

Blood Work: How the Blood of Christ Accomplishes Our Salvation by Anthony J. Carter, Reformation Trust, Orlando, FL (2013). (30 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols.)

1. The Benefits of Christ's Shedding His Blood in Our Salvation.

The history of Christianity is filled with blood. More than anything else, the Bible speaks of the blood of Christ accomplishing for us the grand benefits that belong to salvation: We have been purchased by His blood (Acts 20:28). We have propitiation by His blood (Rom. 3:25). We have been justified by His blood (Rom. 5:9). We have redemption through His blood (Eph. 1:7). We who were far off have brought near by His blood (Eph. 2:13). We have peace through His blood (Col. 1:20). Our consciences are cleansed by His blood (Heb. 9:14). We are sanctified through His blood (Heb. 13:12). We are elect in His blood (1 Peter 1:1-2). We are ransomed by His blood (1 Peter 1:18-19). We have been set free from sin by His blood (Rev. 1:5). [page 3]

2. Most Excellent Part of Christ's Obedience.

In examining and explaining the meaning of the blood of Christ, the seventeenth-century Puritan Stephen Charnock wrote:

By this is meant the last act in the tragedy of his life, his blood being the ransom of our souls, the price of our redemption, and the expiation of our sin. The shedding of his blood was the highest and most excellent part of his obedience (Phil 2:8). His whole life was a continual suffering, but his death was the top and complement of his obedience, for in that he manifested the greatest love to God and the highest charity to man. [pages 3-4]

3. Reminded of His Shedding of His Blood at Communion.

Obviously, Christians do not drink the literal blood of Christ when they take the cup of wine at Communion. However, there is much to be understood and received as we hear Christ say, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:28; see Luke 22:20). The poignancy of these words should grip and encourage our hearts every time we hear them. The cup of blessing is a visible and tangible reminder that we are in Christ and Christ in us. It reminds us of the intimate and inseparable union we share with Him. His life and death are ours because His body was broken for us and His blood was shed for us. We are His and He is ours. His blood sealed our union with Him. Every time we come to the Lord's Table, we should be reminded of this wonderful truth. [page 5]

4. Provision of a Deliverer.

Commentator and pastor James Montgomery Boice writes:

Abel's sacrifice involved blood and therefore testified to the death of a substitute. He was coming to God as God had shown he must be approached. When God killed animals in the Garden of Eden and then clothed Adam and Eve with their skins, God was showing that, because sin meant death, innocent victims must die in order that sinners might be pardoned. The sacrifice pointed forward to Christ. When Abel came with the offering of blood, he was believing God and was looking forward to the provision of the deliverer. When Cain brought his fruit, he was rejecting that provision. [page 8]

5. Christ's Blood Cries Out for Redemption.

Although Abel's blood cried loudly and clearly, it spoke insufficiently. The New Testament tells us, however, that the blood of Christ speaks a better word than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12:24). While Abel's blood cried out for revenge and retribution, the blood of Christ cries out for redemption. When the blood of Jesus hit the ground, it cried not for revenge but for the redemption of the world. [page 9]

6. Living Redemption, not Revenge.

How do we know that someone understands the blood of Christ in his life? We know it by the fact that he or she is not out for revenge, but is living out redemption.

It is disheartening to hear Christians, who claim that the blood of Christ has spoken their redemption, speak of revenge. They often feel the need to right every wrong spoken or wrong deed done against them. Yet the Bible clearly states in Romans 12:19, "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'"

At times, we thoughtlessly say, "I just have to get it off of my chest." Or we say, "O, she's going to get hers." However, as a Christian, my cry should never be for revenge, but for redemption. I do not want revenge on my enemies; I want their redemption. I should not pray for their destruction but for their conversion. Why? Because I am covered with the blood of Christ! The blood of Christ speaks a better, a more blessed word than my cry for revenge could ever speak. It says that God did not take His wrath out on me, and thus I should not take mine out on others. Instead of crying for revenge, I must rest in the blood of Christ for redemption. His blood cries out with a louder and more penetrating voice. [page 10]

7. In Christ, One Lives Because of Christ's Blood.

When the Lord Jesus Christ came on the scene, He was announced as the Lamb of God who not only takes away our sin (John 1:29) but also turns away God's wrath against us. In fact, 1 Corinthians 5:7 states it plainly to us: "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."

