

For This Reason Alone

Explanation of the Picture

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The Sixth in a Series of Eight

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1. “JESUS” - These letters are red - blood red. The Bible teaches that *“the life of all flesh is in its blood”* (Lev 17:14). Concerning humanity, we are told, *“there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins”* (Eccl 7:20). Therefore, death has spread to every single person on the planet as *“the wages of sin is death”* (Ro 6:23). The problem we all have is that God requires blood if sin is to be paid for ... but only *innocent blood* has any power to pay for sin. The blood of the offender (us) has no power to cleanse wrongdoing - it is simply *required* for the wrongdoing! Ours is “dirty” blood and possesses no rectifying ability for anything. The Law Covenant featured the blood of animals as a symbol for the cleansing power that innocent blood can possess (bulls and goats are not morally accountable creatures before God, so this was “clean” blood), but the author of Hebrews, and spiritually discerning individuals knew *“it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”* (Heb 10:4). Animal blood cannot pay for human sin. Only *morally accountable*, “clean” blood can pay for the wrongdoings of other morally accountable creatures.

The Bible declares that God entered human history, under the Law, and lived in full obedience to it. He came here and practiced what He had preached. When Jesus was murdered, “clean” blood was shed. But, where no sin exists, death has no right to be there! Therefore cross presented a one time opportunity. God, the Father, took our sins and *transferred them there*. Jesus’s blood was “dirtied” as sin - our sin - was poured into it. The Father then crushed Him (Isa 53:5). Once our sins had the required payment of blood applied against them, *then justice was satisfied*. They can not be called in again for any further action *because what was required for them has been given*. I am now released, pardoned, forgiven, eternally safe ... and eternally indebted to Him.

So, the Red Letters of this drawing represent blood - but not just any blood. They represent the clean blood of Christ ... that became dirty when my sin was transferred to it. Nothing else can pay for sin - not water (baptism), not good deeds, not repentance from sins, not sorrow for sins, not confession of sins, not an eternity of suffering in Hell for sins. None of these things can **pay** for a single sin. If they could, Jesus would never have gone to the cross. If water could wash away our sins, Paul (and others) would have been called to go around and baptize everybody (1Cor 1:17) - but, no cross. If confession had the power to pay for our wrongs, then God would tell us to confess, confess, confess - but, no cross. If repentance from sin could rectify matters, He would tell us to do that - but, no cross. If we could “work off” sins by doing good deeds and obeying His moral standards (the Law), then Christ died needlessly (Gal 2:21). Or, if we could combine all these efforts, and thus have our sins wiped clean before Him, *then that is what God would tell the willing to do!* But the problem is this - none of these actions have within them *the power* needed to pay for a single sin. Even if we lived sin-free from now on, all our past failures would stand unaffected - part of a *“certificate of debt”* hostile to us (Col 2:14). The only thing perfect obedience would accomplish ... the rap sheet

would not become bigger! Fortunately, that blood is powerful enough to pay for **any** sin - every sin - all sins. Even blaspheming the Holy Spirit is not a more powerful sin than the blood of Jesus. God is just unwilling to apply the blood to that one (Mt 12:31).

Incidentally, if deep inside of you, you think you have committed some sin that is more powerful than His blood - that is a great affront to Him. *“Jesus, your blood is not good enough for this one!”* That thinking itself is a greater offense than whatever sin you committed.

Some of Christianity’s detractors call Christianity, *“a butcher shop religion.”* Well, they are correct. When the Temple was in operation, blood was everywhere. God is serious about this sin matter. In fact, you may now realize that He is pro-capital punishment. The reason death hangs over your head, and can visit you at any moment, is because **God** has levied that penalty on you because of your sin. You are living on death row - and God has placed you there. It is amazing how so many religious people declare God is against capital punishment when they are under it - by God’s own action - at the same moment they declare God is against it! What an astounding example of blindness.

2. The Table - This represents the base upon which Jesus built His life. He built upon the planks of His relationship with the Father and the planks of the Scriptures. These were the foundations of His life and supported His life.

3. The Candlestick - Jesus grew up *“as a root out of parched ground”* (Isa 53:2). He grew straight and strong. The brass of this candlestick represents His strength and uprightness.

4. The Candle - This represents His earthly ministry. He was (and is) *“the light of the world”* (Jn 8:12). He is the One who *“enlightens every man”* (Jn 1:9). May the Light of the Christ shine on us and in us. Just as this candle consumes itself, so also, zeal for His Father’s house *“consumed Him”* (Jn 2:17). The candle is red because any true ministry costs a person his/her life’s energies, materials, thoughts, and plans. Paul, in imitation of Jesus, endured *“all things for the sake of the elect”* (2Tm 2:10).

5. The 30 Pieces of Silver - This was the betrayer’s valuing of the Christ. Today, there are many who would gladly deliver up Christ to His enemies for free! In fact, there are many who would **pay** to get rid of Him. Many would gladly go to those murderous priests and say, *“I will give you 30 pieces of silver if you will but come and rid me of this man. We do not want Him ruling over us! Who is the Almighty that we should listen to Him? Away with Him!”*

Before moving on, let’s look at what Jesus said about His betrayer. He said it would have been better if Judas had *“never been born”* (Mt 26:24)! What a horrible assessment of one’s life! Nothing could be worse! What is He going to say about your life? All the praises, accolades, and honors man can pile upon you *will mean nothing* if this is God’s assessment of your life.

