



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The blood of Christ: Sacrificial death or moral authority?

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Abstract

The phrase *blood of Christ* has traditionally been interpreted as and used interchangeably with Christ’s sacrificial death. As such, Jesus’ death is seen to be more crucial to salvation than his incarnation and resurrection. The blood of Christ language in the New Testament books of Hebrews and Romans echoes Old Testament cultic atonement language. Given recent and ample exegetical biblical scholarship that suggests blood of Christ language might refer to Christ’s incarnational, resurrected life, we should explore the resulting soteriological implications. What salvific significance is there to the cross if Jesus Christ entered the Most Holy Place with his lifeblood flowing in his veins as David Moffitt asserts? I propose that the cross reveals God’s legal and moral authority to forgive sin without minimising the law.

Keywords: atonement; blood of Christ; forgiveness; moral authority; resurrection

Society has imbued blood with power. Eugene Rogers points out in his book, *Blood Theology, Seeing Red in Body and God-Talk*, that ‘part of blood’s power is to represent opposites: life and death, health and disease, kin and alien, treasure and waste.’¹ So too, the blood of Christ has been interpreted as both life and death. Theologian T. F. Torrance interpreted blood as Jesus’ sacrificial death, as in *life for life*,² while Kathryn Tanner understood the blood as the sanctifying life of Christ whose assumption of humanity sanctifies the whole of human life, including human death.³

Blood as life

Recent biblical exegetists make the case that blood in the ancient Jewish cultic service refers to ‘life’ rather than sacrificial death (Lev 17:11). David Downs and Benjamin Lappenga write that ‘a reference to “blood” in connection with sacrifice connotes life rather than death.’⁴

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¹Eugene F. Rogers, Jr., *Blood Theology: Seeing Red in Body- and God-Talk* (Cambridge, UK: CUP, 2021).

²Thomas F. Torrance, *Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ*, ed. Robert Walker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009).

³Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (Cambridge, UK: CUP, 2010).

⁴David Downs and Benjamin Lappenga, *The Faithfulness of the Risen Christ: Pistis and the Exalted Lord in the Pauline Letters* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019).

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Additionally, William Gilders asserts that blood should be understood to mean life, especially in the atonement process.⁵ David Moffitt writes, ‘the Levitical system, blood offering does not have the death of the victim at its conceptual core. Rather, the blood/life is offered as a means of redeeming and purifying mortality. The goal of such offering is the peaceful dwelling of God with his people in close proximity.’⁶

Jonathan Klawans argues that Paul used cultic language and metaphors to explain the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: ‘these metaphors are borrowing from sacrifice. Sacrificial metaphors operate on the assumption of the efficacy and meaning of sacrificial rituals and hope to appropriate some of that meaning and apply it to something else’.⁷ Paul seems to specifically use the images and language of sacrifice, including *suffering, death, life* and *blood*, as shorthand for theological themes. ‘Paul employs cultic language – speaking of the temple, of sacrifices, of sacred fragrances and libations – in the service of describing the significance of his own experience and work’.⁸ Paul does not seem to use those words interchangeably but rather connects them to different aspects of the cultic service. Furthermore, in Paul’s metaphorical use of the sacrificial imagery and ‘descriptions of sacrificial worship, we find that Paul affirms many of the fundamental theological tenets upon which ancient Jewish sacrificial worship is based’.⁹ Downs and Lappenga assert, ‘While there is no question that Jesus’ death on the cross plays a vital role in Paul’s understanding of the gospel, our argument is that Paul’s inclusion of the phrase *διὰ τοῦ πίστεως* strongly suggests that in Romans 3:25 “blood” represents resurrection life, not death’.¹⁰ It is essential, therefore, to clarify that the New Testament blood imagery is taken deliberately and specifically from the accounts of sacrificial service in the Hebrew Bible. At the same time, it is equally important to recognise that these writers used sacrificial language and images as metaphors and allusions for different aspects of the sacrificial service rather than to provide a point-by-point correlation between Levitical sacrifice and Jesus’ death. It is reasonable to conclude that Paul and other New Testament authors had this understanding of blood in mind: they used the phrase *blood of Christ* in the cultic sense as the blood-as-life that was presented, daubed or sprinkled on the mercy seat before the throne of God.¹¹ It is likely that Paul uses the imagery of Christ’s blood to echo the cultic Day of Atonement language, which, in turn, reflects the ancient Jewish concept of blood as life on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies.¹²

