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THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

A STUDY OF 1 JOHN
NUMBER 4
1 JOHN 1:7-8

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1 JOHN 1:7-8 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

There is a constant reference in the Bible to the blood of Jesus Christ. This particular phrase is probably more misunderstood than any other phrase in the Word of God. Generally, when people sing hymns about the blood of Christ, or read passages that make reference to the blood of Christ, they invariably and without exception misunderstand the phrase. Such passages as these--

1 PETER 1:17-18 "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;"

EPHESIANS 1:7 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"

REVELATION 1:5 "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"

A misunderstanding of these passages applies not only to the people who sit in the pews, but quite often, it applies also to those who stand in the pulpit. Most people have never taken time to analyze these words to really know what they mean.

1. ASSOCIATED WITH SALVATION

The phrase, the blood of Jesus Christ, is always associated with salvation. It is always associated with the cross and with our redemption.

2. OLD TESTAMENT BLOOD A PICTURE.

In the Old Testament, the blood of the animal sacrifice portrayed the cross and anticipated the cross.

3. SCRIPTURE IS LITERAL.

Every passage of scripture in the Bible is literal, unless there is something in the passage to indicate that it is being used figuratively. However, there is one problem with this. Quite often in the Bible literal things are often used to indicate spiritual factors.

Illustration. Jesus Christ guided the children of Israel through the desert for forty years. He did it by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar of cloud and of fire were both literal, yet in 1 Cor. 10:1 and following, we read that these literal things were Christ. We had a literal cloud and a literal fire, but they represented something spiritual. We

believe the scripture is to be taken literally, but quite often the scripture shows that it is not speaking literally and we will read such words as hos translated "as." We realize that there are analogies in the Bible and when they appear, they are quite obvious. Where the real trouble comes is when people get in the Book of Revelation and people try to spiritualize everything, when actually we have literal things described there.

Literal Blood

The greatest misunderstanding comes from the fact that on the cross Jesus shed literal blood, but when the blood is referred to in the scripture, it isn't referring to literal blood, but rather to the deeper thing the blood represents.

4. CHRIST DID NOT BLEED TO DEATH ON THE CROSS.

It is not difficult to substantiate this. A soldier plunged a spear into his side after he was dead and out gushed blood. So, Christ bled on the cross but he didn't bleed to death.

5. CHRIST DIED BY DISMISSING HIS SPIRIT.

LUKE 23:46 "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

This is the explanation of the physical death of Christ.

6. THE PHYSICAL DEATH OF CHRIST DOES NOT EXPLAIN HIS DEATH FOR OUR SINS.

When the Bible says, "Christ died for our sins" it is not talking about his physical death. In his physical death, he dismissed his spirit. But there is a death which preceded his physical death, and that death is described in such passages as Romans 5:8. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

This is a substitutionary death. A physical death cannot be a substitutionary death. One person can only die physically for himself. A person may give his life physically, trying to save others, yet eventually every person must die physically for himself. When it comes your turn to die physically, no one can do it for you.

A Spiritual Death

Since each person must die for himself physically, quite evidently this death of Christ for us was not a physical death, but a spiritual death. The reason it is so hard for people to get this clear in their minds is this--Screaming preachers have proclaimed "THE BLOOD! THE BLOOD!" and haven't explained what they mean and leave it hanging there as if the physical death of Christ is what saves us.

Illustration

The spiritual death of Christ can be explained from scripture. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they didn't keel over and die physically. In Genesis 2:17 The Lord told them that if they ate the forbidden fruit, "Dying, thou shalt eventually die." In other words, they would die spiritually, and then later on they would die physically.

"The Wages Of Sin"

The wages of sin has never been physical death, but rather spiritual death. "The soul that sinneth shall surely die" was never spoken of physical death, but rather of spiritual death. Physical death will eventually come as a result of spiritual death. It is quite obvious in the Bible that when the wages of sin is mentioned, it is not referring to physical death.

A Mysterious Thing

Most people believe that in some sort of mysterious way Christ died physically and the blood he shed has a magic power in it and it saves. They believe that he presented his blood in heaven as a payment for sin, and this they get from the Feast of Atonement. This kind of thing is just as weird as it can be.

Think straight for a moment and remember these things--

- a. Though Christ bled on the cross, that physical blood has never touched you.
- b. That physical blood dried up over 1900 years ago.
- c. Even if you could have walked under the cross and have smeared that blood on you, it would have done you no good.

To understand this we must stick with the facts.

7. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST REFERS TO HIS SPIRITUAL DEATH.

The fact that Christ died twice on the cross is brought out in the hebrew of Isaiah 53:9. This says, "He made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his deaths." It is a plural and an intensive plural. He was identified with the rich man in his deaths. The death of Christ for our sins is always connected with his spiritual death.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins"-- what does that mean? Ephesians 1:7 and 1 Peter 1:17-18 and Rev. 1:5 and Heb. 9:22 all say the same thing.

Animal sacrifice a picture

When the animal is put on the altar, it represents Jesus Christ being put on the cross. But the death of the animal is not a spiritual death because the animal has no spirit. Only people can die spiritually. The priest cut the throat of the animal and the animal pumped out the blood by breathing, and when the blood is all gone, the animal is dead. The guilty man placed his hand on the head of the animal and named his sins. And the blood of the animal flowing out, is a picture of how Christ took our sins on the cross and bore them away.

