

ONLY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CAN WASH AWAY YOUR SINS

'This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world' (1 John 1:5-2:2).

We will now study the atoning sacrifice and the blood of Jesus that purifies the believers from all sin. As we confess our sins to God, He not only forgives us but also purifies us from all unrighteousness and He makes us holy. He redeems us, which means He has paid the price for our sins, not with silver or gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect (1 Peter 1:18-19). Jesus has paid the price for the salvation of the world, yet to partake of that salvation we must come into the light of God and let our sins be exposed before Him. Jesus then speaks to God on our behalf and covers us with His precious blood.

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION

God the Father knew that redeeming mankind would cost Him His Son and before the creation of the world it was determined that Jesus, as the Lamb of God, would lay down His life to atone for our sin (Revelation 13:8). The crucifixion of Christ displays the love of God in a way that is beyond human comprehension. Without the cross there would be no possibility of salvation for anyone. God has made the sufferings of Christ the central theme of the message of salvation, for God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

When God first created this world everything was good and there was no death, sickness, pain or evil. When God made Adam and Eve they were created innocent but not holy. There is a big difference between these two attributes. Innocence is not having done something wrong, but holiness is having chosen to go against evil by doing what is right. Obedience to God produces holiness. Among the angels we have what we call the holy angels and then we have the evil spirits. The angels were all created innocent. Those who chose to pursue the path of righteousness became holy. Those who turned away from God's light to the darkness became evil.

There was a separation of the angels between those who became holy and those who became evil. What took place among the angels is now taking place among us humans. To become holy Adam and Eve would have to choose to obey God and follow Him. This is why God had to test them and why He has to test all of us. Life is a test. Adam and Eve failed at this point and they were no longer innocent and instead of being holy they became sinners. The wages of sin is death and death entered this world as a result of the fall of man. After Adam and Eve sinned the curse of death came upon all creation. God was looking for us to live with Him forever and ever. Therefore to save and restore us, God has had to deal with the power of death.

Speaking of Christ the Bible says, 'Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil' (Hebrews 2:14). The devil was holding the power of death, so Jesus had to become a man and die as a man in order to destroy the devil's power. Jesus did not become an angel to die for the angels. They lived in God's perfect light and the evil spirits have no excuse for their sin. Yet mankind was created with a body of flesh and blood, so that if they did fall there would be a way of escape. Adam and Eve are the father and mother of all mankind and their fall has caused the entire human race to be born in sin. God had to then remove them from the Garden of Eden and they were forbidden to eat from the tree of life, for God did not want them to live in their sins forever. Jesus has now opened up the way so that everything Adam lost is restored and we can receive eternal life.

God gave His law to the prophet Moses to show us what sin is. Do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not give false testimony; do not make idols or bow down to them; have no other gods, etc. Through the law we become conscious of sin (Romans 3:20), but this does not give us the forgiveness of our sins. The law could not save us; it could only condemn us as sinners and leave us guilty before the holiness of God. To appease the law there had to be a sacrifice. God said to Moses, "The life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life" (Leviticus 17:11). The debt of sin is cancelled once atonement is made.

A system of animal sacrifice was established to atone for sin. Life is in the blood and to overcome sin, which brought death, there had to be the shedding of the blood or an exchange of life. God's law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Hebrews 9:22). Yet the sacrifice or killing of an animal was only a temporary sacrifice and that is why it had to be constantly performed over and over again. Therefore these sacrifices cannot ultimately save us. Animal sacrifices were made to point ahead to the coming of the true sacrifice, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

THE ONLY BLOOD THAT CAN CLEANSE US

I use the following illustration to explain why it is that only the blood of Jesus can save us. Imagine you are travelling by vehicle from one place to another, but on the journey there is a terrible accident as your car collides with another vehicle. You are badly injured, you are cut in several places, including one of your main arteries and you are losing a lot of blood. We know if a certain amount of blood comes out you will die. Life is in your blood. Now to save your life someone rushes you to the hospital. The doctor or nurse brings a bag of blood, the needle goes into your arm and blood is being restored back into your body. We call this a blood transfusion.