Resurrected life

David Moffitt argues for a third way to understand blood as life. In his book *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Moffitt argues that the goal of the book of Hebrews is to justify why the human Jesus Christ is sitting on the throne of

⁵Williams Gilders, *Blood Ritual in the Hebrews Bible: Meaning and Power* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004).

⁶David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2011), p. 278.

⁷Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (New York, NY: OUP, 2006), p. 220.

⁸Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, p. 220.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Downs and Lappenga, *Faithfulness of the Risen Christ*, p. 119.

¹¹Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, pp. 219–20.

¹²Downs and Lappenga, *Faithfulness of the Risen Christ*, p. 129.

the transcendent God. Moffitt claims that according to Hebrews, Christ became the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek due to his ‘indestructible life’.¹³ Thus, it is *after* Christ’s death that he becomes the High Priest, when by virtue of his own resurrected, indestructible human life, Christ enters the Holy of Holies and presents himself the living High Priest before the mercy seat or throne of God. Moffitt thus suggests the life of the resurrected human Jesus Christ is the mechanism of atonement, and the mercy seat is the place of atonement. The mechanism in the sanctuary service was that God forgave when the High Priest sprinkled blood as the representation of life on the mercy seat (Lev 16:15). As Moffitt concludes, ‘It is not ultimately Jesus’ death that is his sacrifice, but his life. Jesus’ living presence in heaven, predicated on the resurrection and ascension of his human body, was the sacrifice he offered to God in the heavenly holy of holies’.¹⁴ Downs and Lappenga concur: ‘While there is no question that Jesus’ death on the cross plays a vital role in Paul’s understanding of the gospel, our argument is “blood” represents resurrection life, not death’.¹⁵

If we use Moffitt’s understanding of blood as the resurrected life of Christ and transfer the mechanism of atonement from the death of Christ on the cross to the resurrected life of Christ before the mercy seat, it challenges traditional soteriology so that Jesus’ sacrificial death seems no longer central to atonement.¹⁶ The question then becomes, ‘whether Christ’s death is, in itself, sacrificially atoning’.¹⁷ Tradition holds that Jesus’ death on the cross is salvific, and the cross remains central to the work of Christ. Currently, many believe that Jesus’ death *pays the penalty, meets satisfaction, restores God’s honor or defeats the devil*. Therefore, it behooves us to take seriously Khaled Anatolios’ admonition that ‘the scripture gives ample testimony that Christ’s suffering and death are directly efficacious for our salvation. This testimony is normative, and to deny it is to deny salvation itself’.¹⁸ Thus, Christ’s death needs to be taken seriously as salvific in a way that is consistent with scripture and tradition, even if his death is not considered to be the mechanism of atonement.

In other words, if we use Moffitt’s interpretation of resurrected life before the heavenly throne as the mechanism of atonement, what becomes of the cross? This essay will provide a preliminary framework in which to consider how the *wrongful* suffering and death of Jesus revealed his moral authority to freely forgive sin justly and mercifully apart from the law without moral injury to God or his law. The burden is to show that this work of Jesus affirms the righteousness or justice of God apart from the law (Rom 3:21–26). The salvific significance of the cross lies in the fact that when the incarnate Jesus suffered a *wrongful* and *unjust* death, he revealed his moral authority to perform salvific actions that creates a new reality.¹⁹ In other words, the cross secured the moral authority for Jesus’ atonement work before the heavenly throne. I propose that Jesus Christ’s wrongful suffering and death on the cross had at least three crucial

¹³Moffitt, *Atonement*, p. 148.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹⁵Downs and Lappenga, *Faithfulness of the Risen Christ*, p. 119.