The Israelites lived because the blood of the lambs that were slain. If you are in Christ, you live because of the blood of the Lamb of God. In the blood of Christ, we have what we lost in Adam, namely, life. The shedding of our Savior's blood was significant not for the blood itself but for what it represents. It represents the perfect, sinless life of Christ poured out unto death for us (Isa. 53:12). [page 13]

8. Receiving a Life Transfusion.

... if all that needed to happen was for Jesus to shed some blood, He could have pricked His finger and placed some blood on the cross or let it spill on the ground, and all would have been well. His precious blood signified His precious life and His precious death. Consequently, the redeemed do not receive a blood transfusion from God. We receive a life transfusion – His death for our death, His life for our life. It all is according to His precious blood, which satisfies God's righteous requirements for life and justice. [page 13]

9. Christ Obtained the Church by His Blood.

According to Scripture, God has purchased the church. The Apostle Paul, on the eve of his departure from Ephesus, gathered the elders and pastors together, and encouraged them to "pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he *obtained* [literally, purchased] *with his own blood*" (Acts 20:28, emphasis added). Paul exhorted the elders and pastors to keep a careful and diligent watch over the church so as to protect it and provide for the general welfare in it. The motivation for this diligence was the fact that the church did not belong to them. They were only stewards of another's property. God had purchased the church with the currency of the blood of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. [pages 16-17]

10. We Belong to Christ.

Being the possession of Christ is the hope of the Christian. To be a Christian is to belong to Him. To belong to Christ is the foundation for comfort and security in this life and in the life to come. This is the point poignantly made by Question One, Lord's Day One, of the Heidelberg Catechism. The catechism asks, "What is your only comfort in life and in death?" The answer rings with the truth of the purchasing power of the blood of Christ and our security in His possession:

That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him. [pages 18-19]

11. Christ's Blood, Our Propitiation.

J.I. Packer, in his classic book *Knowing God*, asks, “Has the word propitiation any place in your Christianity?” It does, whether we know it or not. At the heart of the work of Christ is His sacrificial outpouring of His blood, which, the Bible states, provides a propitiation for our sins (Rom. 3:25). [page 24]

12. God's Wrath Shows the Awfulness of Sin.

... while our anger does not produce the righteousness of God, the Bible says that the wrath of God brings forth the righteousness that He requires (Rom. 3:25). Clearly, the purpose of God's wrath is to demonstrate the awfulness of sin and consequently to magnify the glory of His grace that is ours in the forgiveness of sin through faith in Jesus Christ. [page 26]

13. God's Anger Is a Reminder We are Not Righteous.

The wrath of God is a righteous indignation that brings about the redemption of His people. The Bible tells us that because of the wrath of God, His righteousness has been revealed apart from the law (Rom. 3:21). God's wrath is for the purpose of pointing people to His mercy in Christ. His anger against sin reminds us that we are not righteous, that we stand in need of righteousness. [pages 26-27]

14. Christ Saves, not Faith.

... though faith is important, we must remember that it is not ultimate. It is not faith that turns away God's wrath and anger against sin; it is the blood of Christ. It is not faith that saves; it is the finished work of Christ. Admittedly, faith is important. We cannot be saved without faith. However, it is Christ who saves, not faith. While faith brings the righteousness of Christ to us, it is the righteousness of Christ that actually earns us God's pleasure. [page 28]

15. Christ's Blood Took God's Punishment for Us.

The blessed truth is that Christ, by His blood – His life and death – has taken God's wrath and punishment for us. When Christ was on the cross, He not only took the

punishment due for our sin, He took the wrath of God, the righteous indignation associated with the punishment. [page 28]

