

A Better Hope Series: 'Better Blood'

Note: You may find the Message Podcasts & Group Guides in this series at actschurchlakeway.com. This may also be found on the ACTS Lakeway smartphone app, available for download in the app store for your phone or tablet.

Group Connection Point

What do you know about your bloodline? Take two minutes and share highlights of your family's origins or ancestry.

Group Discussion Questions for 'A Better Hope'

1. In Scripture, we know a great deal about the bloodline of Jesus. Although Jesus was, and is, the Son of God, he also had a human ancestry. Read Luke 3:21-23, and then skim the following verses through the end of the chapter to note highlights of His blood line. What familiar names jump out?
2. Jesus was defined by his human ancestry, and yet He also transcends it. For instance, the Scriptures tell us that Jesus is the 'Son of David,' and yet David also recognizes Jesus as 'Lord.' In fact, the author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus is superior to Moses, to Melchizedek, to the high priests, and even to the angels! Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Discuss: What comfort do you gain from these words, as you think about the superior role of Jesus your Great High Priest?

Read Hebrews 8:11-22

3. What strikes you about the pattern of the Old Testament, in which blood was continually used to cleanse those who followed the LORD? Why was the shedding of blood so important in the 'Old Covenant'? (don't miss Hebrews 8:21-22).
4. If that was the old way, what is the new way of being cleansed from sin? (don't miss Hebrews 8:14-15). In what ways have you personally experienced the relief that comes from being cleansed by the blood of Jesus?
5. Many hymns and contemporary Christian songs focus on the blood of Jesus. Look, for instance, at the lyrics to 'Nothing But the Blood of Jesus.' Do these lyrics strike you as gross? Morbid? Hopeful? Reassuring? Or have you become numb to the actual meaning of the words? Read and discuss (or maybe even sing!):

*What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

*O precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow
No other fount I know
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

Nothing can for sin atone

*Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Naught of good that I have done
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

*This is all my hope and peace
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
This is all my righteousness
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

Read Hebrews 10:24-28. Then discuss the following:

6. In this series, we are focusing on the theme of 'hope.' What hope do you find, knowing that Jesus spilled His blood as a final and perfect sacrifice for YOU? What is the underlying promise that this conveys?
7. Promises are built upon future realities. Meanwhile, while we wait for the promise to be revealed, we HOPE. What are the temptations and even dangers that can present themselves during a time when we hope for something that has been promised? How do you rank yourself (1-10) at waiting patiently for a promise to be fulfilled?
8. The following quote was shared this past weekend. Read it carefully and then discuss. Share the challenges you face in this, but also encourage one another with the 'Better Hope' that you find in the blood of Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior!

Our need to persevere comes with an implicit understanding that there will be times when it seems God is moving far too slow in keeping His promises. When God moves slower than we'd like, there is a vacuum created. This is the vacuum in which our greater temptations will come. If God doesn't act on our timetables, will we act apart from Him? Will we settle for less than what He desires for us? Will we conclude He is indifferent to our needs and seek another way of fulfilling the longings of our hearts?

Erwin McManus: [Uprising](#)

Individual Journaling and Reflection Questions for 'A Better Hope'

- Journal on the lyrics of a song that focuses on the precious blood of Jesus. You may use the song listed above or search for the lyrics of a different song (such as, 'There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood'). As you write, let the meaning of the words sink in deeply. Ask God to help you recognize what it cost Jesus to ransom you from your sins, from death, and from the power of the devil! Thank God for His indescribable gift!
- Tell God that you trust His intention for you. Tell God you believe in his promises. Tell God you are willing to wait upon his timing. Tell him you confess the times when you have moved to act apart from Him. Tell God...