¹⁶Michael Kibbe, ‘It is Finished? When Did It Start? Hebrews, Priesthood, and Atonement in Biblical, Systematic, and Historical Perspective’, *The Journal of Theological Studies* NS. 65 (2014), pp. 25–61.

¹⁷Kibbe, ‘It is Finished?’, p. 46.

¹⁸Khaled Anatolios, *Deification through the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2020), p. 27.

¹⁹Joanne Marie Terrell, *Power in the Blood: The Cross in the African American Experience* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), p. 142.

consequences: firstly, Jesus was victorious over sin, evil and death;²⁰ secondly, by remaining incarnate, Jesus remained committed to humanity in perpetuity;²¹ and finally, Jesus revealed his moral authority to forgive apart from the law. By remaining faithful to God's kingdom principles through his wrongful and unjust suffering and death, Jesus' witness and work on the cross become efficacious for our salvation. Jesus' victory over sin, evil and death and his wrongful and unjust suffering and death secured his moral authority to forgive apart from the law, which enabled Jesus to provide atonement before God's heavenly throne (Rom 3:21).

Moral authority

As used by Nick Bosio in the context of military leadership theory, moral authority can be defined as the right and ability acquired through acts of integrity to the principle of the law to make trustworthy decisions independent of written laws. Laws are designed to regulate how people interact with each other, and penalties are devised to enforce the laws and moderate retribution. God's law regulates how humans are to interact with God and each other. State and federal laws regulate how the government and its citizens relate. In certain situations (for example, during war), events arise that need to be interpreted through the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. In such cases, officers who have demonstrated integrity in following the principle of the law, despite the harm it may bring upon themselves, acquire the moral authority or the right to work outside the law to save their troops.²²

Moral authority has parallels to but is not the same as legal authority.²³ Legal authority is gained by one's status and position. Moral authority is acquired through

²⁰The *Christus Victor* model of atonement has long been criticised for lacking a vicarious substitutionary frame or mechanism Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 20. Suppose the mechanism has shifted to Jesus' resurrected human life before the throne of God; in that case, the spiritual battle between Jesus and the evil powers can be seen as an intrinsic part of the salvation process. Many of the church fathers viewed Jesus' mission as fighting the powers and principalities of this world: 'the work of Christ is first and foremost a victory over the powers which hold mankind in bondage: sin, death, and the devil.' (Oliver D. Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement: The Reconciling Work of Christ* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), p. 58) Furthermore, the New Testament scriptures indicate that Jesus defeated the evil of death and the devil through his death (Eph 6:10–18; Col 1:13, 2:13–15; 1 John 3:8; Heb 2:14–15).

²¹This is an idea to explore in a different paper. When Jesus died on the cross in his incarnate form, he bound himself to humanity in perpetuity, 'the union held under the strain imposed by the crucifixion' (Torrance, *Atonement*, p. 216). Through this commitment to incarnation, God gave his transcendent life to be categorised (Ian McFarland, *From Nothing: A Theology of Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014)). I would suggest that God, through Jesus Christ, chose to remain visible, material and knowable. Athanasius writes, '[God] manifested Himself by a body that we might receive the idea of the Unseen Father' and the Word took flesh and became an object of Sense, that through the Seen He might reveal the Invisible' (Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*. <https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204/npnf204.vii.i.html>).

²²Lieutenant Colonel Nick Bosio, 'What "Right" Looks Like: Linking Command and Moral Authority' <https://theforeg.defence.gov.au/publications/what-right-looks-linking-command-and-moral-authority>; accessed 15 June 2022. Bosio is a Directing Staff at the Australian War College. In 2019, he was Chief of Army Scholar researching military and systems thinking. He was also the Commanding Officer of the 6th Engineer Support Regiment. His postings cover tactical, campaign and strategic positions in command and staff roles, both within Australian and on operations. In 2015, he was the Chief of Campaign Plans, Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (Operation OKRA).

