

Atonement Realised

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the spiritual value and eternal preciousness of the Blood of Christ, and how it is not to be used for protection, but rather as a symbol of redemption and forgiveness of sins.

Scripture: Matthew 26:28, John 6:53-56, Acts 13:39, Romans 8:1, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Revelation 12:11

Topics: "New Covenant vs Old Covenant", "Atonement"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the critical distinction between the Old and New Covenants, arguing that many Christians misuse Biblical phrases related to the Blood of Christ due to a lack of understanding. He warns against superstitious practices that treat the Blood as a magical covering, asserting that true protection and redemption come from a deep, personal relationship with Jesus rather than ritualistic applications. North highlights that the early Church did not practice blood-sprinkling or seek protection through the Blood, but rather experienced forgiveness and cleansing through faith in Christ. He concludes that redemption is found in Jesus Himself, not merely in His Blood, and encourages believers to embrace the newness of life in Christ, free from outdated practices. The sermon calls for a renewal of understanding and speech that reflects the fullness of life in the Spirit.

Transcript

Perhaps the greatest tragedy underlying much of the unwarrantable misuse of precious spiritual Biblical phraseology is the failure to distinguish the difference between the Old and New Covenants. Because a phrase is Biblical it does not follow that it is correct when used outside of its historical and dispensational setting.

Another great tragedy is surely the fear that underlies so much of the practice now made obsolete by God and therefore unacceptable to Him. It chiefly arises from a misplaced emphasis upon the power of black magicians using black arts to destroy people, or the work of God. Persons who ought to know better are teaching other persons who know less than they to live and move in fear of mediums and magicians, whose power against them was all destroyed at Calvary. This gives rise to all such superstitious uses of the Blood as covering oneself with it and sprinkling one's possessions with it. Everything must be treated in this way it is said -- houses, rooms, cars, situations. People will not get out of bed or enter homes, or go near a demon-possessed person, or even at times converse with another child of God unless some kind of prayer, pious enough in all conscience, is breathed concerning some use, or application, or coverage with

the Blood. The sad, sad reason implied if not plainly given is that because the agents of Satan have blood, human, animal, birds', or mixtures of bloods, so also must we have blood to answer, combat, or afford protection from that devilish medium. But this is not so. One real deep inward soul-drink of the spiritual value and eternal preciousness of that Blood of Christ is sufficient and more than sufficient to undo all the works of Satan. To find, collect, and use the finest selection of Biblical phrases concerning the Blood is not a Biblical prescription for overcoming Satan or giving protection from his powers. Superstition is not faith, and superstitious use of the Bible is not the least common fault among Christians today. This all must be banished from the churches for it does not honour, but dishonour the Blood.

There can be no doubt that the practices of the early Church are the surest guide to correct behaviour in all matters. The account of their habits, together with the epistles of guidance, and correction, and instruction, and edification, and education, form a major part of the New Testament canon. Nowhere in any of these, throughout the Acts of the Apostles and onwards (or, for that matter, in the Gospels either) is there any suggestion that the Church of Jesus Christ should act in such a manner as has been described. Not once is coverage or protection sought from or by the Blood. Instead the real reason for the shedding of the Blood is set forth in plainest terms, the forgiveness of sins, redemption, cleansing, drink. These things being had in experience there was nothing to cover, no protection needed. If a man is made the righteousness of God, does that condition need covering? And if so, from whom and by what? It is the basic moral and spiritual quality of the Blood that has been drunk, and that righteousness is as needless of protection in us as in the One whose originally it was. In understanding we must be men.

Pursuing the theme a little further we notice that the saints spoken of in Revelation 12 overcame the dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, by the Blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they were not a lot of self-lovers. Obviously, since we must love someone or something, they loved the One who shed that Blood and were quite prepared to lay down their lives for Him or their brethren: more, if the word in chapter 1: 5-6 is any indication, they loved the Blood He shed also. By it and their testimony they had no difficulty in defeating the devil. We are not told what they said, nor are we told that they 'used' the Blood in any way; just the honest facts are stated, by these two things they overcame the dragon, fallen Lucifer in his most terrifyingly powerful form.

