



*The Blood
in Relation to
Repentance,
Forgiveness, Acceptance
and Fellowship*

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(1843-1921)

The blood is always stated in Scripture to be the ground of our forgiveness. Perhaps I stand alone in that, but I certainly grew up thinking repentance was the ground of forgiveness. I thought that if I repented hard enough, and I understood repentance to mean feeling very bad about my sins, if I was sorry enough, in other words, for having sinned, that then I should be forgiven.

I was greatly surprised when I began to study the Bible to find that it was not my repentance nor anything else in me, that was the background of my forgiveness, but the blood of Christ that enables God, in Paul's phrase, to be "*just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*" (Romans 3:26). We think the problem is for us to reconcile the justice and equity of God with the condemnation of a sinner; but the problem up yonder, dear friends, is exactly reversed. It is in heaven's view how to find a way that God can be just and justify a sinner. It is perfectly simple that God can be just and condemn sinners; but how can God be just and justify sinners? The blood of Christ is the answer. The ground of our forgiveness and the ground of justification is being "*justified by His blood*" (Romans 5:9). We are justified by our faith instrumentally (Romans 3:28; Romans 5:1). Faith lays hold upon this.

Then again the blood – and the blood only – is the ground of our peace (Colossians 1:20). We speak sometimes of making peace with God. We cannot make peace with God. Peace is made by God, and peace is made by the blood of Christ, who did all that was necessary to make peace, and when we believe we enter into a peace which already exists.

When I was a boy I was a soldier in the Confederate army, and there came a time when the army of Northern Virginia was surrendered by our General to General Grant, the commander of the Union forces. General Lee and General Grant met together and arranged the terms upon which every one of us might enter into perfect peace with the United States Government, and we were very glad to do it. Now I did not have to hunt up General Grant, and make a little separate treaty for myself. I did not see him until long years after that at all. The two Generals made the terms, and we accepted then.

Jesus Christ made peace by the blood of His cross. A peace is made, an eternal peace that never can be destroyed, and a sinner enters upon it by an act of faith ...

How nigh are we made? "Accepted in the Beloved!" Think of it! The very moment that a sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is his position. Instantly made nigh by the blood. How can that ever be improved upon by anything we can do, or by any change of locality on our part? Could I ever be any nearer to God than accepted in His Son? If I could, then by so much I would displace Christ. If I can be nearer to Him than His Son Jesus Christ, then I can be nearer than Christ, and I push Christ back by so much. God forbid the thought!

But we are always trying to do something, or to feel something, or to come into some experience which shall make us nearer to God, instead of resting right back on the work of Christ which is finished – the blood that makes us nigh.

I remember years ago I heard a minister in what was intended to be a revival meeting begin a prayer in this way, "Oh Lord, from our great and guilty distance we venture to call upon Thy holy name," and I thought to myself, is the man converted, and if he isn't converted, why is he leading prayer in a meeting like this, and if he is converted does he know that he is made nigh by the blood of Christ? Does he not know that a converted man, received in the Beloved, is not at a great and guilty distance from God. He is right in the very heart of God, and that from the very moment when he believes. The blood is also the basis of Christian fellowship elsewhere. You have that in I Corinthians 10:16, "*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?*"

(edited and abridged)

Where Faith Sees Christ

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