

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

SOUL-SAVING LESSONS **“Power in the Blood”**

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

Christians often sing the song, “There is Power in the Blood.” Blood is essential to Christianity because of the great sacrifice that Jesus made. But as we think about blood, the fact is that blood affects each of us differently. For example, at the sight of blood, some might become faint. Others might get sick. And some might be entertained due to the desensitization that has occurred because of television in our day and age. Some people might be reminded of past wars and the horrific things that happened in those wars. Others would be reminded of death and times that have occurred in their lives when they had seen blood. In the Bible, blood plays a very important role. The Scripture says in Leviticus 17:11 that “the life is in the blood.” From the beginning of time, we have known that blood was important to mankind. Especially during the Christian Age, the blood of Christ is of utmost importance. There is a passage in the Book of Hebrews that teaches us the importance of blood. Hebrews 9:22 says, “According to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Blood is essential in God’s plan of salvation because where there is sin there must of necessity be a sacrifice. Blood had to be shed for us to have a sacrifice for our sins. In instituting the Lord’s Supper, Jesus said in Matthew 26:28, “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Jesus gave His precious blood so that our sins could be wiped away, and so that we could be cleansed in His blood. In Zechariah 13:1-2, we are told that a fountain would be opened for cleansing in Jerusalem. In John 19:34 we learn that while Jesus was on the cross, a soldier came by and pierced the side of Jesus so that blood and water came forth. The “fountain” of which Zechariah prophesied is seen as Jesus shed His blood on the cross for each one of us. In fact, in Acts 20:28 we are told that Christians are bought—the church is purchased—with the blood of Jesus Christ. So, yes, blood is very important to Christians. It is something that we know is essential to our salvation.

But why is it so important? What makes the blood of Christ so important to Christians and Christianity today? First, we need to note that Christians are a blood-bought people. As God’s people today, we know that it was the blood of Christ that bought us and that made it possible for us to be a part of the New Testament church. In Acts 20, we find a passage which teaches us that the church was purchased with the blood of Jesus. Acts 20:28 says, “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He [Jesus] purchased with His own blood.” Whose blood is important to Christians’ salvation today? It is the precious blood of Christ. As we think about being “bought back” by God, or of the church being purchased by the blood of Christ, we know that Jesus is the only One Who can do this because of His sinless sacrifice. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 4:15 that Jesus was “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” The text of 1 Peter 2:22 teaches us that Christ “committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth.” Jesus is the perfect, sinless sacrifice for each one of us. Thus, it is His blood—not the blood of animals such as was shed in the Old Testament—that makes each one of us free to be New Testament Christians.

How did that blood buy us back to God? How did that blood purchase the church? When Jesus died on the cross as a sinless sacrifice for mankind, He satisfied the justice of God. The justice of God demanded that where there is sin, that sin had to be punished. Those who had committed that sin had to be punished. Ezekiel 18:4 says, "The soul who sins shall die." We are told that our sins separate us from a righteous God because He is of pure eyes and cannot behold wickedness (Hab. 1:13). Where there was sin, the sinner had to be punished. Thus, Jesus' blood bought us back to God because He satisfied God's justice by His perfect sacrifice. The Bible says in 1 John 2:1-2 that Jesus became the propitiation [substitutionary sacrifice] for our sins, "and not for ours only but also for the whole world." When Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice on the cross at Calvary, He purchased the church and gave Christians hope of salvation. I am reminded of 1 Peter 2:24 where we are told that it is on the cross that Jesus bore our sins in His own body. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:21 that Jesus was made a sin offering for each one of us. On the cross, Jesus paid the ultimate price for the church and to buy Christians back to God. What an awesome privilege it is to be a member of the Lord's body today.

