

Time to Rip Off the Bandage

610 Words

This post is adapted from Kathy Howard's new devotional "Deep-Rooted: Growing through the Gospel of Mark."

My grandkids love bandages. It seems that every time they come to our house somebody *needs* one. So, I keep "kid" ones on hand. Bright colors. Their favorite characters. Most of the time, their little scrapes and bumps really don't need a bandage. But it makes them feel better for a little while. Bandages don't heal. They merely cover the wound until healing can take place.

The Old Covenant was a bandage. Sin was the gaping wound. The law, the tabernacle, the sacrificial system, none of it could bring real healing. It was all simply a place holder, waiting for God's perfect timing to bring true and complete healing for sin. Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross was the once-for-all, eternal cure.

When Jesus took His last breath on the cross, something significant happened. The curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. This ornate, linen curtain blocked the way into the Holy of Holies. That innermost sanctum of the temple that housed the Ark of the Covenant, the very symbol of God's presence with His people. No one could enter the Holy of Holies into the presence of God except the high priest; and he could only enter once a year on the Day of Atonement.

On this day, the high priest first sacrificed a bull on the altar and sprinkled its blood in the Holy of Holies to atone for his own sins. Then, he sacrificed a goat and took its blood into the Holy of Holies, into the presence of God, to atone for the sins of the people. These ceremonies had to be repeated again and again. Year after year. Because the blood of bulls and goats could not cleanse sin or purify the conscience of the people (Hebrews 9:13-14).

These sacrifices were just a bandage. They simply covered our wound of sin. Jesus was God's plan of salvation all along. Before creation (1 Peter 1:19-20) God saw our need for a Savior and determined that His Son would pay the price. The blood of bulls and goats is not sufficient. Only the blood of the unblemished Lamb of God can provide eternal forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:14).

When our sinless high priest died, He carried His perfect cleansing blood into the presence of God to atone for our sins. When His body was broken on the cross, the barrier between sinful man and our holy God was torn in two. To dramatically mark this victory, God ripped the veil that blocked the way into His presence.

And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Mark 15:37-38, ESV

In his book "The Pursuit of God," A.W. Tozer reflected on the temple veil. "Ransomed men need no longer pause in fear to enter the Holy of Holies. God wills that we should push on into His presence and live our whole life there. This is to be known to us in conscious experience. It is more than a doctrine to be held; it is a life to be enjoyed every moment of every day."

God invites those who trust in Christ's sacrifice for salvation to enter the Holy of Holies. To step through the curtain of Christ's precious body and draw close to our holy God (Hebrews 10:19-22). Won't you come?

Have you taken the privilege of entering God's presence too lightly? If so, repent and consider the broken body of Christ.

Father, thank you for the incredible privilege of coming into Your presence. Jesus' suffering and death was the price of admission. In His name, amen.

Kathy Howard

A former "cultural Christian," Kathy Howard now has a passion for God's Word that's contagious. With more than 30 years of experience, Kathy has taught in dozens of states, internationally, and in a wide range of venues including multi-church conferences and large online events. She has a Masters of Christian Education from the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary. Kathy is the author of 10 books, including the new "meaty" devotional *Deep-Rooted: Growing through the Gospel of Mark*. She writes for multiple online magazines and devotional sites. Kathy and her husband live in the Dallas/Ft Worth area near family. They have three married children, five grandchildren, and two accidental dogs. Kathy provides free discipleship resources and blogs regularly at www.KathyHoward.org. She also connects with women at [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Instagram](#).