What would happen if we gave you goat or sheep blood and injected that into your body? Of course you would die because your body cannot take animal blood. We cannot even give you just any human blood because we as human beings have different blood types such as A, B, AB, O, positive or negative. When you give a blood transfusion you have to give the right type of blood to the person, otherwise that person's body cannot accept that blood. We should therefore ask, "What kind of blood can save the sinner?" Only righteous, holy blood can save the sinful person.

When Adam and Eve first sinned the curse of death came upon this world. They had children and their children were born under that curse. They in turn had children and slowly the population of the world grew bigger, and so all of us were born with the sinful blood. There is no person in this world who can say they have never sinned. All of us have sinned against God. If a person claims to be perfect, ask him if his mother or father has ever sinned, or if his grandparents sinned. We have all inherited the sinful blood of our ancestors. To be perfect you would need to have all your ancestors perfect all the way back to Adam and Eve, and even then because Adam and Eve sinned you could not be perfect.

All the people of the world have been born in sin and that is why the Bible says that there is not one that is righteous (Romans 3:9-12). We are born in a lost world with a wall of separation between us and God. We are all born with the sinful blood, due to original sin. To provide the way of salvation something special and amazing had to happen.

THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRIST

An angel came to a young virgin called Mary and the angel said to her that she would be pregnant. She was very shocked. She was thinking, 'I am not married and I have not been unfaithful.' "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:26-35).

Mary was engaged to a man called Joseph. When Joseph found out that Mary was already pregnant he was even more shocked. He was thinking, 'How could this girl do this to me?' Therefore he was thinking that he could not marry her, but that night an angel appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."

We are told that this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through Isaiah the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" – which means, "God with us." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave Him the name Jesus (Matthew 1:18-25).

Why did Jesus Christ have this supernatural birth? It was so that Jesus would not have the sinful blood. The story of the virgin birth isn't just a nice Christmas story. It is necessary for our salvation and that is why we have to believe in the virgin birth of Christ. Jesus was born without the sinful nature of man and He had the blood that was holy and righteous. It wasn't ordinary blood. Yes, it was human blood because Jesus became a human, but the difference between Jesus' blood and our blood is very significant.

The Bible speaks of God purchasing the Church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). There is a sense in which God became a man and walked this earth so that Christ's blood was the righteous, holy blood of God. In Zechariah chapter twelve it is the word of the Lord God Almighty, the God of Israel, who says, "They will look on me the one they have pierced" (Zechariah 12:10). This is clearly referring to the crucifixion of Christ (John 19:37; Revelation 1:7). Jesus is God, Immanuel, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, and by shedding His blood, it is in fact the holy blood of God that atones for the sins of the world. There is no higher price that could be paid for our redemption.

As descendants of Adam we are born in sin and we are born with the sinful blood. I could not die on a cross to save you because I have the sinful blood. You could not die on a cross to save me because you also have the sinful blood. Animal blood cannot take away our sins. Yet Jesus could make atonement for the sins of the world because He was not contaminated by the sinfulness of man. God had to do this great miracle and Jesus had to come from Heaven via a supernatural, virgin birth, in order to save us. He could die on the cross to save the world because He has the perfect, holy and righteous blood. In Christ the fullness of God lives in bodily form and it is amazing, but it is actually God's own blood that saves us (Colossians 2:9).

JESUS WILLINGLY GAVE HIS LIFE

Jesus grew up as a normal child. From a young age He was full of wisdom and He grew into manhood. Jesus then began His ministry and this was confirmed by mighty miracles. He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf. He healed those who were crippled and cleansed those with skin disease. He even raised the dead back to life, yet Jesus knew that these miracles were not enough to save the world. Healing people's

bodies does not take away their sins. To save the world there had to be the perfect sacrifice for sin. Jesus knew that He would have to give His life.

It is very interesting to know that Jesus had a supernatural ability to escape death. He could not be killed because He was without sin. The reason He did eventually die was because He took the sins of the world upon Himself. Whenever people tried to kill Jesus they couldn't do it until He had taken our sins upon His own body. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Since Christ was perfect and sinless, He should never have died. Therefore He did not die for Himself; He died for you and for me.

