

A Better Sacrifice

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[0 : 00] What do we think of when we think of the word sacrifice?

I think of things like cost, of yielding, of surrender. And in Hebrews 11.4 we read, What of your sacrifice? Is your sacrifice more excellent? More excellent.

Cain's offering was from the ground. He offered the fruit of the ground. Of his own efforts, of his own making.

Without blood, Cain's offering was counted as unworthy really.

Because no offering of self-effort can save you. There's lots of religious people in our world today giving all kinds of things, or making all kinds of sacrifices.

[1 : 33] But like Cain, it's by their own efforts. It's without the blood. On the other hand, you've got Abel's offering. Abel's offering. His offering was different.

His offering was by faith. His offering was a substitute for himself. As the lamb was slain. Abel's offering was a foreshadow of the cross.

Abel still speaks today. He still speaks today, we read. He being dead, yet speaketh. Is your sacrifice more excellent?

Is your sacrifice worthy? A sacrifice that he will receive? What would such a sacrifice look like? The psalmist in Psalm 51, 17 says, The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Is your sacrifice worthy? He wants us to come to the end of ourselves.

[2 : 43] To come not in our own strength, but to come depending upon him. That's what Abel did as the lamb was sacrificed in his behalf. He wants our spirit, our heart, to be broken and yielded and given.

And he will not despise this sacrifice. A heart broken, a heart contrite, a heart repentant, broken up over our sin. This is what Abel's sacrifice pictured.

As we come around the Lord's table, we see it reflected again. Abel came by faith, by surrender and by a substitute, not by any merit of his own.

Is your sacrifice more excellent? Is your sacrifice worthy? Is your sacrifice unto him? Unto him. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice.

He offered it unto God. And the word tells us of giving, of sacrificial living, of being living sacrifices. Each one of us, every Christian, ought to live as such.

[3 : 50] And Proverbs 3.9 it says, Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of thy increase. There's a giving of your substance.

There's a giving of yourself, of your being, of your best. Not a token effort, but a real substantial, of your substance, a substantial sacrifice.

A meaningful thing. And with the emphasis in it all, that it is unto his honour. Unto his honour. Honour the Lord with thy substance. It's not an honour that's to get any credit for ourselves, to big-note ourselves.

When you give, give it unto him. Unto the Lord. In honour of him. Sacrificially. Not for any selfish motive. But a giving that is unto him.

Much of your giving might be secret giving. That others don't even know about. A giving secretly. A giving spiritually. It can be, as you think of your life, time is precious.

[4 : 49] We're time poor. As we know, the phrase goes, in Australia, in our world, of busy living. Even giving your time to be here. That's, in some cases, for you, that's a sacrifice.

You could be trying to make a buck, as it were. You've given, spending your petrol to come here today. And I know for some of you, even that is a sacrifice.

It's something that you've given unto the Lord. You've honoured the Lord by being here. On the Lord's day. When we put aside carnal things. Even if it be, just for an hour or so.

It's an honouring the Lord with our substance, isn't it? It's a sacrifice. In all, that we give. And everything that we ought to give. Ought to be in that frame. Of mind. In that way of thinking. In our praying. In our praising. In our serving. It's a sacrifice. Every tear. Every prayer. Every service. Every time you put yourself out. For someone else's sake. But make sure it is unto his honour.

[5 : 46] And unto his praise. Not that you can get a pat on the back from anyone. For anything that you do. But it is unto his honour. Unto his praise. But to do good. And to communicate. For such sacrifice. To God. To God. To God.

To God. To God. To God. To God. To God. unto his honour, unto his praise. But to do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Hebrews 13, 16. Our object is to please him. As it says in Hebrews 13, 15. By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.

That is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name, giving thanks to him, giving honour to him, giving praise to him. Our sacrifices must be unto him, by him, because of him.

And it's continual. We don't switch off. We don't switch it on and off. There's sacrifice. Is your sacrifice spiritual? Abel's was. Abel's sacrifice was a spiritual thing.

[6 : 47] It was not a fleshly thing. It was not of his own working, of his own effort and sweat. It was in the substitute for him. And that's the basis that we come around the Lord's table to a commuting time, is that we come.

Because it's a work of God. It's the work of the blood. It's the work of the cross. It's a spiritual work. And 1 Peter 2, 5 says, Ye also as lively stones, as stones that are alive, living, vibrant, lively stones are built up.

A spiritual house. A spiritual house. This is not just some holy club. This is a spiritual house. This is a spiritual family. A holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

When you think of your life and your living, of your giving, of who you are, of yourself, let your sacrifice, let your praise, let your yielding, let your surrender be unto him.

A spiritual act, not a fleshy one. Otherwise it's vain, like Cain's was. Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God by virtue of the blood by Christ.

[8 : 01] And friends, to consider further, a religion without the blood is vain. Without the blood, a church is dead.

Without the blood, there is no remission, no forgiveness, no cleansing, no saving, no gospel, no salvation, no song.

The blood, the blood is center stage, it must be. The blood is the theme of heaven's song.

Revelation 5, 9. There's people here from many nations.

He has redeemed us by his blood. Out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation. And like the psalmist, we can say, I will freely sacrifice unto thee.

I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good. Psalm 54, verse 6. I'll ask the ushers to come at this time. And I've got Greg.

[9 : 12] Redan's got his hands full there. Christian Modeste. Thanks, brothers. Maybe someone could step in for Redan.

Could meet Joshua. Just at the right time. God's timing. You just walked in. I'll pass the bread and the cup.

Hold together and wait for one another if you can. Let's be prayerful as we share the timing.

It's a cup. Thank you. The fruit of the vine. And it represents his blood. It's just bread today. It's not transformed.

We're not reliving or reenacting the sacrifice. It's a once for all sacrifice, isn't it? And that's the sacrifice that counts the most. And above all is that ultimate sacrifice.

[10 : 11] That's the one that we want to think of today. Of his sacrifice. I think of your life and of how you live. Is your sacrifice more excellent?

So what you do, what you give, who you are, how you live, it's by faith. That's what made the difference for Abel, wasn't it? His sacrifice was more excellent because it was by faith.

Is your sacrifice more worthy? It's from a contrite heart. When we come to God, it's not by any reckoning of merit of our own. It's not by any worth, whileness of ourselves.

But it's because of the merit of the blood. And we can come in contrition, as the psalmist did, with a broken heart, with a broken spirit. And find his mending. Find his healing.

We come unto him, to his honour, to his praise. It's unto him that we give our sacrifice. And it's a spiritual act. It's acceptable by Christ our Lord.

[11 : 10] It's acceptable because it's spiritual. And whenever we live and go about our Christian lives, let's think of those things. Living by faith, living with a repentant heart, living to his honour, to his praise, and living a spiritual walk that is putting aside fleshly and carnal things that will take his place and truly freely sacrificing unto him.

And being that living sacrifice that is pleasing to him. It says that he took the cup and he took the bread.

And we're taking just a representation of that in our moment together just now. It's a holy time. It's a spiritual time. And we want God to do a spiritual work in every heart.

The only virtue we can claim is the virtue of the blood today. It's the virtue of who Christ is and what he has done. Of his work. Of that finished work. And it still speaks to us today.

Just like Abel's sacrifice speaks to us. It's not our work. It's not any doing of our own. It's all of his doing. It's all of his undertaking for us. And that's what we prayerfully want to be reminded of today.

[12 : 29] Amen.