

## **Hebrews 9:15-22**

*Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. 16 For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. 17 For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. 18 Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. 19 For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. 22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

Your relationship with God need not be based upon a will and a prayer, like that of so many people trapped in unbelief or false religion. Your relationship with God is not even dependent upon human decision or the impetus of your own will. No, your relationship with God is based upon a covenant, an insoluble promise from the Father in heaven signed and sealed with the Son's holy blood, and it is based upon His will, established by His death, founded in love, resolved for your salvation.

The covenant of the law could not give hope, not because God's commandments were defective, but because men and women could not keep them perfectly, and they demanded perfection. A new covenant was necessary, and so the perfect Lamb of God was conceived and born to take your place, not only on the cross, but under the law throughout His life, living in perfect obedience to His Father. We know how hard such obedience can be. Even as redeemed children of God, we struggle against the flesh. While we long to serve our God, our old Adam hangs around our neck, digging in his heels, grating at the thought of serving the will of another, especially the will of God. And the obstacles of life make it only harder. Frustration only weakens our determination and business robs us of much needed time and preparation in prayer and meditation upon God's Word.

Thank God for our Mediator. No obstacle kept Him from keeping the Father's words. No business distracted Him from prayer and meditation. And nothing swerved Him from the task set before Him by divine mercy and providence: our redemption. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins, and so He, innocent, pure, undefiled, shed His blood to make us like Him, first through His declaration here and now, and then entirely and without the flesh in heaven. We are being renewed in His image. And we are His family with an inheritance to eagerly await. Yes, we are adopted, but we are His brothers and sisters by blood: blood shed on the cross and offered to us in the Sacrament. Take time to remember that today. Give thanks for that, and when Satan comes accusing or alluring, or frustration mounts and the business never seems done, take heart in knowing that the covenant is as sure as the blood that sealed it, that no earthly trial can rob you of your eternal treasure, and that everything necessary for your salvation is already done and accomplished. Amen.