At the appointed time Jesus let the soldiers take Him, for after they drew back and fell to the ground, Jesus permitted them to get back up and to bind Him as a prisoner (John 18:6-12). It was now time for Satan to unleash His fury. This was the hour when darkness reigned (Luke 22:53). Seizing Him, they led Him away and took Him into the house of the high priest. The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating Him. They blindfolded Him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" And they said many other things to insult Him.

One thing I notice about the Lord when He was going through His time of suffering is that Jesus did not heal Himself. Jesus had healed a woman who for eighteen long years had been bent over with a back problem (Luke 13:10-17), yet Jesus did not heal His own back. Jesus delivered those who were mentally unsound (Luke 8:27-39), yet Jesus did not heal Himself when the soldiers placed the crown of thorns upon His head. Jesus healed the crippled (Matthew 15:30-31), yet He did not heal His own hands and feet. Even today Jesus still has the scars. Jesus did not heal Himself because He knew that He had to pay the ultimate price by giving His life as a ransom for all men (1 Timothy 2:6).

Throughout the Old Testament the people of Israel had special places where they did hundreds and hundreds of animal sacrifices. If you were there watching you would think it was quite grotesque, seeing such slaughter, and why would God want all this blood? This is why you must understand the importance of having a heart that is cleansed and forgiven of all sin. The things that cause people to sin are so tragic and ghastly. Evil truly does separate us from God. This world is contaminated and that is why such a great sacrifice was needed and why everything had to be cleansed with blood.

One sin is enough to stop you from going into Heaven if it is not cleansed and atoned for. A tremendous price had to be paid for our salvation. Animals were put to death so that God's judgment would not come upon people, yet these animal sacrifices were only temporary as they symbolically pointed ahead to what Christ would do for us in faithfully laying down His life. He died so that we could live. This is the greatest sacrifice that God could ever give, yet we will not comprehend why Jesus had to die for us unless we feel guilty for having sinned against God. Therefore we need to take a look at sin to realize how exceedingly unacceptable to God it is and realize that it is only the blood of Jesus that can wash us clean. How great and powerful the blood of Jesus is!

THE SINS THAT MAKE US UNCLEAN

The Lord Jesus Christ has given us a list of sins that make people unclean in the sight of Almighty God: "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'" (Mark 7:20-23).

The main problem is that most people don't want to change and they refuse to partake of Christ's body and blood for cleansing. We cannot hide our sin; rather we must let it be washed away. Many preachers don't speak out boldly against sin, yet Jesus did because for people to be saved they must repent. We will now go through these sins that Jesus has highlighted, for out of the sinful heart will come:

1) Evil Thoughts – In the days of Noah mankind had become extremely wicked, for every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time (Genesis 6:5-7). 'In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God' (Psalm 10:4). People's

minds and consciences are corrupted when they do not believe (Titus 1:15). They are alienated from God and enemies in their minds because of their evil behaviour (Colossians 1:21). What we think about determines the path we are on. Therefore we must take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

2) Sexual Immorality – When God created Eve for Adam it was written: ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh’ (Genesis 2:24). Marriage was established by God and the sexual relationship must be within the bonds of marriage. Therefore: ‘Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral’ (Hebrews 13:4). Those who enter a sexual relationship without being married are committing fornication and unless they repent of this sin they will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). Marriage is extremely important.

3) Theft – The desire to steal and to take that which does not belong to you also comes out of the sinful heart and makes a person unclean. When Jesus spoke of His Twelve apostles, He said that one of them was a devil (John 6:70-71). That is because Judas was a thief and he used to help himself to what was put into the money bag (John 12:6). Because this sin was not purged from his heart, it led him to betray the Lord for thirty silver coins (Matthew 26:14-16). Those who steal from God or from the church are in due time destroyed.

4) Murder – We are warned that anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him (1 John 3:15). If hatred, anger and bitterness overtake our hearts we do not have eternal life. This is why forgiveness is so important. ‘For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins’ (Matthew 6:14-15). We cannot expect God to forgive us of our sins if we don’t forgive other people. Deliberate unnecessary abortion is the murder of an innocent child and reveals a depth of darkness in one’s heart.

