

# The Power of the Blood of Christ

by R. A. Torrey

(from *How To Obtain Fullness Of Power* by R.A. Torrey, ©1897, Fleming H. Revell Company)

"POWER BELONGETH unto God." It is therefore at man's disposal. But there is one thing that separates between man and God, that is, sin. We read in Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isa.59:1,2). Before we can know God's power in our lives and service,, sin must be put away from God and us. It is the blood that puts away sin (Heb. 9:26). We must know the power of the blood if we are to know the power of God. Our knowing experimentally the power of the Word, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of prayer, is dependent upon our knowing the power of the blood of Christ. Let us see what the blood of Christ has power to do:

**1.** First of all, the blood of Christ is a propitiation for sin. In Romans 3:25, R.V., we read,

*Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God."*

In the earlier verses of this chapter Paul has proven all men to be sinners, "every mouth is stopped," all the world is seen to be "guilty before God." But God is holy, a God who hates sin. God's hatred of sin is no play hatred. It is real, it is living, it is active. It must make itself manifest somehow. God's wrath at sin must strike somewhere. What hope then is there for any of us; for we "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"? In verse 25, God gives us His own answer to this tremendously important question. There is hope for us because God Himself has provided a propitiation, the shed blood of Christ. God has 'set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood.' The wrath of God at sin strikes on Him instead of striking on us. Of this great truth the Prophet Isaiah got a glimpse several hundred years before the birth of Christ. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid [literally, made to strike] on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

The first power of Christ's blood is the propitiation for sin, affording a mark for and satisfying God's holy wrath at sin. He is "our passover" (I Cor. 5:7) and when God sees His blood, He will pass over and spare us, sinners though we are.

(Compare Exod. 12:13, 23.)

This propitiation is chiefly for the believer, "a propitiation, through faith." All of God's wrath at the believer's sins is fully appeased or satisfied in the blood of Christ. What a wonderfully comforting thought it is, when we think how often and how greatly we have sinned, and then think how infinitely holy God is, how He hates sin, to think that God's wrath has already been fully appeased in the shed blood of His own Son, the propitiation which He Himself provided!

The blood of Christ in a certain measure avails for all, for unbelievers as well as for believers, for the vilest sinner and the most stubborn unbeliever and blasphemer. In I John 2:2, R.V., we read, *"And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."* By the shed blood of Christ a basis is provided upon which God can deal in mercy with the whole world. All of God's dealings in mercy with man are on the ground of the shed blood of Christ. God's dealings with those who ridicule the doctrine of the Atonement, God's dealings with Voltaire, Tom Paine and Colonel Ingersoll, are all on the ground of that shed blood. All of God's dealings in mercy with any man since the fall of Adam are on the ground of that shed blood. If it had not been for the shed blood, God could never have dealt in mercy with a sinner, but must have at once cut him off in his sin.

If anyone asks, How then could God have dealt in mercy with sinners before Christ came and died?- the answer is simple. Jesus is the Lamb that hath been "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). From the moment sin entered into the world, God had His eyes upon that sacrifice which He Himself had prepared from the foundation of the world. And in the very Garden of Eden the blood of sacrifices that pointed forward as types to the true sacrifice began to flow. It is the power of the blood which has secured to men all the merciful things God has wrought for them since sin entered. The most determined rejector of Christ owes all he has that is good to the blood of Christ.

**2.** Again in Ephesians 1:7, R.V., we read,

*"...We have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses...."*

Through the blood of Christ we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sin is not something the believer in Christ is to look forward to in the future; it is something he already has. "We have," says Paul, "the forgiveness of our trespasses." The forgiveness of sin is not something we are to do something to secure. It is something which the blood of Christ has already secured, and which our faith simply appropriates and enjoys. Forgiveness has already been secured for every believer in Christ by the power of the blood.

You have heard of the old woman who lay dying. her rector heard of it and called upon her. "They tell me," he said, "that you are dying."

"Yes," she replied.

"And have you made your peace with God?"

"No," came the answer.

"And are you not afraid to meet God without making your peace with Him?"

"Not at all," was the answer and startled the minister.

The minister grew earnest. "Woman, do you realize that you have but a short time to live and that you must soon meet a holy God?"

"Yes, I realize it perfectly."

"And you are not afraid?"

"Not at all."