16. In Christ, We Are Not the Objects of God's Wrath.

In the New Testament, the wrath and righteous anger of God is never toward His redeemed. It is never mentioned as against those in Christ. Rather, it is against the "sons of disobedience" (Eph. 5:6); those in sin, not those in Christ (Col. 3:5-7). In fact, because we are in Christ, we are not the objects of God's wrath in this life or the life to come (1 Thess. 5:9). The blood of Christ has propitiated God's righteous anger against our sin. [page 30]

17. Redeemed through Christ's Blood.

Just as God redeemed the Israelites from Egypt through the blood of the lambs on their doorposts, so all God's people ultimately are redeemed through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. [page 42]

18. Brought into Light of His Grace.

We come into the world held captive by sin. We live every day according to the edicts of our master and in accordance with our captivity. The human race apart from Christ is hopelessly and helplessly held captive in sin's dark night. However, when faith in Christ is realized, our condition changes – we are brought to the light of His grace. [page 43]

19. Romans 8:28, A Comfort for Christians.

When the Bible speaks of election, it does so to give glory to God and comfort to His people. The often-quoted Romans 8:28 – "And we know that for those who are called according to His purpose" – appears in the context of the Apostle Paul's teachings on God's electing and predestining purposes. This verse has served as a balm for many anxious and troubled Christians. [page 45]

20. We Are Adopted into God's Family.

God in love predetermined that we would be members of His family through the redemptive blood of Christ. In other words, those whom He redeems from sin, He adopts into His family. The redeemed who were once in bondage to sin are now sons and daughters of God. This is the blessed privilege of the redeemed. This is the glory of the Redeemer. [pages 48-49]

21. Breaks Down Hostility and Brings Peace.

The blood of Jesus tears down the walls of hostility and brings peace and prosperity of soul. It takes a people who are not His people and makes them His people under God, indivisible. The blood of Christ, spilled at the cross, is so powerful that it destroys all

foolish, oxymoronic statements we sometimes hear: “selfish Christian” – there is no self at the cross, only Jesus; “stingy Christian” – the cross is the greatest motivation for giving there could ever be; “proud Christian” – the ground at the foot of the cross is the humblest in the history of the world; or “racist Christian” – at the cross there is no Jew or Gentile, black or white, Arab or Asian. There is only Christ and those who are washed in His blood. [pages 57-58]

22. The Offer of Peace to All.

...Christ shed His blood as the ultimate sacrifice of God to reconcile sinners to Himself. It was the ultimate sacrifice of God to reconcile sinners to Himself. It was the ultimate gesture of amity. Those who refuse to receive the sacrifice of His blood cannot have peace with God and will often find themselves at odds with those who have. Yet the gracious offer of peace is made to all. [page 66]

23. Christ’s Work Much More than Old Testament Sacrifices.

When Christ came, He put an end to the Old Testament priesthood and all the ritual sacrifices and washings. He did this by becoming not only the Great High Priest, but also the sacrifice that washes His people from all their guilt and sin. There was a cleansing that took place in the Old Testament by the work of the priests, by the way of the blood of bulls and goats. The Bible says that the work of Christ is “much more” (v. 14). [pages 71-72]

24. Augustine, Changed by Christ’s Blood.

The story is told that Augustine, the fourth-century theologian and bishop of Hippo in North Africa, after confessing faith in Jesus Christ, ran into a former mistress on the street. Immediately upon recognizing her, Augustine reversed his course and began moving swiftly in the opposite direction. The woman, surprised in seeing Augustine and equally surprised at his reversal of his route, cried out, “Augustine, it is I.” Augustine, continuing to move away from her, replied, “Yes, but it is not I.” [page 79]

25. God Is Holy, Holy, Holy.

In his classic work *The Holiness of God*, R.C. Sproul explains:

Only once in sacred Scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree. Only once is a characteristic of God mentioned three times in succession. The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that He is merely holy, or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love; or mercy, mercy, mercy; or wrath, wrath, wrath; or justice, justice, justice. It does say that He is holy, holy, holy, that the whole earth is full of His glory. [page 81]

26. The Christian's Holiness Detached from the World, Yet Involved.

J.I. Packer reminds us:

The Christian's holiness, like his Master's, is his living out a relationship to the world of men where he is in it without being of it (see John 17:14-16). This requires both separation and identification, both detachment and involvement. [pages 83-84]

27. "The Elect" = God's People.

