

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## What Can Wash Away My Sin?

By Dennis Abernathy

Many people ridicule the concept of salvation by the blood of Christ. Robert Ingersoll launched numerous tirades against Christianity about what he ignorantly called “blood religion,” even referring to the Christian faith as a “slaughterhouse religion.” A favorite pastime of intellectuals today is ridiculing the idea of “blood atonement.” They tell us: “Your blood sacrifice theology is horrific. I could never believe in a God who would accomplish salvation through a cross!” But the Bible still says: “*without shedding of blood there is no remission*” (Heb. 9:22). This is the focal point of the gospel story of redemption. The crimson thread of blood runs throughout God’s entire revelation to man. We understand that Christ’s blood makes justification from sin possible (Rom. 5:9).

Robert Lowry’s hymn: “*Nothing but the Blood of Jesus,*” asks and answers the question of the title of this article. “What can wash away my sin?” Answer: “Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” How true it is, for Jesus said: “*For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matt. 26:28). Revelation 1:5 says: “*To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.*” The question is: “WHEN are we washed from our sins?” “WHEN do we receive the remission of our sins?” Acts 22:16 gives us the clear answer. Ananias told Saul of Tarsus to “*Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins.*” Acts 9:18 says: “*And he arose and was baptized.*”

While many correctly tell us that Christ’s blood washes away our sins, they fail to correctly tell us WHEN this occurs. Question: Would it be permissible to tell a person: “Arise and be baptized because your sins are already washed away?” Such would nullify Christ’s blood “*which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matt. 26:28). Think on these things. ■

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## A Holy Priesthood

By Joe R. Price

It is very possible that we do not think of ourselves as priests as often as we should. Perhaps this is due to our familiarity with the priesthoods we see in the churches of men – like the Catholic priests – perversions of the scripture-defined priesthood of Christians. We must not forget that the gospel describes Christians as “*priests*” who compose a “*kingdom*” (Rev. 5:10; 1:6). We are a “*holy*” and a “*royal*” priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). What an honor it is to be counted priests before God our Redeemer!

The essential work of a priest is to offer sacrifices and gifts unto God. For instance, the service of the Levitical priests, while for the benefit of Israel, was service given unto God (Exo. 28:1). Their daily service in the house of God brought the priests into God’s presence as it assisted the worshippers they served.

The sacrifices offered by the Levitical priests were acceptable before God when they were offered according to the Law (a study of Leviticus shows the exacting nature of offering sacrifices to God). In a similar manner, Christians are assured that our sacrifices, offered to God “*through Jesus Christ*”, are acceptable to Him (1 Pet. 2:5).

But you may be wondering, “What does all of this have to do with me today”? Much in every way! Unless you

are a priest who is serving God in His holy priesthood, the sacrifices and services you attempt to give Him are futile. On the other hand, as a priest you are in the extraordinary position of approaching the God of heaven and earth with sacrifices that please Him. How magnificent and humbling ought that to be!

Being a priest unto God ought to be extremely important to us. And, as priests we must know what sacrifices we ought to offer Him. Here is a brief review of some of the sacrifices Christians offer to God:

**1) Our bodies** (Rom. 12:1-2). We bring before God a body with which to serve, worship and obey Him. Our body is to be given to God and not to the indulgences of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).

**2) Ourselves** (2 Cor. 8:5). The faithful priest is devoted to his God and freely gives himself to the service of God. We must be priests who give ourselves to God; then our service will be received before Him.

**3) When we support gospel preaching, we are rendering priestly service before God** (Phil. 4:18). The Philippian church's support of Paul was a sweet smelling, acceptable sacrifice to God. So is ours as we have fellowship with others in spreading the gospel.

**4) The sacrifice of praise that confesses the good things God has done for us** (Heb. 13:15). Why would any priest be content to not assemble with his brethren to praise God's matchless name (Heb. 10:24-25)?

Being a priest has practical application to your life every day. As you walk by faith, every expression of service you offer to God and every time you obey His word becomes a *“spiritual sacrifice”* that God accepts (1 Pet. 2:5). Christian, you are a priest and your priesthood is holy (1 Pet. 2:5). Your life is an offering to God. Serve Him in all holiness. ■

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## Learning To Receive

David Gibson

Years ago, when we arrived here with our moving truck, what if we had told those who came to help, “Thanks, but you can all go on home. We’re going to unload it all ourselves”?

*“Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ”* (Gal. 6:2 NASB). If we are to bear one another’s burdens, that implies that there is a time to have our burdens borne.

Some advantages of receiving:

- 1) It gives others an opportunity to serve.
- 2) It keeps us humble.
- 3) It keeps us connected. It doesn’t pay to be too independent.
- 4) Someday we may have to depend on others for transportation, bathing, dressing, even feeding.

So, we might as well start getting some practice now on how to be on the receiving end.

If we ask God to help us with a heavy burden, it may well be that the way He answers our prayer is by sending us a brother or sister in Christ. We dare not turn down God’s blessing through others.

Salvation is not a do-it-yourself project. *“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly”* (Rom. 5:6). ■

Quote: *“Give generously, receive graciously”* (David Cambridge).

Service Times — Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM — Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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