"And you have not made your peace with God?"

"No."

"What do you mean?" cried the astonished rector.

A smile passed over the features of the dying woman. "I have not made my peace with God because I do not need to. Christ made peace more than eighteen hundred years ago by the blood of His cross (Col.1:20), and I am simply resting in the peace he made."

Oh, blessed is the one who has learned to rest in the peace Christ made, who counts his sins forgiven because Christ's blood was shed and God says so! "...We have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7, R.V.).

**3.** There is a third passage very akin to this, that brings out the power of Christ's blood. it is I 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."*

This brings out the completeness of the forgiveness we get through the blood. The blood of Christ has power to cleanse the believer from all sin. It continually "cleanseth," is cleansing, keeping him clean every day and hour, and every minute. The cleansing here is from the guilt of sin. When cleansing is mentioned in the Bible in connection with the blood, it is always cleansing from guilt. Cleansing from the power of sin and the presence of sin is by the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the living and indwelling Christ, not the crucified Christ. Christ on the cross saves from the guilt of sin; Christ on the throne saves from the power of sin; and Christ coming again will save from the presence of sin. But the blood of Christ cleanses from all the guilt of sin, when one is walking in the light, submitting to the light, and walking in Christ who is the light. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. His past may be as bad as a past can be. There may have been countless enormous sins, but they are all, every one, the greatest and the smallest, washed away. His record is absolutely white in God's sight. As white as the record of Jesus Christ Himself. His sins which were as scarlet are as white as snow, though they were red like crimson, they are as wool (Isa. 1:18).

The blood of Christ has power to wash the blackest record white. Some of us may have had a black past. We all have had; for if we could see our past as God sees it before it is washed, the record of the best of us would be black, black, black. But if we are walking in the light, submitting to the truth of God, believing in the light, in Christ, our record today is white as Christ's garments were when the disciples saw Him on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:2, Mark 9:3, Luke 9:29). No one can lay anything to the charge of God's elect (Rom. 8:33): there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1).

**4.** Again in Romans 5:9, we read,

*"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."*

The blood of Christ has power to justify. Every believer in Christ is already justified in Christ's blood. Justified means more than forgiven and cleansed. Forgiveness, as glorious as it is, is a negative thing. It means merely that our sins are put away and we are regarded as if we had not sinned. But justification is positive. It means that we are reckoned positively righteous; that positive and perfect righteousness, even the perfect righteousness of Christ, is put to our account.

It is a good thing to be stripped of vile and filthy rags, but it is far better to be clothed with garments of glory and beauty. In forgiveness we are stripped of the vile and stinking rags of our sins; in justification we are clothed upon with the glory and beauty of Christ. It is the power of the blood which secures this. In

shedding His blood as a penalty for sin, Christ took our place, and when we believed in Him, we step into His place. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21, R.V.).

**5.** Let us now look at Hebrews 9:14, R.V.,

*"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscious from dead works to serve the living God?"*

The blood of Christ has power to cleanse the conscious from dead works to serve the living God. Do you understand what that means? It is a glorious truth and I will try to make it plain. When a man is wakened up to the fact that he is a sinner and that God is holy, he feels that he must do something to please God and atone for sin. He must "do penances," "keep Lent," or give away money, or do something else, to atone for his sins. Now all these self efforts to please God and atone for sins are "dead works." they can never accomplish what they aim at, and can never bring peace.

How many weary years Martin Luther sought peace in this way and found it not. But when we see the power of the blood, how it has already perfectly atoned for sin, how it has already washed away our sins and justified us before God, how we are already pleasing and acceptable in God's sight by reason of that shed blood, then our consciences are not only relieved from the burden of guilt, but also from the burden of these self-efforts, and we are now at liberty to serve the living God, not in the slavery of fear, but in the liberty of the freedom and joy of those who know they are accepted and beloved sons. It is the blood that delivers us from the awful bondage of thinking we must do something to atone for sins and please God. The blood shows us that it is already done.

A friend of mine once said to another who was seeking peace by doing, "You have a religion of two letters. My religion is a religion of four letters."

"How is that?" asked the other.

"Your religion is do. My religion is done. You are trying to rest in what you do. I am resting in what Christ has done."