²³*Ibid.*, p. 4.

actions that are based on principle, even when those actions may cause harm to oneself.²⁴ Moral authority allows one to supersede or bypass laws for the common good, or as in the case of soldiers, to save their troops if a command would result in danger or possible death. Leaders usually work through the established rules, and only rarely, in extreme situations, will they work outside the rules.²⁵ Therefore, when those with inherent legal and moral authority perform their duties apart from the law, they have not violated or minimised the laws, nor have the laws lost their value or function.

A modern illustration of the relation between moral and legal authority can be found in South Africa in Nelson Mandela's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Mandela acquired the moral authority to forgive the violators of human rights by his wrongful twenty-seven-year prison sentence. He suffered because of his confrontation against the immoral power system of apartheid South Africa. When he was later elected president, imbued with the moral authority secured by his unjust suffering and armed with legal authority as chief executive, Mandela could supersede the law and forgive the human rights violations of apartheid based on confession rather than exacting punishment.²⁶ By remaining faithful to the abolition of the apartheid system even through wrongful suffering, Mandela acquired moral authority, and with his legal authority as president, he could pardon offenders to create reconciliation for his country without undermining the law.²⁷

If we use this understanding that inherent legal authority is gained through status or position, then Jesus had the inherent legal authority to heal and forgive by his status as the Son of God.²⁸ When Jesus healed the paraplegic lowered through the roof (Matt 9:1–8 and pars.), he used this healing event as a visible demonstration of his legal authority to forgive freely. Jesus not only connected the act of healing with forgiving, but he gave a visible example of his power to forgive freely when he says, 'that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home' (Lk 5:24). Additionally, Jesus revealed his moral authority through his commitment to the principles of the kingdom of God and with his wrongful suffering and death on the cross. Thus, through Jesus' inherent legal authority by his status as the Son of God along with his moral authority revealed through his wrongful suffering and death, Jesus can forgive sinners without undermining the law. Forgiveness is not fulfilling the obligations of the law. Forgiveness is the surrender of pursuing the obligations of the law or foregoing the payment.

²⁴Ibid., p. 6.

²⁵Ibid., p. 12.

²⁶Martha C. Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice* (Oxford: OUP, 2018), p. 78. She asserts that Mandela never called it forgiveness due to the baggage of the forgiveness process. Additionally, it is estimated that only a third of violators responded to this commission to confess. The rest did not trust the government to keep their promise not to convict.

²⁷The difference between moral and legal authority is exemplified by the parishioners of Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC. They had the moral authority to forgive the white supremist who murdered their members, but they did not have the legal authority to forgo his punishment; likewise, the United States President has legal authority to pardon convicted criminals but usually not the moral authority to do so. Mandela had both.

²⁸I would suggest that Jesus also acquired legal authority by virtue of his status as the High Priest 'according to the order of Melchizedek' (Heb 7:17).

The problem of forgiveness

As Ryan Davis notes, God ‘is unjust if he simply forgives without real atonement, as that would effectively say that offence against God may be permissible. The sin committed cannot just be forgotten but must be expiated. God cannot simply put the sin aside; it must be propitiated.’²⁹ Thus, many believe that if God forgives without reparations or without someone paying, God is not Just. Or as Joanne Terrell puts it, ‘if injustice is forgiven out of mercy alone, then injustice is more at liberty than justice’.³⁰ In short, ‘granting forgiveness without exacting any punishment or reparation would...betray the significance of the moral law’.³¹ We tend to think God can only do one of two things: either punishment, the payment of the penalty; or forgiveness, the negation of the law. And yet Davis reminds us that ‘theories requiring that God insist on punishment or suffering of someone, seems (...), unduly skeptical about God’s moral creativity’.³²