The absence of reference to any method or 'use' of the Blood in this case is quite typical of all the New Testament scriptures wherever it is mentioned. Nowhere are we told that the apostles practised blood-sprinkling, neither did they teach that the Blood of Jesus Christ was ever intended for that use in general practice when dealing with any variety of demon personage or demonic situation. It is an entirely gratuitous assumption, as erroneous as it is extra-Biblical, to believe or teach that the sons of God need either to sprinkle or cover themselves or others with the Blood. We must surely take it for granted that the early Church would have known the proper attitude to the Blood of the Lamb so lately shed. Therefore, it permits of no other interpretation than that the complete absence from scripture of any such practices as have sprung into popular use since the closing of the sacred canon shows them to be wrong.

Neither the Lord Jesus Himself during His earthly ministry, nor yet any of His chosen apostles after Him gave any instruction concerning blood-sprinkling or covering or pleading. They did not set any such example for the churches to follow, nor did they allude to any such practice, nor even hint at it. Nor can one example of it be found throughout the entire length of the Acts of the Apostles to give any ground for believing it to be Church tradition. To imply that the New Testament allows or promotes the practice and teaching of such things in connection with the Blood of the everlasting covenant is entirely erroneous: to infer that it may do is both mythical and repugnant; all are absolutely unnecessary and sheerly human,

and if not directly devilish such practices are at least utterly sensual. Coverage is not provided by the Blood of God's Lamb.

When God sent His Lamb into the world, it was a move back again to the original revelation in Genesis as contradistinctive to the teachings given later under the intervening Mosaic system. When speaking to the Jews in His day the Lord Jesus did not say, 'Your Mediator Moses rejoiced to see My day'.. . but, 'Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see My day'. . . for Moses spake of '... a lamb the lamb your lamb,' Exodus 12: 3-5, but Abraham said, 'God will provide Himself a Lamb.' Thus Abraham saw Jesus' day. But Moses had to deal with the blood of men's lambs; so coverage, sprinkling, striking, were its commanded usages. Because blood drinking was prohibited, men were inhibited and salvation was limited. Acts 13 : 39. Moses could not speak of salvation to the uttermost, whereas the Blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin. When we drink the Blood we are washed, sprinkled, purged, loosed, redeemed, forgiven -- according to the riches of His grace, not covered according to the limitations of law. All is internal, externality is finished.

It may be that Balaam has a word for us in all this. A wicked king had hired him to use witchcraft against Israel, and for love of money the hireling prophet was for a while willing to do so. But he soon discovered a most remarkable and patent fact which is recorded for us in Numbers 23 : 23. 'Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.... What hath God wrought!' Higher up we read, 'God hath blessed and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them.'

Let a man, even each member of the Israel of God, believe this truth, and he will not have need to relapse into Old Testament clichés, as sacred as they may appear. He will no more need to use its phraseology concerning blood than he will have need of that blood itself. The Blood of Jesus Christ goes on cleansing everyone who, having drunk it in order to become a son of Light, goes on walking in the light. A constantly cleansed man has no conscience of sin and no fear of evil; more than this, he is seldom if ever conscious that he needs protection. He does not believe his Lord is so forgetful of him that He needs continuously reminding to protect him. He lives in the glorious knowledge that all things work together for his good always. He finds that not only can he obey the injunction to give thanks in everything, but beyond that he also enjoys the mature word which fullness of the Spirit brings within his experience; viz., he finds himself giving thanks always for all things. Ephesians 5:18-20, a vastly better condition and attitude, and a much higher and fuller concept to be sure.

It must never be forgotten that the Bible says it is in Him we have redemption; not in His Blood but in Him. Of course it is through His Blood, but not in it. All redemption, even in historic Israel, was because of Him and the Blood He would shed; all is Him, in Him, of Him, and through Him to the Father. He and His Father were before ever He actually took flesh and blood, which He did in order that He should shed that Blood, so that by that act and through that Blood alone we might be born into Him. We do not, cannot drink the actual human physical substance of the Blood; instead the Holy Ghost has come, that in Him, the blessed Spirit, as from a sacred cup of Heavenly Life placed to the lips of the inward man, we may drink in all the virtuous Life of the soul of the Man Christ Jesus. As there are eyes of the heart, so are there ears of the heart, and lips of the heart even as also there are hands and feet and all faculties and senses and functions of the heart: we all have them; greater and more powerful than the outward, the inward man of the heart exists in us all in a state of death or life. Dead until he drink the Blood, alive only when he has drunk and as he does constantly drink it.

