
Take time and read the following article to help prepare your hearts & minds for communion on July 12, 2026:

Brought Near by His Blood

By Anthony J. Carter

Men are prone to forget those things that women seem to hold most dear. Many husbands even have forgotten the date of an anniversary or birthday. Most of them have experienced the wrath of their wives' glance when in polite company they failed to recall – with joy – an important day or date. Yet while I have been the recipient of that unfortunate stare, I would contend that forgetfulness is a malady that is no respecter of gender or person. It befalls us all. God knows this and thus graciously calls on us time and time again to remember.

One of the things we are told to remember is where we were before Christ redeemed us. The Bible describes our condition as being citizens of a distant, hostile, Christless country. Yet in Christ, indeed, through His Blood, we who were afar off have been brought near to God.

We rejoin our series on the blood of Christ with the truth that we have been brought near by His blood. The apostle Paul couches

this truth in an appeal to us to remember our former lives. He writes in Ephesians 2:12-13: *Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

Much of the Christian life could be bettered and more appreciated with a jogging or shaking of our memory. In fact, much of what we faithfully pursue is all but those things that we are in need of remembering. Faithful preaching reminds people of the glory of the resurrected Christ (2 Tim. 2:8). The songs we sing remind us of God's amazing grace and mercy. Similarly, the Lord's Table is a reminder that we are in covenant with Him and that He promises to receive us one day (1 Cor. 11:24-26).

Yet it would appear that nothing is more important to remember than our former lives and how we who were not beloved became beloved of God (Rom. 9:25) through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Like the Ephesians, we are called to remember where we were when the blood of Christ came to us.

We were once "separated from Christ." In

chapter 1 of Ephesians, Paul lays out all the spiritual blessings that belong to those who are “in Christ.” None of these are the fortune of those who are separated from Christ. Have we forgotten that such we were?

We were once “alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise.” We flew the flag of an enemy territory. We wore the colors of a defiant and rebellious people. As those who were outside of Christ, we had no portion in His inheritance. Though we may have had friends in this world, the friendship of God was beyond our reach. We were strangers to the true God and outsiders even while often living next door to God’s covenant people. Have we forgotten that such we were?

We were once “without hope and without God in this world.” Even though we may have had a desire for a better life now and a blissful eternal existence, there was no real hope of confident expectation of one. Outside of Christ, hope is little more than wishful thinking. It has no grounds or assurance. It is essentially an atheistic and even godless condition. Have we forgotten that such we were?

We were once “afar off.” This is the summation of our existence outside of Christ. God was not near to us. Spiritually, we lived in a

far country, far away from God. The idea here is that God did not know us. There was no immediate relationship whereby we could call upon Him because we knew Him and He knew us. Have we forgotten that such we were?

The fact that these were our realities should not be lost on us, nor should we forget. The Bible reminds us that though this was our condition, now we have a new reality – accomplished by the blood of Christ.

The blood of Christ gives us a home. The blood of Christ becomes the flag and color under which we stand. The blood of Christ takes those who were once strangers and makes them family. As the Bible says, we are no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (Eph. 2:19).

Let us remember that the blood of Christ has reconciled us to God and that His shed blood has ended the hostility and transformed us from enemies to friends. Let us remember to pray as the songwriter: “Lest I forget Gethsemane. Lest I forget thine agony. Lest I forget they love for me. Lead me to Calvary.”

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