a speck of dust orbiting a speck of dust in the universe. And yet the Almighty Creator went to such massive, extreme measures – eternal measures (literally, was thinking about it and planning it for ALL of eternity past!), and went so far as to put His own Son to death – all in order to make us holy in our behavior. Jesus did not die just to pay the penalty for our sin; He also died and rose to bring us into a life of holiness (Tit.2:14). The Lord God Almighty carried out a plan over the course of thousands of years – involving the entire universe, and at the cost of the life of the Son of God Himself – all that to rescue you from this afternoon's sinning. To keep you from making a decision next Friday night that would be evil instead of righteous.

Don't Resist the Freight Train

So think about what we are doing when we choose to sin. We are opposing the eternal work of God! The purposes of God are like a giant freight train that comes rocketing out of eternity past in a beeline toward the ultimate exaltation of the Son of God through the holiness of His saints, and doing something to oppose the momentum of that train is suicide. To sin is to oppose the eternal purposes of God – the plan He has been working out forever. The thought of doing that – resisting this eternal purpose that God is so invested in, should scare the daylights out of us. It is a very bad idea to stand in the way of God's mighty acts of salvation.

Jeremiah 32:21 You brought your people Israel out of Egypt with signs and wonders, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror.23 ... but they did not obey you or follow your law; they did not do what you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster upon them.

When God goes out of His way to save you, do not despise that. When God sacrifices His beloved Son on the cross to make you holy – do not belittle that. When God works at something so intently that He creates a universe for it, orchestrates the actions of humanity for thousands of years for it, and sacrifices His own Son for it – do not stand in the way of that. If you do, God will not take that lying down. It would be safer to stand in the way of the sun and try to hold it back than to stand in the way of God's eternal purpose to glorify His Son through a redeemed, holy people.

The Value of Your Soul

Think of how valuable your soul is to God.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

As a pastor, I am to go to any and every extreme when it comes to protecting the flock, because they were purchased with God's own blood. But the first part of the verse includes my own soul in there. He bought that with His blood, too. Do not be reckless with something God paid for with blood.

Your Father is the Judge and the Judge is your Father, so be afraid of Judgment. The price that was paid to free you from sin was infinite, so be afraid to despise that price. And the Father's work of Redemption is eternal and supreme, so be afraid to stand in the way.

Live in fear.

Live in hope.

Live in holiness.

Benediction: Ephesians 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins

1:25 Questions

1. Is there anything you could do to cause the preciousness of the blood of Christ that was shed for your redemption to occupy a greater place in your thoughts and affections?

2. Is there a part of the worthless old life that you have assumed you would always be in bondage to? Read verse 18 and replace the words “empty way of life inherited from your forefathers” with that area of the old life that you thought was inescapable.
3. As you listened to the sermon, did you discover any areas where you have been unwittingly resisting the redemption freight train?