This is the perfect picture and truth of the Body. Does not every member of a body partake of and live by drinking in the blood of and in that same body? Even so does every member of His Body the Church live by drinking in the nature and virtue and life of Jesus Christ in the Spirit. This is why we are told that we are made to drink into one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). For the Life that was once manifested on the earth in the soul of the Man Christ Jesus, and is the truth for ever for every man, is brought unto us by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, from whom as a babe in the flesh on earth Jesus came by Mary to be life and truth for us all. Not outwardly now as distinct and separate from us, but inwardly, wholly, spiritually: that is, entire in spirit, as complete and wholesome, and actually He as ever He was when known as Jesus of Nazareth.

A man's redemption is Jesus. He is not only the Redeemer but also Redemption. As Redeemer He is generally only thought of in connection with a redemptive act -- Calvary, a price paid, a purchase made, a death died. But wonderful and indispensable as that was, it was and is of no avail unless He is also my Redemption. The Redemption is in Him through faith in His Blood. Redemption is Jesus' Life. Laid down it purchased me, taken up and lived in me it redeems me from myself and sin. Redemption is Jesus. Jesus in me is made Redemption to me. Jesus, as He lived and walked on this earth was Redemption. As the Son of man He redeemed human nature; that is, He was God's reason, just and holy and righteous, for redeeming me, because He proved that it was possible for human nature to be in the midst of sin and yet not sin, be beset by demons and not be defeated by them, be hated by men and still love them compassionately, tenderly, everlastingly, and ah, so much, much more. Where all men failed He succeeded; in every detail of life where I sinned He remained sinless and more beside; that is how and why He was and is Redemption. He, that Life, is God's justification for justifying me; He is made justification to me. He is Redemption. Redemption is not some thing God gives me, but a personal life, Jesus. He was made Redemption to me having been and being Redemption in Himself as a Man on the earth before me: this is God's magnanimity, and munificence to me. In him I have Redemption: through His Blood He was made Redemption to me; this is the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.

The end of this is that the life I now live in the flesh is His life not mine, and as He did not in the past need to be sprinkling blood, or pleading it, or getting under it, or covering Himself with it, neither does He require or need to do so in the present. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever, whether in Himself or in His people. His flesh is their meat, His Blood is their drink. 'He that eateth Me shall live by Me,' He said. It is quite impossible to eat raw flesh and not drink blood, for flesh is by blood. The Church of Jesus Christ is His Body -- of His flesh and of His bone. Let all who are His members know that all is within them as they are in Him, and let them slip out from under a yoke that neither their fathers nor they were able to bear. The Old is done away with all its irrelevant phrases. The practices and the language went together. The New has replaced the Old. therefore let spiritual and mental renewal result in newness of speech.

We are told that His Blood speaks. It has a language of its own which leaves us with no need to say anything. Abel's blood had to cry to God from the ground whereupon it was shed and by which it was absorbed. There was no-one to carry it to the heavenly Jerusalem, so it cried for vengeance. It had to be avenged even though vengeance may not have been in his heart when it was shed. But the Blood of Jesus speaks in Mount Zion where the glorious Christ mediates the Holy Spirit in unending love to bring us all back up into the image of God. The blood of sprinkling speaks to God and His answer is the outpoured Spirit. Where the Spirit dwelleth no protection is needed, for the Spirit is as the Blood and Him Who shed it. He is the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus, even the life that was in the Blood, the exact life. Being filled

with the Spirit I am filled with all that the Blood stands for; there is no difference, none at all. Now I have no need to find a form of speech for the Blood, instead I have the name. Jesus was the name given to that man of flesh and blood, and when I both bear and use it in all propriety and power, it carries all the virtue and meaning of the Blood to whatever need I have.

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