In her book, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice*, philosopher Martha Nussbaum describes a form of forgiveness called *transactional forgiveness*, which she defines as forgiveness that is granted after a specific process is followed.³³ This process involves confession, repentance and reparations. This forgiveness process, Nussbaum argues, is designed to cause two things: a *status reversal* and *payback*.³⁴ Status reversal involves ‘lowering the status of the wrongdoer by pain or humiliation which puts [wronged] in a relatively “up” [status]’.³⁵ She further writes that ‘abasement is the precondition of elevation’.³⁶ On the other hand, payback or vengeance is the belief that ‘the suffering of the wrongdoer somehow restores or contributes to restoring the important thing that has been damaged’.³⁷ In some atonement models, Jesus seems to follow this process of transactional forgiveness. Jesus, as the Son of God, became the second Adam as a matter of status reversal. He humbled himself (Phil 2:8) and made the necessary reparations and payment of penalties by dying for sin. Thus, God can now freely forgive since the requirements of the process have been met. However, Nussbaum argues that transactional forgiveness is not actual forgiveness.³⁸ Transactional forgiveness is a form of sitting in judgment over someone.³⁹ The wronged party judges whether the wrongdoer followed the process and evaluates their intent. Parents often tell their children to say they are sorry like they ‘mean it’. Status reversal and payback cannot restore or repair relationships; instead, they create an imbalanced relationship based on debt.⁴⁰ Therefore, Nussbaum eschewed the term forgiveness and replaced it with *unconditional love and generosity*.⁴¹ She describes unconditional love and generosity as totally giving up the right to insist on the process of forgiveness.

²⁹Ryan Davis, ‘The Authority of God and the Meaning of the Atonement’, *Religious Studies*, 50/4 (2004), pp. 405–23. Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/s0034412514000134. p. 415.

³⁰Terrell, *Power in the Blood*, p. 105.

³¹Davis, *The Authority of God*, p. 409.

³²Ibid., p. 411.

³³Nussbaum: *Anger and Forgiveness*, pp. 10–11.

³⁴Ibid., p. 16.

³⁵Ibid., p. 11.

³⁶Ibid., p. 24.

³⁷Ibid., p. 11.

³⁸Ibid., p. 25.

³⁹Ibid., p. 38.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 34.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 25.

Unconditional love and generosity depart from judgment, contrition and anger.⁴² They release the requirements and need of status reversal, payback and penalty payments.

The parable of the prodigal son demonstrates the difference between transactional forgiveness and unconditional love and generosity. When the younger son decides to return home, he speaks in the mode of transactional forgiveness, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son, treat me like one of your hired hands' (Lk 15:18–19). The younger son pleads to have his status reversed to that of a slave in hopes that the father will accept his lower status as payment for his offense of leaving with his inheritance. However, before the son can begin his negotiations, the father responds with unconditional love and generosity re-instating the son's status by bestowing a robe and ring upon him and then celebrating his return with a feast (Lk 15:22–24).

Rather than a transactional model commonly portrayed by Jesus' payment of death, Jesus' form of forgiveness aligns with the unconditional love and generosity type of forgiveness. Glen Pettigrove explains there are two aspects to Jesus' form of forgiveness. First, 'forgiving involves foregoing the pursuit of a legitimate complaint that one has against another'.⁴³ When Jesus forgives sinners, he relinquished his right to punishment or condemnation Jn 3:16–17. Some claim that forgiveness of this type violates and undermines the law because God cannot redeem apart from judgment and reparations.⁴⁴ However, if Jesus has the legal authority to suspend the consequences of the law along with his moral authority to forgo pursuing his right to condemn because he is the wronged party, Jesus' actions of forgiveness would not affect the effectiveness of the law because it is his choice to use his inherent legal authority and his revealed moral authority to forgive apart from the law. Humanity is saved from death because of Jesus' legal and moral authority to forgive freely.

The second part of forgiveness 'is a gift offered by the one wronged, rather than something earned or deserved by the wrongdoer'.⁴⁵ In Nussbaum's transactional forgiveness model, the wrongdoer must meet the demands of the wronged. On Nussbaum's alternative model, the wronged takes the initiative and gives the gift of forgiveness. Pettigrove calls this type of forgiveness the action of love.^{46,47} Jesus took the initiative to forgive and through his faithfulness to the principle of unconditional love and generosity even unto his wrongful death. He thereby revealed his moral authority to forgive apart from the demand of the law.

Jesus' death on the cross was a 'foreseeable result of his confrontation with evil'⁴⁸ and thereby established his moral authority to heal and forgive. His 'sacramental witness' for truth by his wrongful and unjust suffering and death revealed Jesus' moral authority to forgive sinners apart from the law without harm to the law and thus demonstrates God's righteousness.⁴⁹

⁴²Ibid., p. 49.