Christians also are redeemed by the blood of Christ. In Colossians 1:14 we are told, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Ephesians 1:7 illustrates this same point. Christians, like servants of old, have been redeemed (purchased back to God). How did this occur? What price was paid for our purchase so that we could be redeemed back to God? The text of 1 Peter 1:18-19 tells us exactly what it cost God for us to be bought back. Peter said, "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Here we are taught that we have come back to God, that we have a right relationship with Him, and that the things that were "broken" have now been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Just like the slave under the Old Testament could be bought back during the year of Jubilee, so we today can be bought back to God through the blood of Jesus Christ. Christians have been redeemed from condemnation. Those who are lost have been redeemed through the blood of Christ from being condemned eternally. As we think about the blood of Christ and how it means so much to Christians, we need to think about eternity and where we would be without that blood. For example, Romans 8:1 says that there is "no condemnation" to those who are in Christ. But what about those who have not become God's children? There **is** condemnation for them. Before the blood of Christ came, condemnation was upon mankind. Christ's blood made it possible for us not to have to spend eternity in Hell. Think about what it would be like without the blood of Christ. Would you like to live in the kind of place described in Mark 9:24? It is a place "where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched." It is a place of unbearable torment where there will be terrible weeping and gnashing of teeth. In Luke 16, Lazarus went home to Paradise, but the rich man awoke in torment and wanted just a single drop of water to ease his torment. In Matthew 5:46, we are told that the righteous will go away into eternal life, but the unrighteous will go away into eternal condemnation and death. The blood of Christ redeems us back to God so that we do not have to spend eternity lost along with the devil and his angels.

But we have been redeemed for a purpose. That purpose is to serve God. As Christians, the blood Christ buys us back to God so that we can serve Him. Formerly, we were servants of sin. Romans 6:16-18 teaches this very principle. But now, as children of God, we have the privilege and opportunity of being a servant of God. Jesus provides the perfect example of this. In Mark 10:45, Jesus said, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Jesus is an example of what it means to be a servant. We, today, also should be workers and servants in the kingdom

of God. Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 15:58, “Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” Christians in Thessalonica were encouraged by their “work of faith and labor of love” (1 Thess. 1:3-5). We today, then, should be workers and servants because we have been redeemed to serve our God. We should give our lives to Him.

The blood of Jesus is important because Christians are cleansed by that blood. Hebrews 9:14 tells us that all things are purified by blood. In Revelation 7:14, we see that the Christians are cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. One of the texts that teaches us this principle so clearly is found in Revelation 1:5 where John wrote of “Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” Why is the blood of Christ so important? It is because we are washed in that blood. As we come in contact with the soul-saving blood of Jesus, we are cleansed from our sins. But **how** does blood cleanse? If you take a garment and dip it in blood, it does not appear to be cleansed. But Christians have been cleansed by the blood of Christ because of its purity and because of the spotless nature of Christ’s life. In the Book of Leviticus, when the people would make sacrifices, they would choose a lamb or a bull that was the best of the herd. It had to be without spot or blemish, and could not have anything wrong with it. That is a depiction of Jesus, too. Hebrews 10:3-4 states that the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins. Yet Hebrews 10:12 says, “But this Man [Jesus], after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.” We are cleansed by the blood of Christ because He lived a perfect life. He died on the cross for us and gave Himself for us. It is the forgiveness that we receive through His blood that is so very important for each and every one of us. Think again about what Jesus said in Matthew 26:28 as He instituted the Lord’s Supper. He said, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” As people who are cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we should want to go out and tell others about the message of salvation. Christians who have been cleansed should want others to know about the hope of going to Heaven. We should want others to know how much God loves them. The fact that we can be cleansed of our sins should make us want to evangelize and tell others about this hope. This is clearly seen from Scriptures. Jesus said in Mark 16:15, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Christians should want to tell their friends and neighbors about the good news of the Gospel. In Luke 19:10, we are told that Jesus came to “seek that which is lost.” We were the ones who were lost—which was the reason that Jesus came. Therefore, if we today are going to follow in Jesus’ footsteps, we need to go out and tell others about the hope of salvation. Think about all the lost people in the world, and how many of them we might be able to influence for Jesus. Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 that we should be a shining light. We need to be a good example for our friends and neighbors around us (1 Pet. 4:16). As Christians, we ought to wear the name of Christ proudly and want to tell others about the hope we have. Today, we must go and spread the Gospel to those who are lost.

