

## Christ's Sacrifice Once for All

The Epistle for the Fourth Sunday in Advent is Hebrews 10:5-10. It speaks of the OT sacrifices which needed to be constantly repeated and the one time sacrifice of Jesus.

In the OT a pair of kid goats, without blemish were used, for sin offerings. One goat (scapegoat) had the priest lay his hands on the its head. Then this goat was released into the wilderness, taking with it all sins and impurities. The other goat was sacrificed for the sins of the people. All of this pointed ahead to the coming Savior promised in the Garden of Eden. Only through faith in Christ were these sacrifices pleasing to God.

The OT sacrifice involved three elements. There had to be a priest who offered the sacrifice. Jesus, as priest, offered himself. There had to be a goat or lamb which was without blemish or defect. Jesus was the perfect Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world. There had to be blood shed. Jesus' blood was shed on the cross. Jesus did it all and has taken away our sins forever and has gained heaven for us.

Verse 10 says: *we have been sanctified*. In the wide sense the Greek word includes the entire process of God's grace whereby spiritually dead people, through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Word and Sacrament, are reborn to spiritual life and made perfect in life eternal. In the narrower sense, sanctification is the spiritual growth, worked by God the Holy Spirit, that follows after a person has come to faith in Christ.

As baptized children of God we have been saved and made pure. As we remember our baptism we are reminded of what has been done for us and how the Holy Spirit keeps on doing it for us every moment of our lives.

Prayer: Merciful God, for Jesus' sake forgive my sins. Grant me the Holy Spirit, that I may fulfill your will. Amen. (TLSB)