⁴³Glen Pettigrove, 'Forgiveness and Interpretation', *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 35/3 (2007), pp. 429–52.

⁴⁴Torrance, *Atonement*, p. 42.

⁴⁵Pettigrove, 'Forgiveness and Interpretation', p. 431.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷In solidarity with Joanne Terrell, I believe that unconditional love and generosity means having the freedom to choose to give up your right for revenge or payback. It is not virtuous to suffer for suffering's sake. See Terrell, *Power in the Blood*, p. 124.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 142.

⁴⁹Ibid.

Conclusion

Although the phrase *blood of Christ* is often understood as referring to Christ's death, the scripture offers evidence that Jesus' blood can more appropriately be understood to represent his atoning resurrected life. When Paul and the author of Hebrews used the terminology of blood, they alluded to the concept of *blood as life* in the sacrificial atonement ritual. Moffitt suggests that the resurrected human life of Jesus before the heavenly throne of God is the mechanism of atonement, and the mercy seat the place of atonement. I have suggested that the salvific significance of the cross is that it reveals God's moral authority to forgive.⁵⁰

In his discourse with Nicodemns, Jesus says, 'just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him may have eternal life' (Jn 3:14). To the Hebrews in the wilderness, the serpent on the pole was a visible symbol of God's power to heal when they were told to 'look and live' (Nm 21:8). The Hebrews who with faith looked to the bronze serpent received healing and life. The book of Wisdom says the Israelites understood 'the symbol [the bronze snake] itself was thought to have no power, but God alone, since the one who turned toward it was saved, not by the thing beheld' (16:5–8), but by the faith-act of looking.⁵¹ As time passed, the Israelites came to idolise the serpent as the mechanism for healing rather than the symbol of God's healing power, and King Hezekiah destroyed it (2 Kgs 18:4).

In a similar manner, many Christians have idolatrised Christ's death on the cross as the mechanism for forgiveness rather than regarding the cross as a symbol of God's power to forgive. The cross symbolises Jesus Christ's sacramental witness for living God's unconditional love and generosity, which revealed God's moral authority to freely forgive sins without undermining the law. The wronged is the only one who can either demand reparations or forgo payment and forgive. Jesus said during the conversation at Emmaus that the scripture reveals how the Messiah should suffer these things. Christians and theologians search the scripture for echoes of sacrifice rather than narratives of forgiveness and reconciliation. The cross reveals that God has always had the legal and moral authority to forgive the violators of his law, as he is the God of the law and the one who is wronged when humanity sins.

If we understand that death is the enemy and contrary to God's very presence as Eternal Life, then we understand that killing Jesus was the greatest weapon the devil and the powers of the world could conceive to hinder our reconciliation with God. However, God with his sovereign ability to turn evil into good used that death to demonstrate with the resurrection the ultimate power of the Living God. The incarnation and resurrection are essential aspects of atonement. Jesus' incarnation is not merely the means to dying a sacrificial death, nor his resurrection simply vindication of his faithfulness. The incarnation is the visible symbol of God's commitment to humanity. The resurrection is the visible symbol of the hope of eternal life. The cross stands between them as the visible symbol of Jesus' moral authority to freely forgive. The cross symbolises Jesus Christ's sacramental witness for living God's unconditional

⁵⁰The cross, I believe not only reveals God moral authority, but is also the place where sin is finally defeated, and Christ commits to his incarnation for perpetually.

⁵¹Andrew L. Minto, 'John 3:14–15: Analogy, Prophecy, or Typology and the Problem of Dissonance and Dissimilarity.' Continuing Seminar: The Fourth Gospel and the Old Testament. The Sixty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association. Chicago, IL. 5–8 August, 2006.

love and generosity, which revealed his moral authority to forgive sins freely without damage to the law. Through the incarnation and as our representative, Jesus as High Priest in his indestructible human life begins the reconciliation process by revealing his forgiveness on the cross.