5) Adultery – When Potiphar’s wife saw that Joseph was handsome and well built, she made ungodly advances towards him. He refused to be with her, yet one day she caught him by his cloak and he ran out of the house (Genesis 39). We are commanded to flee from sexual sins for our bodies are meant to be temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:15-20). King David had to pay a heavy price for his adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:10-14). Many are unwilling to pay the price of restitution and that is why they don’t make it back to God. The sin of adultery is likened to playing with fire (Proverbs 6:27-29). People need to enter marriage with the realization that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16).

6) Greed – Greed is accompanied by self-indulgence and wickedness (Matthew 23:25; Luke 11:39). We are warned not to use flattery as a mask to cover up greed (1 Thessalonians 2:5). Many people let this sin dominate their hearts and that is why they are unwilling to make sacrifices for the Lord and for the gospel. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction (1 Timothy 6:9). Jesus said, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (Luke 12:15).

7) Malice – We must not allow within our hearts a desire to cause harm to others, to get revenge or to deliberately put unnecessary obstacles in their way. The people of the world live in all kinds of malice and envy (Titus 3:3). Prejudices, vain arguments, ungodly judgments and backstabbing come from the person with this type of ungodly heart. A malicious man puts on a false mask and disguises himself with charming words (Proverbs 26:24-26). Malice goes together with the next sin that Jesus mentions.

8) Deceit – One sin is used to cover another sin, yet in the end all deception will be exposed. When Ananias and Sapphira lied about keeping back some money for themselves, the apostle Peter accused Ananias of having let Satan fill his heart. This sin cost them their lives (Acts 5:1-11). It is written: ‘A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will perish’ (Proverbs 19:9). The Bible says that the sinful heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure (Jeremiah 17:9). That is why we are commanded to get a new heart (Ezekiel 18:30-32). Those who practice deceit are easily deceived and hindered from finding salvation.

9) Lewdness – People live in error by appealing to the lustful desires of the sinful human nature (2 Peter 2:18). Lewdness opens the door to promiscuity and prostitution (Ezekiel 23:29,35). This is a sign of unfaithfulness to God. Wisdom preserves us from immorality, but that wisdom must be put into practice (Proverbs 6:23-26). Homosexuality and lesbianism are the result of being given over to shameful lusts and to a depraved mind (Romans 1:26-27). Lust causes people to sin within their hearts (Matthew 5:28). The apostle Paul advised those who burn with passion to marry (1 Corinthians 7:9). Again we see that faithfulness in marriage is a necessity for any nation to walk with God.

10) Envy – Resentment destroys people and envy rots the bones’ (Job 5:2; Proverbs 14:30). A feeling of discontent aroused by another’s success will develop a sour personality and cause one to be moody, unthankful, bitter and unable to find true happiness. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice (James 3:16). A heart of envy is a breeding ground for other sins. When people miss the grace of God, bitter roots grow up to cause trouble and defile many (Hebrews 12:15).

11) Slander – We have to be careful that we don’t make false and malicious statements about other people. The desire to slander others comes from the sinful heart and this is why we need to examine ourselves when we are speaking against someone. Jesus said, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” (Matthew 7:3). We slander someone because we see the speck in their eye not realizing that we could be committing an even greater sin.

12) Arrogance – Those who are wicked pour out arrogant words and are full of boasting (Psalm 94:4). The boasting of what a person has and does comes not from the Father but from the world (1 John 2:16). There will be terrible times in the last days because people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:1-4). The arrogance of man causes him to reject his own salvation.

13) Folly – Drunkenness produces foolish men (Proverbs 26:9) and wicked woman (1 Samuel 1:13-16), yet the people of the world continue to drink away their lives. One of the greatest acts of folly is to speak against the Lord Jesus (Jude 14-15). ‘For the fool speaks folly, his mind is busy with evil: He practices ungodliness and spreads error concerning the LORD’ (Isaiah 32:6). Those who have not been cleansed of this sin speak untruthfulness about God. Sin leads to unbelief and then the fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” Atheism is the ultimate corruption of the heart of man and this has destroyed many souls (Psalm 14:1; 53:1).