Another reason that the blood of Jesus is so important is that it is by the blood of Christ by which we are forgiven of our sins. In Romans 3:24-25, we are told that we are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood.” The blood of Jesus makes it as if we had never sinned. Paul reminded us of this, and of the love of God, when he said in Romans 5:6-8,

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Christ's blood was shed on Calvary so that we could have the hope of Heaven. Think once more about Matthew 26:28. This is important, as it relates to forgiveness obtained through the blood of Jesus. In this context, Jesus was instituting the Lord's Supper. As He came to the fruit of the vine, He said, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many **for the remission of sins.**" It is clear to us as Christians that the blood of Christ is central to our salvation. We ought to want to remember all that He has done for us. Hebrews 9:22 reminds us that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Jesus was crucified outside the camp (Heb. 13:12) for our sins so that we could have the hope of going to Heaven. I cannot help but think of the peace that we receive from the forgiveness of our sins. Think about some of the passages in the Bible that each of us how wonderful it is to be forgiven. Think of Psalm 103:10. In speaking of the Lord, the psalmist said, "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities." In verse 12 of that same chapter, the psalmist also said, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." God has not given us what we deserve. Rather, our sins have been separated from us. Micah said in Micah 7:19 that God has "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." In places, the sea is miles deep. Thus, Micah is saying that our sins have been removed so far from us that they can no longer hurt us. The psalmist said in Psalm 130:3-5, "If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared" This reminds us of the words of Hebrews 8:12 where God said, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." It is through the blood of Jesus Christ that we have the beautiful avenue of forgiveness.

But stop for just a moment and think about the price of that forgiveness. What did that forgiveness cost God and His dear Son? Imagine what it cost God, having been with Jesus for all eternity. In John 17:3-5, Jesus reminded us of how He and His Father were together from eternity. In John 1:1, we are told, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jesus was there in the beginning with God. He had been with God from eternity. Imagine, then, the hurt that resulted from the separation when Jesus could no longer be with God. Christ came to Earth to die for mankind—for His own creation. What a terrible cost that was for the Godhead to pay. What a terrible price it was for Christ to pay—to come to this Earth after having lived in Heaven. He had to leave Heaven to come to Earth to live and die as a man. Imagine what a cost that was to Jesus. And not only did He die, but He died on the cross—the most cursed of all types of deaths (Gal. 3:11-13). Think about all that Jesus had to suffer. He was ridiculed by men. They mocked Him, spat upon Him, and hit Him with their hands. They slapped Him. They took off His robe and beat Him on the back. They crucified Him on a Roman cross, where He hung in agony for hours while He died for our sins. Talk about the price for our salvation! Jesus truly paid that price for us. He paid a great deal so that we could have the hope of one day going to Heaven.

The demand of forgiveness for us today is that we live according to God's will. Forgiveness has been granted to us. But it teaches us that we ought to live every day for Jesus. Our lives ought to be a sacrifice for Him. In Romans 12:1, Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." We should live our lives every single day as sacrifices for Jesus. Our lives should no longer be about what **we** want. Rather, they should be about serving God. Paul learned this lesson. He said in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." We were bought for a price, as 1 Corinthians 6:20 points out. Paul said, "You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which

are God's." When we became Christians, our bodies and spirits became God's. Everything we do must glorify and magnify His name. This is what our lives should be all about, as 1 Corinthians 10:31 makes clear. Paul wrote, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

How, then, does one come into contact with the blood of Jesus? What must a person do to contact this soul-saving blood—the blood that is so central to salvation? The Scriptures make it clear regarding what we must do to come into contact with the blood of Jesus. Revelation 1:5 teaches us that our sins are washed away by the blood of Jesus. That being true, at what point do we come into contact with His blood? Acts 22:16 teaches us about the exact point at which we come into contact with the blood of Christ. Saul was told by Ananias, "Why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." It is at the point of baptism that one comes into contact with the blood of Christ. Saul was told that his sins would be washed away when he was baptized. Now it is not baptism **alone**, of course. There are other steps that one also must take in order to be saved. We are told that we must hear God's Word. Romans 10:17 teaches us that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." We must realize that Jesus is our sole Authority when it comes to religious matters. He alone has **all** authority (Mt. 28:18). We must hear the words of Christ and follow His will. A person cannot be saved unless he accepts and obeys the words of Jesus. Jesus Himself said in John 12:48, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day." We must hear God's Word because it will one day be our judge.

