
The Blood: A Beautiful Mess

"The life of the flesh is in the **blood**." (Leviticus 17:11)

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My sister, Lisa, introduced me to Jesus 26 years ago.
For 3 years leading up to that memorable day when I
surrendered my life to Him,
Lisa would take me to church with her (as often as I was willing).
I remember standing in her church services, unsaved
and surrounded by people **joyfully** and **loudly singing** songs about...
blood.

At one point, I pulled my sister aside and asked,

"Not to be rude, but... *what's with all the **blood**?*
It's kind of **gross** and **disturbing**."

*(Yes, before I knew Jesus, I...well, I didn't know Jesus.
Today, decades later, I not only 'get it' regarding His **blood**,
but I also get HIM-- and all His **blood**. Amen.)*

Anyway, in the past month,
the Holy Spirit called this topic to mind with a fresh insight.

First, the basics:

Every human is born with sin.
Sin **separates** us from God.
The wages of our sin-- what our sin earns-- is **death**.
Death is ugly.
It's messy, depressing, and humiliating.

Our loving, Heavenly Father sent His Son Jesus
to pay for the **death** we owe.

Uncomfortable? Yes.
Messy? Very.

And here comes the fresh insight:

For those of us who **absolutely and entirely love Jesus**,
His death on the cross is **beautiful**:
we know why He did it,
we've **tasted His love** for us,
and we **swoon in awe** of God.
*We understand that He spared us from eternal hell,
and we live every moment in thanks to Him.*

But let's face it:

Jesus' death on the cross, on a human level, was very **GROSS**.
It was terribly **messy**, to put it lightly.
It was **tragic** for His beloved ones to witness,
and He died the **shameful death** of a criminal.
*Yet He was completely **innocent**.*
He who **knew no sin**, became sin for us. (1 Corinthians 5)
He *became* sin!

**Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ,
as though God were pleading through us:
we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.
For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us,
that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Yes, it's **beautiful** that He'd **love** us so much to do this,
but the act of literally **becoming sin** can't get any uglier.

It's like, the only worthy payment for sin
would have to be as **vile** and **putrid** as death itself.
And that means a lot of **blood**.

Sin is **disgusting**.
In the same way that a punishment should fit its crime,
the payment for sin must match that same degree of
disgustingness.

On the cross, we see the ultimate **disgust** of sin:
sin creates a **bloody** mess.

Check this out:

For thousands of years, before the Father sent Jesus to do this for us,
His people were commanded to annually sacrifice a
pure, unblemished, innocent lamb to pay for their sins.

By God's **ingenious** design, the sacrificial lamb
was sufficient for temporary forgiveness.

The **blood** shed by that lamb--
the **blood** that was sprinkled on the altar in the temple--
left **stains**. *It sure didn't leave bleached spots.*

Today, the **blood** of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin,
doesn't leave **red stains**.

It leaves white. Clear. **All sin gone**.

*Human **blood** cannot leave clear spots.
Only God's **blood** can do that.*

CHALLENGE

Jesus-- God Himself-- came down to earth and got **messy** with us.

He shed His **blood**, and His death on the cross was **messy**.

But His **blood** doesn't leave a **MESS** behind to clean up.

His **blood** cleans up the **MESSES** we've left behind.

In fact, His **blood** cleanses us so much that it leaves
"bleached out" **stains**.

**"As far as the east is from the west,
so far has He removed our transgressions from us."**

Psalm 103:12

How glorious is it,
that God's **blood creates**
something that once was,
into **something that is no longer?**

Take a moment to contemplate how **disgusting** sin is,
and how **intense** the **blood** of Jesus is. And how much we **need** it.

Then, what may have seemed **gross** and **disturbing** before,

what the world may say is **strange** and **distasteful**,

will become the most **glorious**,

most **cherished**,

most **treasured** thing to you.

The beautiful blood of Jesus.

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