These sins are what make a man unclean. God wants to save us from ourselves and from what we have permitted to develop within our own hearts. Thankfully by the grace of God, the Lord often convicts us of our guilt so that we keep short accounts with Him and repent. At times God allows us to face temptation to expose the evil that is within us. In this world it is easy to fall. Therefore without the blood of Jesus we have no hope. Remember that it is because of these sins that Jesus had to die for you personally. He has paid the ultimate price for your salvation. When a person comes to a knowledge of the truth but refuses to be

cleansed by Christ's precious blood, there is no sacrifice left for their sins. Therefore those who die without Christ are lost forever.

The last plague upon Egypt under Moses was the plague of death upon the firstborn son of each household. Each man from among the Israelite community was to take a lamb without defect, slaughter it, and take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door-frames of their houses. They were also to eat the Passover meal. As the Lord brought judgment upon Egypt, which symbolizes the world, He would see the sign of the blood on the houses where His people were and they were spared. There is a sense in which the whole world is under the plague of death, due to the consequences of sin (Romans 6:23). Yet those who apply the blood of Christ to the door of their hearts are spared and they are granted eternal life. Only the blood of Jesus can wash away your sins.

SURRENDER TO GOD

There are three types of people who need to respond to the Lord right now:

1) If you know there is a gap between you and God. If Jesus is not very real to you or if you have never really known His presence in your life, God is calling you to meet with Him. You need to get your life sorted out with God by an act of repentance and faith. Let Jesus into your heart as your Lord and Saviour and be cleansed of your sin by His precious blood;

2) If you once had a relationship with the Lord, but you have gone your own way and fallen into sin. God in His mercy is calling you to return to Him so that your walk with the Lord gets back on track and you become a strong and true believer. Realize the seriousness of your sin in backsliding;

3) If you have never made a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. You may have visited a church out of some kind of religious duty, but if you have never surrendered your life to Jesus you are still in the kingdom of darkness and need to apply the precious blood of Christ to the door of your heart. If you are willing to do this, please call upon the name of the Lord and pray as suggested:

THE PRAYER OF A LOST SINNER FOR SALVATION

“Lord Jesus, I need You to save me. I know that I have sinned, but I don’t want to be lost. Thank You for dying on the cross and paying the penalty for my wicked ways. I confess these sins to You now..... (name those sins).

I turn from them and I look for You to help me to walk the path of righteousness. I realize that my evil deeds are to blame for Your painful crucifixion, so I am truly sorry and I ask You to forgive me.

I believe the good news that You rose from the dead and that You are alive forever. I believe that You are watching me at this very moment, so I open the door of my life to receive You as my Lord and Saviour.

Come into my heart, take away my sins, and make me the kind of person You want me to be. I want to be Your friend. Fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit and let me overcome all the works of the devil. Come Holy Spirit.

Thank You for saving me and giving me assurance of a place in Heaven. I give all praise, honour and glory to Your holy name. Amen.”

As you complete this prayer, you may feel the peace of God descending upon you or welling up within your heart. The joy of God will begin to flood your soul. It is good to thank God and praise Him for His goodness in bringing you into a right relationship with Him.

**I have decided to follow Jesus
all the days of my life!**

Yes

No

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever (your name) _____ believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Date of birthday into God's family: _____
(The day you accepted Jesus as your Saviour)

When you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, you have made the most important decision of your life. I pray that you will become stronger and stronger in your faith, so that you will fulfil the high call of God upon your life. Here are a few simple steps that new Christians should take so they will really develop an intimate walk with God:

- 1) Become Strong In Prayer
- 2) Study God's Word (The Holy Bible)
- 3) Fellowship With Other Believers (Attend A Christian Church)
- 4) Be Baptized In Water And With The Holy Spirit
- 5) Share The Good News Of Salvation With Others

'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace' (Numbers 6:24-26).

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY OF GOD!