Is He a Savior or a Stumbling Block?

1 Peter 2:4–10

In the world of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, what the Lamb has done stands as one of the most profound and challenging actions the world has ever witnessed. We exist in a reality dominated by complete transactionalism, where the concept of a genuine gift is rarely understood without some hidden agenda lurking in the background. Yet this transactional nature is entirely absent from the Lamb of God's sacrifice.

The Lamb's holiness is not merely proven through His avoidance of sin, but rather through the transformative way He gives Himself completely for the benefit of those who harmed Him—without conditions, without seeking revenge, and without protecting Himself from pain. This selfless giving is what distinguishes Him as utterly unlike us in our human nature.

The Lamb's self-giving contains no hidden agenda or expectation of reciprocation. Unlike human giving, His sacrifice is not a strategic maneuver to earn loyalty, secure repayment, or manipulate affection from others. Behind His sacrifice lies no concealed demand or expectation. He does not operate on the principle of giving in order to receive something in return. Instead, He offers Himself fully and completely for the benefit of those who wounded Him, not as a transaction with expected returns, but as the purest expression of divine love.

This unconditional giving sets Him fundamentally apart from all others. His holiness manifests not through dominating power, but through love that withholds nothing and holds nothing in reserve—even when that love is openly rejected. He faces death with hope rather than force. He gives without condition, not to compel others to return something to Him, but to make such a return genuinely possible through freedom.

This radical approach to giving separates divine self-giving from all human forms of giving, which typically remain tethered, whether consciously or unconsciously, to some form of expected return: respect, love, gratitude, recognition, or reward. The Lamb, however, gives Himself fully for those who reject Him, betray Him, strike Him, and abandon Him—and He does this not to induce guilt or demand repayment, but because sacrificial love forms the

essence of His being. This transcends mere goodness or conventional love; this is the very definition of holiness.

Holiness (qadosh) as embodied by the Lamb represents the pure, undiluted willingness to do good without demanding anything in return. This love does not protect itself, does not posture for advantage, and feels no compulsion to win or dominate. It simply gives, even when nothing comes back in response. This represents not just moral purity, but moral singularity in purpose. The Lamb exists in perfect alignment across the heart, action, and motive. Within Him, there is no manipulation, no angle for personal advantage, no calculation of self-benefit—only **steadfast love (ḥesed)** and **covenant faithfulness (berith)** extended even toward His enemies. This is precisely why His wounds do not diminish His holiness—instead, they provide tangible evidence that His holiness exists not merely in theory but in embodied reality.

We often describe holiness with inadequate phrases like *"set apart"* or *"other,"* but these terms fail to communicate the whole reality. To express it more clearly: the Lamb's way of being is so radically different that it has never been naturally imagined, conceived, or practiced through human power alone. While humanity can understand generosity and may even admire self-sacrifice—such as soldiers laying down their lives in war or parents enduring hardship for their children—these noble acts typically come with implicit conditions: loyalty, belonging, shared identity, or at minimum, the expectation of honor or remembrance in return.

The Lamb, however, follows an entirely different path. He dies for those who abandoned Him in His hour of need. He is slaughtered by the very ones He came to save. Even as they mock and ridicule Him, He offers no resistance. He does not retaliate against His tormentors. He pronounces no curses upon them. He makes no demands for payback or justice. Instead, with profound compassion, He says, *"Father, forgive them."* This sacrifice emerges not from obligation, tribal duty, or moral performance, but from self-giving love offered without demand, without retaliation, and without any guarantee of return. This represents a form of holiness the world has never witnessed apart from Him.

The Lamb stands holy not despite His wounds, but precisely because these wounds demonstrate the absolute purity of His love. They do not serve as evidence of defeat or failure, but rather as proof that His giving contains no shadow of self-interest. His sacrifice involves no control, no retaliation, and no self-promotion, only faithful, covenantal, steadfast love. This is what **qadosh** (holiness), **ḥesed** (steadfast love), and **berith** (covenant faithfulness) look like when embodied in the flesh. This is the Lamb who gave everything for a rebellious humanity. He continues to invite us, call to us, and

hope that we will repent, surrender our self-interest, and accept His invitation to experience this transformative love.

Blessings,

Pastor Gool