"Elect" is a term of loving endearment. in the Bible, particularly in the New Testament, God's people are consistently referred to as the "elect" or the "chosen" (Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Peter 2:9). In fact, this is one of the favorite ways in which the New Testament writers are moved to refer to God's people. [page 93]

28. Our Obedience of Faith.

Joyful obedience is the only faithful response to the gospel and the right response to election. The Bible reminds us that our obedience is an obedience of faith (Rom 1:5, 16:26). It is the necessity and faithful consequence of the love of God in choosing sinners to be saved in Christ Jesus. If we love Christ, we joyfully obey Him (John 14:15). The commands of Christ are loving edicts of a faithful Master. Like Peter (2 Peter 1;1), Paul (Rom. 1:1, Phil. 1:1), and James (James 1:10, we have no problem in calling ourselves slaves of Christ, who alone is worthy of our loving, unquestioned obedience. [page 96]

29. Freed from Sin by Christ.

As powerful as sin is, the blood of Christ is more powerful still. In Christ, the chains of our captivity have been broken, and the light of His grace has shone the way of freedom. But how has He freed us? Christ has secured our freedom because, in the shedding of His blood, He operated in the divinely ordained munus triplex, the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King. This is why He is called "the faithful witness" (as Prophet); "the first-born of the dead" (as Priest); and "the ruler of kings on earth" (as King). In the threefold office of Christ, we are granted our freedom from sin.

As Prophet, Jesus pronounced an end to all our sin. In the Old Testament, the prophet was the mouthpiece of God to the people. In fact, the prophet often prefaced his words by saying, "Thus says the Lord." As God's mouthpiece, the prophet spoke the words of indictment against the people for their sin (Isa. 1:4) and called them to repentance (v.18). The prophet pronounced the forgiveness and pardon of God (Isa. 40:1-2). Jesus, as the final and sufficient Prophet, has done all of these for us. He came not just proclaiming the Word of God; He is the Word of God (John 1:1)" He came to the world

because of sin (Matt' 1:21). He proclaimed our need to repent and believe on Him (Mark 1:15). And He proclaimed our pardon and forgiveness for sin (Col. 1:14).

As Priest, Jesus offered Himself as the sacrifice for all our sin. In the Old Testament, the high priest was the mediator between the holy God and His sinful people. As mediator, the high priest entered the Holy Place and offered a sacrifice to God on behalf of the people once a year on the Day of Atonement (Lev.16:34). He sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy seat "because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins" (Lev. 16:16). This he did year after year after year. Christ, as our Mediator and High Priest, not only offered the sacrifice (once and for all), but He is the sacrifice. Like the high priest of old, Christ entered the Holy Place, but unlike the high priest, He entered to offer Himself. He had to enter only one time, for He sprinkled His own blood on the mercy seat. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us:

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Heb. 9: 11-14)

As King, Jesus rules in such a way as not to allow sin to reign over us any longer. In the Old Testament, the monarchy was established for the peace, prosperity, and welfare of the nation. The prototype king was David. No king was ever as beloved as He was. He was God's viceregent among the people. With David on the throne, the nation of Israel could say, "All is well." Few things comfort a nation more than having a ruler of righteousness and strength sitting on the throne of power. It was said of David that he "reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people" (2 Sam. 8: 15). However, we have a King greater than David. Christ came in the line of David as David's son and yet also as David's Lord (Matt. 22:42-45). He is "the ruler of kings on earth" (Rev. 1:5) and "King of kings and Lord of lords" (19: 16), including David. He rules with perfect justice and equity. As our King, He has fought our battles and now rules in such a way that sin never can reign over us (Rom. 6:7-14). [pages 110-113]

30. Christ, Our Prophet, Priest, and King.

In Christ, we have a Prophet who has brought the Word of God to us; we have a Priest who has offered Himself in our place; and we have a King who rules with justice and equity over His people. [page 113]