

## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

"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; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." I Peter 1:18-19.

One certainly feels a sense of woeful inadequacy to speak on "The Precious Blood of Christ". There is no language that can tell it, no philosophy that can explain it, and no human genius that can delve into it and bring out its full riches. Therefore, our approach to this great subject must be reverential, tranquil, deliberate and prayerful.

God has always regarded blood as a most precious thing. It is the most precious thing in a man's body. The Old Testament instilled in men a great reverence for blood. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." It holds together man's body and soul. If all blood is precious, how much more so the blood of Christ. Who can estimate its value? The better it is known the higher it rises in the estimation of those who are acquainted with it. And yet it is neglected, and even despised, by great multitudes who prefer mere trifles to it.

We must admit that there is not enough being said about the blood of Christ in these days. We are not singing and preaching about it as did our forefathers. Satan wants to turn our minds away from the blood of Christ. He delights to tell people that they can be saved by reformation, by good deeds, and by doing the best they can. But the Word of God plainly teaches that the only way to God is a blood-marked way. Blood is mentioned 455 times in the Bible. "And when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Exodus 12:13. "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" Matthew 26:28. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" Romans 4:8-9. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" Ephesians 1:7. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" Hebrews 9:22. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood" Revelation 1:5.

A crimson thread runs through the Bible from the very beginning up to the cross of Christ, and from the cross of Christ to the throne of the Lamb of God. The first greeting that Christ received was that which hailed the power of His blood, when John the Baptist cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" John 1:29. And the last salutation that Christ will receive will be the song of the redeemed, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Revelation 1:5-6.

### I. It Redeems.

To redeem means to set free by the payment of a ransom. The precious blood of Christ redeems from the curse of the law, which said, "This do, and live". We were slaves to the law, but Christ paid the ransom price, and the law is no longer our tyrant master. We are free from it. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

When Peter said that Christ redeemed us, the world was one-half slave. Men were

constantly being bought and sold, and that regardless of color. When a man was held in bondage as a slave, his family or some kindhearted friend, if possessing the means to do so, would redeem the man from slavery with gold or silver or precious stones. That is the meaning that lies back of this great word "redeem". Christ paid the price of our redemption. And how great that price was! It was nothing less than His own precious blood.

Over the portals of a church in Germany there is cut in the stone a beautiful lamb. A man who worked on the steeple of the church lost his footing and plunged to the ground below. A flock of sheep were grazing in the churchyard, and the man fell on a lamb. The lamb was killed, but the man's life was saved. In his gratitude he cut into the stone over the doors of the church the lamb that saved his life. So we are forgiven and saved from the penalty of sin and death by Christ Who is the Lamb of God. He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood. The blood of Christ, which was shed for our redemption, is the proof of God's love for us. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

From what does the blood of Christ redeem? It redeems "from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." "Vain" is the translation of a Greek word which has in it the idea of an ineffectual attempt to do something, an unsuccessful effort to attain something. Thus, the vain conversation from which the Christian is liberated is his manner of life before he was saved, which failed to meet the standards of God. It was a futile life, in that it did not measure up to that for which human life was created, to glorify God.

This manner of life they had received by tradition from their fathers. The phrase "received by tradition from your fathers" is the translation of one Greek word which means literally "given from father." That is, this futile manner of life was passed down to the son from the father through the channels of heredity, example, and teaching. The child is born in sin, that is, comes into being with a totally depraved nature, and if the parents are unsaved, comes into a home where evil customs and practices are observed. The precious blood of Christ not only redeems from this vain manner of life, but from hell also.

## II. It Reconciles.

Here the thought of man's condition is that of alienation and separation from God. As Isaiah said, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear." The inevitable tendency of evil-doing is to separate the evildoer from the one whom he has wronged. Sin always alienates, separates, and drives out man from the presence of God. Cain sinned and went out from the presence of the Lord. Judas sinned and went out. Peter sinned and went out and wept bitterly.

How can man be reconciled to God? It is by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. It was to do that great work of reconciliation that Christ came into the world and died upon the cross. For millions Christ made a complete atonement, and there is not any other plan by which sinners can be reconciled to God, except by the precious blood of Christ. Many of you have felt the power of Christ's atoning blood; you know that you are reconciled unto God by the death of His Son.

## III. It Cleanses.

At first that sounds like a strange paradox. How could blood cleanse? Blood

makes a stain which is deep and distinct, and which every evildoer dreads to leave behind him. Blood has always been the evidence of guilt. But here is the great paradox. The blood of Christ, instead of staining, washes out the stain of sin. Instead of defiling, it washes white the soul of the believer in Christ. The immortal soul, created in the image of God, has been stained with sin. "Sin has left a crimson stain." Yet this is the wonder-working power of the blood of Christ—it has the power to cleanse from the stain of sin. John said, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin". "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains."

At the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago during the Columbian Exposition in 1893, there were representatives of thirty-six different religions or cults on the platform. Each representative spoke on the merits of his own religion, and when all had finished, Dr. Joseph Cook spoke in behalf of Christianity. He advanced toward the audience and gave an imitation of Shakespeare's "Lady Macbeth" as she came on the stage with bloody hands after her crime. He turned to Dr. Hale, the Unitarian, and said, "Have you sir, anything in your religion that will wash away her sin?" A cloud passed over the face of Dr. Hale, and all the others too as he asked each the same question, to which each had to reply, "No." Then, coming to the front of the platform with his arms extended, Dr. Cook said, "I declare unto you the supremacy of the Gospel of Christ, for it will not only wash her hands but also her heart, because "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

We must ever proclaim the message of "The Precious Blood of Christ." In New Jersey a train crew found that they could not proceed with their train, so they sent the flagman down the track to warn the approaching passenger train of the stoppage up the line. In a little while there was a terrible crash, but one engineer jumped and saved his life. Later, there was a court inquiry to endeavor to fix the responsibility for the accident. The flagman was examined and testified that he went down the line and flagged the train, but that the engineer just signalled and went on. The engineer was called and asked if he saw a red flag to which he replied that he did not. He said the flagman waved a flag but that it was not a red one, so he just waved in response and went on. When asked if he was color blind, he stated that he was not. Under guard the flagman went to get the flag he claimed that he waved. When they returned the mystery was solved. It was no longer a red flag, for from exposure it had faded out to be a dirty yellow. What a terrible calamity as a result of showing the wrong color!

Thus it is today with many who are waving the yellow flag of salvation by man's character and by works instead of waving the red flag of the Gospel of Calvary's Cross.

"Upon a life I did not live  
Upon a death I did not die  
Another's life, another's death  
I hang my soul eternally."