The physical death of the animal bleeding to death physically is a picture of the spiritual death of Christ bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. The blood of the animal was literal blood but it pictured the spiritual death of Christ on the cross for us.

Please Understand These Facts

1. The blood of Jesus Christ is the most powerful thing in the earth. It represents his power to take away our sins. Christ took our sins, bore them, paid for them, became sin for us, did what no one else could ever do. Apart from his death on the cross, there is no hope, no salvation.

2. However, you are not saved by his literal blood. You have never touched his literal blood. It dried up 1900 years ago.
3. However, that blood is so powerful just one drop of it is enough to save the whole human race. That blood speaks and says this-- "I have paid for your sins. I became sin for you. Never having sinned and having no old sin nature, I became a sinner in your place and died for you." This is what the blood proclaims.
4. No one can be saved apart from the shed blood of Christ. Christ did something on the cross that was sufficient to satisfy the righteousness and justice of God so our sins could be forgiven.

LEVITICUS 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Many preachers have quoted this scripture and have screamed loudly about The Blood, The Blood. But this verse refers to animal blood. The life of the animal is in the blood. But the life of the human is in the soul and the spirit.

A Spiritual Analogy

The blood of Christ always refers to his spiritual death, so this is a spiritual analogy. Literal blood of the animal is used as an analogy. Just like a literal cloud and literal fire were used in the wilderness to represent Christ.

Christ bore our sins on the cross, that's what he did. He paid for every sin of every man of the whole human race.

Look at verse 7 again

1 JOHN 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing--this is a present, active, indicative of katharizo. Our sins were poured out on Christ and judged, past, present, and future sins. Our sins have already been to court. They have been punished and judged and taken away.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

In 1 John 1:9 we are told that if we confess our sins that he will forgive us of our sins. That "confess" means to name them, to recognize them, to acknowledge them. But we've always thought that we had to help God, but we don't. So many have thought that in order for God to forgive us, we've had to feel real sorry for our sins. Remember this--YOU CAN'T HELP GOD DO HIS WORK. I look at that courtroom where my sins were judged and I realize that I am not forgiven on the basis of how I feel, but I am forgiven on the basis of the character of God. If God dealt with you on the basis of your feeling, you would be saved today and lost tomorrow. He doesn't deal with you on the basis of your feeling but on the basis of his JUSTICE.

When a person says to God, "I'm so sorry for what I've done and if you'll just forgive me, I'll never do it again." That's not rebound. That's a confused, mixed up person trying to do some of God's work for him, and you can't do that. When you name your sins to him, he is

faithful and just to forgive you, restore you, set you on your feet again and give you another chance. This verb katharizo means "keeps on cleansing." You name that sin and it's gone. He already knows how you feel about it. Not only does he forgive your sins when you confess them, but remember, that on that cross, he paid for sins that you haven't even committed yet, but one day will commit. That's why you can name the sin and it will be forgiven. He has already paid for it on the cross.

The Court Trial

"The blood of Christ" is the name of the court trial where your sins were handled. That blood says this--"Look, I am the Son of God, sinless and powerful. I'm powerful enough to take your sins and judge them and condemn them to hell forever." The moment you confess, that is the moment you are forgiven.

"From all sins" in verse 7 refers to all the sins we know about. "To cleanse us from all unrighteousness" in verse 9 refers to all the sins that we don't even know about.

The Principle Of Grace

Grace means God does all the work and we do none of it. Believe and confess are the two non-meritorious verbs in Scripture, and we can't horn in on either one for in both God does it all by grace. God does all the work.

The Father planned it.

The Son executed it.

The Holy Spirit revealed it.

Man simply receives in a non-meritorious manner that which God had done for him both in salvation and in restoration to fellowship by confession of sin.

Christ Did It All

Christ did it all in salvation and in the forgiveness of sin. He did all the work in salvation.

JOHN 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

"The night cometh when no man can work" refers to those three hours on the cross when Christ did all the work for salvation and we can do no work at all. God is perfect and his plan is perfect and man can't do anything meritorious. Grace always finds a way.

1 JOHN 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now some cluck will come along and say, "I don't have an old sin nature." Well, to be sure he does, for every person who has ever lived has had an old sin nature. The word "sin" here is in the singular and refers to the old sin nature, the source of all sin. This is a third class condition and it means maybe he will say this and maybe he won't say this. Here in this verse the believer is deceiving himself.

Negative Toward Doctrine

When we are negative toward doctrine, then the truth does not come through. We go negative and in comes darkness. This is the "walking in darkness" of verse 6. Darkness, lack of doctrine, causes us to deceive ourselves. Darkness is satanic doctrine and it always leads to self-deception. When we look out from darkness, we always see deception. Quite often we blame God for our darkness and we say, "Why did

God do that to me?" God didn't do that to you, you did it to yourself.

The truth is not in us when we make statements like not having an old sin nature. When the truth is not in us, we go into pseudo-spirituality, quite often they have real enthusiasm but they don't know any doctrine.

God Didn't Create The Old Sin Nature

The old sin nature is the only part of the soul that God didn't create. He created the self-consciousness, the mentality, the volition, the emotion, and the conscience but he didn't create the old sin nature. Man, with a strong assist from the Devil, created the old sin nature himself.

Don't deceive yourself by neglecting 1 John 1:9. This is such an important doctrine we will leave this for our next study.