However, we must not only hear the Word of God, but we also must believe in Jesus as the Son of God. In John 3:16 we are told, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Yes, we must believe, but it is not belief alone that saves. James said in James 2:24, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." So it is not faith alone that saves. Rather, it is faith combined with obedience to God's commands. We place our faith and trust in God. We then must be willing to repent of past sins in our lives. Think of the words of Jesus in Luke 13:1-5. Certain people had come to Jesus to ask about people who had blood mingled with their sacrifice, or those who had a tower fall on them and kill them. Jesus told these people that those who had died were no worse sinners than anyone else. He then said, "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." We then must hear God's Word, believe in Jesus as the Son of God, repent of our past sins, and then confess Jesus as Savior. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33 that if we will not confess Him before men, then He will not confess us before the Father. But He also went on to say that if we would confess Him before men, then He would confess us before the Father. So confessing Jesus is important to salvation. Paul said in Romans 10:10, "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." And yes, baptism, too, is essential to salvation. Think about it in this way. We know from Ephesians 1:3 that all spiritual blessings are to be found only "in Christ." If salvation and all spiritual blessings are found "in Christ," how does one get into Christ? We learn exactly how one gets into Christ from Galatians 3:27. This text says, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." So we are baptized into the body of Christ, which is where we contact His blood and know that we have all spiritual blessings. So, yes, baptism is essential to salvation. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3-5 that unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he could not enter into the kingdom of God. One cannot be right with God unless he obeys the plan of salvation, and especially unless he obeys God in baptism since that is where we come into contact with the blood of Jesus. Listen to what Peter said in Acts 2:38. As certain Jesus came to the realization that they had cru-

cified their Messiah, they asked (vs. 37), "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer was very clear. Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." These Jews were told that two things were necessary: (1) repent; and (2) be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. Acts 18:8 sums it up in a nutshell when it says that "many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized."

Have you come into contact with the blood of Jesus? Truly, there is "power in the blood." Christ's blood has the power to save us from sin. It has the power to make us useful to God. But until we contact the blood of Jesus, God's power cannot work in our lives. If you have never obeyed the Gospel, more than anything we want you to become a Christian so that you can have the joy, the peace, and the hope of going to Heaven. You can do that today by obeying the will of God.

If you would like to have a copy of this lesson on DVD or CD, we would be more than happy to make that available to you. Come to our website, www.thegospelofchrist.com, fill out the request form, and we will send it to you. As always, we encourage you to study the Bible and live your life by the Gospel of Christ.

Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR “POWER IN THE BLOOD”

1. According to Leviticus 17:11, where is “life” found?
2. What does Hebrews 9:22 teach us that cannot happen without the shedding of blood?
3. Zechariah 13:1-2 speaks of a “fountain” being opened in Jerusalem. What, according to John 19:34, was that fountain?
4. According to Acts 20:28, what did Christ purchase with His blood?
5. According to Hebrews 4:15, Christ’s blood had a certain characteristic that made it different from any human’s blood. What was that characteristic?
6. Ezekiel 18:4 points out the penalty for sin. What is that penalty?
7. In 1 John 2:1-2 we are told that Jesus was the propitiation for our sins. What is a propitiation?
8. According to the teaching found in 1 Peter 2:24, what did Jesus do for us that relates to our sins?
9. Paul told the Christians in Colossae (Colossians 1:14) that they received two things from Christ’s blood. What are those two things?
10. According to 1 Peter 1:18-19, what price did God pay to buy us back and to forgive our multiple sins?
11. Before we come into contact with the blood of Christ, what are we (according to Romans 6:16-18)?
12. How, according to Hebrews 9:14, are all things purified?
13. What, according to Hebrews 10:3-4, can the blood of bulls and goats never do?
14. Hebrews 10:12 speaks of Jesus making “one sacrifice for sins forever.” What was that sacrifice?
15. According to Jesus’ own words in Matthew 26:28, what was the purpose of His shedding His blood?
16. Romans 6:23 explains that Christians have been given a free gift (salvation). What is a Christian’s responsibility, under the edict of Mark 16:15, because of that gift?
17. What does Revelation 1:5 say that Jesus did for us?
18. Acts 22:16 and Galatians 3:27 explain exactly how a person comes into contact with the blood of Christ. How is that accomplished according to these passages?