There are many Christians today who have not permitted the blood of Christ to cleanse their consciences from dead works. They are constantly feeling they must do something to atone for sin. Oh, my brother, my sister, look at what God looks at, the blood, and see that it is all done, already done! God is satisfied, sin is atoned for, you are justified. Now don't do dead works to commend yourself to

God; but, realizing that you are already commended by the blood, serve Him in the freedom of gratitude and love, and not in the bondage of fear.

There are three classes of men. First, those who are not burdened by sin, but love it. That is wholly bad. Second, those who are burdened by sin and seek to get rid of it by self-effort. That is better, but there is something infinitely better yet. Third, those who see the hideousness of sin, and were burdened for it, but who have been brought to see the power of the blood, settling sin forever, putting it away (Heb. 9:26), and so are no longer burdened, but now work not to commend themselves to God, but out of joyous gratitude to Him who perfectly justifieth the ungodly through the shed blood.

**6.** In Acts 20:28, we read,

*"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."*

And in revelation 5:9, R.V.,

*"And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation."*

The blood of Christ has power to purchase us unto God, to make us God's own. The blood of Christ makes me God's own property. That thought brings to me a feeling of responsibility. If I belong to God, I must serve Him wholly; body, soul, and spirit, must be surrendered wholly to Him. But the thought that I am God's property brings also a feeling of security. God can and will take care of His own property. The blood of Christ has power to make me eternally secure.

**7.** We learn still more about the power of the blood in Hebrews 10:19, 20, R.V.,

*"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, the flesh."*

The blood of Christ has power to give the believer boldness to enter into the holy place, to approach into the very presence of God. In the old Jewish days of the tabernacle and temple God manifested Himself in the most holy place. This was the place to meet God. But into this holy place only one Jew in all the nation was allowed to enter, the high priest; and he only once a year, on the day of atonement; and then only with blood. God was teaching the Jews, and through them the world, three great truths-- God's unapproachable holiness, man's

sinfulness, and that sinful man could approach a holy God only through atoning blood, that "without shedding of blood" there could be "no remission," and consequently no approach to God (Heb. 9:22). But the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices was only a figure of the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ; and, by reason of His shed blood, the vilest sinner who believes on Him has the right to approach God-- come into His very presence, when he will, without fear, "in full assurance of faith," "with boldness."

Oh, the wondrous power of the blood of Christ to take all fear away when I draw near to that God who is holy and is a "consuming fire"! God is holy? Yes. And I am a sinner? Yes-- but by that wondrous offering of Christ "once and for all" my sin is forever put away, I am "perfected" and "justified," and, on the ground of that blood so precious and satisfying to God, I can march boldly into the very presence of God.

But the blood of Christ has still further power. Read Revelation 22:14, R.V.,

*"Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city."*

By comparing this verse with chapter 7 and verse 14, we see that it is in the blood of Christ that robes are washed. The blood of Christ then has power to give those who believe in Him a right to the tree of life and entrance into the city of God. Sin in the first place shut men away from the tree of life and out of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24). The shed blood of Christ opens to us again the way to the tree of life and to the New Jerusalem. The blood of Christ regains for us all that Adam lost by sin, and brings us much more than we lost.

We see something of the power of the blood of Christ. Have you appreciated that blood? Have you let it have power in your life that it ought to have? There are some today who are trying to devise a theology that leaves out the blood of Christ. Poor fools! Christianity without atoning blood is a Christianity without mercy for the sinner, without settled peace for the conscience, without genuine forgiveness, without justification, without cleansing, without boldness in approaching God, without power. It is not Christianity, but the devil's own counterfeit. If we would know fullness and power in Christian life and service, we must first of all know the power of the blood of Christ, for it is that which brings us pardon, justification, and boldness in our approach to God. We cannot know the power of the Spirit unless we first know the power of the blood. We certainly cannot know the power of prayer unless we know the power of that blood by which alone we can approach unto God.

There are some teachers of "the higher life" who ignore the fundamental truth about the blood. They are trying to build a lofty superstructure without a firm

foundation. It is bound to tumble. We must begin with the blood, if we are to go on to the "holy of holies." The brazen altar where blood was shed first met every priest who would enter into the holy place. There is no other way of entrance there. If we do not learn the lesson of this chapter, it is vain for us to try to learn the lessons of chapters 3 and 4. To everyone who wishes to know the power of the Spirit we first put the question, "Do you know the power of the blood?"