

## Articles and Sermons :: At the Price of God's Own Blood (Testimony of Count Zinzendorf) by John Piper

**At the Price of God's Own Blood (Testimony of Count Zinzendorf) by John Piper - posted by sermonindex (), on: 20**

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I have been moved deeply recently in reading about the life of Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Many of you know about him. Some don't. He was a German, born in 1700, who founded a community of earnest Christians called Herrnhut (the Lord's Watch). The community became part of the Moravian Church and was best known for its unparalleled missionary zeal.

**Zinzendorf's Commitment to the Blood of Jesus**

In 1727 the community started a round the clock prayer watch that lasted unbroken for 100 years. There were about 300 persons in the community at the beginning, and various ones covenanted to pray for one of the 24 hours in the day. In 1792, 65 years later, with the lamp of prayer still burning, the little community had sent out 300 missionaries to the unreached peoples of the West Indies, Greenland, Lapland, Turkey, and North America. They were utterly, and radically dedicated to making Jesus known.

I mention this not only because I dream of a church saturated with prayer and sold out utterly to Christ and ready to leave everything for his call. I mention it this morning because behind this community at Herrnhut there was an experience of deep humbling, and cleansing, and power based on the blood of Jesus.

After Zinzendorf had finished the university, he took a trip throughout Europe looking at some of the cultural high-spots. And something very unexpected happened. In the art museum at Dusseldorf he saw a painting by Domenico Feti entitled "Ecce Homo" (Behold the Man). It was a portrait of Christ with the crown of thorns pressed down on his head and blood running down his face.

Beneath the portrait were the words, "I have done this for you; what have you done for me?" All of his life Zinzendorf looked back to that encounter as utterly life-changing. As he stood there, as it were, watching his Savior suffer and bleed, he said to himself, "I have loved him for a long time, but I have never actually done anything for him. From now on I will do whatever he leads me to do."

For the rest of his life the blood of Jesus had a central place in the doctrine and devotion of Zinzendorf and his community at Herrnhut. And the story goes that when the first two young missionaries boarded the ship in Copenhagen to sail for the West Indies, perhaps never to return (20 out of the first 29 missionaries to St. Thomas and St. Croix died in those first years), they lifted their hands as if in sacred pledge and called out to their friends on shore, "May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering!"

**The Question Before Us Today**

My message is going to be short today because I want to save a good portion of time to worship the Lord and to pray together before we take the Lord's Supper. And the question I want you to ask yourself and ask the Lord as you prepare for the Lord's Table is this: "Has the Lord obtained the reward of his sufferings in your life?" When you think about the blood of Jesus running down his face from the thorns, and from his hands and feet and his pouring side, are you content with what he has of you? Has the purchase that he made been obtained freely from your hand. Or are you withholding any of the reward of his suffering?

**What God Purchased at the Price of His Own Blood**

To help us answer that very personal question, let me take a few minutes and meditate with you on the blood of Christ. What did God purchase at the price of his own blood?

Acts 20:28 says that he purchased the church. "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son."

So when Zinzendorf stood before the painting in Dusseldorf as a believing, faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, he could say on the authority of this text: "These wounds were meant to purchase me. These drops of blood were shed to obtain me." He could never get over it. He was not his own; he was bought with a price. Do you get up in the morning and say, "I am not my own today. I belong to another. I have been bought with a price. And I will live every moment of this day so that the Great Purchaser of my soul will receive the full reward of his suffering?"

Three Elements of the Reward of Christ's Suffering

And what would that mean in daily practice? Let me mention three things.

### 1. The Cleansing and Beautifying of His People

The reward of Christ's sufferings and the purchase of his blood is the cleansing and beautifying of his people, his bride.

Ephesians 5:25-27, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."

What then did he bleed to purchase? What was the reward of his suffering? Verse 26: to sanctify his church. The holiness of his people will be his reward. Verse 27: to present her to himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle. So his reward will be the beauty of his bride—she will be splendid and glorious at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

So I ask you again before we take this sacred cup, are you striving with all your might to render to Jesus the reward of his suffering—to offer up to him what he has purchased? Or to put it differently, Is your heart in tune with his heart? His heart that considered your holiness something worth dying for? Are you putting the same price on your holiness that he did? Or do you neglect what he died to purchase?

First then, the reward of Christ's sufferings is the holiness of his people. He suffered and bled and died to obtain a people and to make that people holy—to make his bride clean and beautiful. Your holiness—your spiritual beauty—is the reward of his sufferings and the purchase of his blood. And he will have it from all those who are truly his.

### 2. The Zeal of His People for Good Deeds

Second, the reward of Christ's sufferings is the zeal of his people for good deeds.

Titus 2:14 says, "He gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds."

He gave himself to make a people zealous for good deeds. He shed his blood to purchase your zeal for practical righteousness and mercy, for benevolence and kindness, for courage and compassion. Notice this carefully: he did not die merely to get you to stop doing some bad things. Nor did he die merely to get you to do some good things. He died to make you zealous for good deeds. He suffered and bled and died to give you a zeal for doing good.

Do you have a zeal for doing good to people? Eternal good through their salvation? And temporal good as a means to that end? Or are you denying Christ the reward of his sufferings? What does it mean that Christ gave himself in wracking pain to make you zealous for good deeds, if you are taking no steps to become zealous for good deeds?

The zeal of those early Moravian missionaries was unquenchable. And I think the reason is that they never forgot the blood of Jesus. They never stopped thinking: my life, my holiness, my zeal for the good of souls was purchased at the price of his blood. How can I not live for his honor with every breath I take! How can I not freely offer up to him what he has purchased with his blood?

Your zeal for the good of people is the reward of his suffering. Are you with him or against him in his suffering?

### 3. A Ransomed Church from Every People Group

Finally, the reward of Christ's sufferings is a ransomed church from every tribe and language and people and nation.

In Revelation 5:9 the Lamb of God is worshiped with these words, "Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom persons for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

By his blood he has ransomed persons from every people group in the world—every tribe, every language group, every culture, every ethnic cluster. The reward of his suffering is the ingathering of the elect from all the peoples of the world. In other words, the blood of Jesus was shed not just to purchase your holiness and your zeal for good deeds; but the holiness and the good deeds of all the worldwide church of God including those sheep that are not yet in the fold.

Does Your Heart Beat with Jesus' Heart?

So I ask again: does your heart beat with his heart this morning? Are you pursuing in your life the things he bled to obtain? When we come to the Lord's table in a few moments and with the cup and the bread proclaim his death, will you be able to say to him with a clear conscience, "There is nothing I want more in my life than what you bled to obtain; there is no reward in my life that I want more than the reward of your suffering?"

If you look at your life and come up wanting (as we all will), do not forget this: the reward of his suffering is also the forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7), and justification by faith (Romans 5:9), and reconciliation with God (Romans 5:10), and cleansing of conscience (Hebrews 9:14), and final victory over Satan (Revelation 12:11).

In the next few minutes let's do some real serious business with God and with his Son. There is confession enough for all of us. And some serious praying is needed about defects in our lives that reveal a terrible indifference to the price Jesus paid for our holiness and our zeal for good deeds and our passion for world evangelization.

Don't let go of God in this hour until you can say from the bottom of your heart, "Lord, Jesus, there is nothing I want more in my life than what you bled to obtain."

**Re: At the Price of God's Own Blood (Testimony of Count Zinzendorf) by John Piper - posted by tbsounde2 (), on: 2**

One of brother Piper's best :)