6. The Grapes

a) To get wine, grapes must be crushed. So also, to make salvation possible for us, Jesus

had to be crushed - and that by the Father. The hands of murderous men were only *part* of the sufferings of the cross. For while He was on that cross, He “*bore our sins in His body.*” The Father “*was pleased to crush Him*” as a guilt offering for us. Only God know what this means (Isa 53:10,11 and 1Pet 2:24).

b) Wine is also a symbol of joy. For us to experience the joy of God, our flesh (carnal mindset, attitudes and deeds) must be put to death. Our way must be crushed so that He might live in us, in His fulness. Father, we need grace, powerful grace, granted in mercy (Ro 8:13).

7. The Bread - An aggressive pilgrim/puritan of yesteryear (Adam Clarke) made a comment to this effect (not directly quoted): *‘We break the bread in communion just as the Lord commanded. We are so dull in our spiritual senses that we need visible reminders to help us understand spiritual truth. Jesus was broken for us; so, to break the bread is a necessary help to remind our dull hearts and minds of His great love and sacrifice for us.’*

8. The Cup - This represents the new covenant in His blood. He made a covenant with us to forgive us, cleanse us, resurrect us with immortal bodies, grant us eternal life, give us authority and joys inexpressible in His eternal kingdom (plus myriads of other promises); and He has sealed those agreements in His own blood. He means business in this commitment toward us. Jesus said, *“If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to Me and let him keep drinking”* (Jn 7:37). God grant us grace, grace, grace to drink from Jesus - all of Him and His promises. If His death was powerful enough to reconcile us to God, what do you think He can now do for us by His life (Ro 5:10)?

9. The Wood Piece - Well, this is just an old piece of wood that I found. It is not pretty at all, yet, as I have gazed upon it, it now appears beautiful. Jesus had no *“appearance that we should be attracted to Him ... no stately form or majesty,”* no commanding, striking appearance (Isa 53:23). In fact, I am quite sure His enemies even hated His looks. *“This homely, common carpenter ‘the Messiah?’ Away with Him! It’s an accursed crowd who heralds Him!”* But to those who listened to Him, and gazed upon Him, He became precious, priceless – beautiful. Man looks at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart (1Sam 16:7). Isn’t it wonderful to know that God will not judge us according to our looks (uncontrollables) but according to our deeds and behavior (controllables)? That puts us all on equal ground.

Also, as I look at this piece of wood, I see a weather-beaten, tough, yet perishable, earthen vessel. Jesus lived in winds of adversity and was *“tempted in all points,”* as we are, yet He *“never sinned”* (Heb 4:15). He stood firm. He was a man of labor (carpenter), and in His last three and one-half years, He had *“nowhere to lay His head”* (Lk 9:53). He had no fat; only leanness (Ps 109:24). He carried our griefs and sorrows and was acquainted with grief (Isa 53:3). He was battle-scarred. He was an earthen vessel - but that has now been swallowed up by immortality; and because He lives, so also shall we. We are now anxiously awaiting *“the redemption of our body”* (Ro 8:23). May we come through this whirlwind as tough, weather-beaten, battle-scarred old saints - victorious, holy, and wholly devoted to Him as a memorial to His name, for His renown - a memorial that will never be cut off (Isa 55:13).

10. Title: Written in Green - Through His death, life is made available. Eternal life as well as abundant life (Jn 17:3 and Jn 10:10).

11. The Shadow Under the Candlestick - If you notice, this shadow falls on the grapes, bread, candlestick, table, wood piece, and silver coins. God has revealed so much to us through His Word and by His Spirit. Yet, we only know in part - and look in a mirror but dimly. All our concentration on the things of God enable us, at best, to just *scratch the surface* of the depths of our Creator. Our best eyesight into God's revelation yields bits and pieces to our understanding of ... Jesus' relationship to His Father and the fulfillment of prophecy in Scripture (the planks), or ... His being broken and crushed for us (bread, grapes, and wine), or ... His incarnation and sinlessness (the candlestick), or ... His trials, sufferings, and lifestyle (the wood piece), or ... the behavior of men (Judas' silver). However, we know God will take away *all* the shadows in our understanding when we enter His presence. For then we "*will know in full,*" just as we "*have been fully known*" (1Cor 13:12).

12. Black Background - Any human endeavor or accomplishment, when compared to the work of the cross ... is totally eclipsed. Compared to the sacrifice of the Son of God, every other subject is complete blackness (vile) or nothingness (empty and unimportant). Charles Spurgeon wrote, "*O sinners, flee ye to the sacrifice of Calvary and there put your whole confidence and trust; for He who died for men is the Lord Jehovah.*" Amen.

You will also notice that this entire scene of redemption is suspended in midair. There are no supports under the table. This represents the fact that salvation has originated in God, was performed by God, and is applied to lives by God - apart from any props or helps. He may grant us the opportunity to be used by Him in this process, but all of us who are so used know that it is God who makes our labor effective. "*Salvation is from the Lord*" (Jon 2:9). Bless God for the fruitfulness of His works.

The great myst'ries of the faith, help us hold.
Forbid we exchange them for all the world's gold.
Help us retain these great truths
tho we get battered and bruised
No other message is worth being told.

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Here's the song: https://youtu.be/B2_S2c-jelY

Here's the commentary/sermonette on the song: <https://youtu.be/W-8UyWei5JQ>

Here's Video Explanation of the Drawing: <https://youtu.be/mO-rclIAbMs>