

A. W. Tozer writes insightfully:

When the “south wind blew softly,” the ship that carried Paul sailed smoothly enough and no one on board knew who Paul was or how much strength of character lay hidden behind that rather plain exterior. But when the mighty tempest, Euroclydon, burst upon them, Paul's greatness was soon the talk of everyone on the ship. The apostle, though himself a prisoner, quite literally took command of the vessel, made decisions and issued orders that meant life or death to the people. And I think the crisis brought to a head something in Paul that had not been clear even to him. Beautiful theory was quickly crystallized into hard fact when the tempest struck.

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

51.Q. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

LI. A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days (Lev. 23:3), and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship (Ps. 92:1-2; Isa. 58:13-14), except so much as is taken up in the works of necessity and mercy (Matt. 12:11-12).

52.Q. Which is the fifth commandment?

LII. A. The fifth commandment is, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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THE BLOOD THAT SPEAKS

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Hebrews 12:24

Much is made of “better things” throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews. In particular the eternal priesthood of Christ is shown to be infinitely superior to that given under the Law. Here in the end of the letter the writer emphasizes the better position of the believer in terms of the things to which we are brought in comparison to Mount Sinai under which all stand condemned. By faith and in fact we are brought to approach and come near to the things listed in this passage. What an exciting thought that we (believers) have confidence and boldness to approach such wonder. Our topic comes at the end of a list which includes, the Heavenly Jerusalem, an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, to God the Judge of all, the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. Each of these things is awe-inspiring to consider and the whole of them is indescribable. The reason we may approach them is found in the blood of Christ our Lord.

The precious blood of Christ is never to be separated from the whole of His work of redemption. It stands central to all that is accomplished. It is the emblem of absolute necessity to salvation and thus is gladly removed from consideration as essential and efficacious by the postmodernists that are so prevalent today. Yet, it is the price of redemption, the ransom for many, and without it there is neither salvation nor hope. It behooves us to listen as

the “blood of sprinkling speaks.”

The first record of the shedding of blood in Scripture is implied with the Lord’s use of the skins of innocent animals to clothe the nakedness of Adam and Eve. The next is found in that Abel presented a more excellent sacrifice than Cain and shed the blood of a lamb. This was done by faith and was honored in that it was a picture of the sacrifice of Christ and was an act of sanctified obedience to the Lord. The next account of blood being shed was the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. It is recorded that the blood of righteous Abel cried unto the Lord from the ground and vengeance was enacted. It is in reference to this that the writer of Hebrews draws the comparison of the voice of Abel’s blood with that of the blood of Christ our Lord. There are similarities. Both were murdered by those who hated the righteousness of God as it is in Christ Jesus. In both was displayed the hatred of the seed of the serpent. But, there was no redeeming virtue in the blood of Abel and guilt and vengeance was the only message.

What then do we understand from the blood of sprinkling? Without trying to be exacting in definition, we would simply note that those things to be used for sacred symbolic purposes in the Old Testament were sprinkled with the blood of animals. We do not believe that the materials so sprinkled were changed in their makeup, but they were thusly set apart for specific purpose. We are thus made to think of

application. With the blood of our Lord, much more is accomplished. Those to whom the blood is applied are changed by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and their lives are set apart from the beginning for the Lord. The fact of a blood-bought redemption stands as the basis for all we have: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Ephesians 1:7.* That is an absolute to be trusted for all. The application, however, continues as it is applied to our hearts and minds. Our awareness and thus our faith are so increased: *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:22.*

So then we are brought to the “blood of sprinkling” that tells us of life. Our Lord declared in John 6:53 that without it you have no life in you. We learn that it is the blood of Christ that has taken away the wrath of God: *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; Romans 3:25.* How precious to our hearts and minds is it to consider that we have been declared innocent by the blood of

Christ: *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Romans 5:9.* Heathen worshipers stand at a distance in the fear of their false gods, while we have access freely to our God: *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Hebrews 9:12.* It is by His blood that we are sanctified: *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Hebrews 9:14.* And, we are reminded preciously that, *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:38* and that: *...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. 1 John 1:7.* Indeed we are “...made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

We are assured in that the blood of Christ is the basis for the intercession that continues for us in Heaven. The blood of Abel cried for justice, the blood of Christ cries out for mercy and is heard in the behalf of all who know mercy to be their only hope. *bhs*

"There is a sulking submission and there is a cheerful submission. There is a fatalistic submission which takes this attitude—this is inevitable, so I must bow to it; and there is a thankful submission, receiving with gratitude whatever God may be pleased to send us. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes" (Ps. 119:71). The Psalmist viewed his chastisements with the eye of faith, and doing so he perceived the love behind them. Remember that when God brings His people into the wilderness it is that they may learn more of His sufficiency; when He casts them into the furnace it is that they may enjoy His presence." Arthur Pink, "Subjection Under God's Chastisement"

"God has promised deliverance to believers in Christ. But there are two ways in which deliverance may come. We may be delivered from death so that we can live to further advance the gospel with our mouths. Or, we may be delivered through death, as countless martyrs through the centuries have been, instantly ushered into the presence of Christ, but still advancing the gospel with our blood. We either win by living, and the world gets more of Jesus from us. Or we win really big by dying, and we get more of Jesus in His presence! The one thing we cannot do is "lose our lives" for the gospel. That is impossible. We can only "gain our lives" if "we lose them" and if we die physically, we gain them even quicker." David Sitton *Reckless Abandon*

On Preaching Christ.

"We preach Christ Crucified." 1 Cor. 1:23.

There are many weighty reasons for rendering Christ prominent in our ministry:

1. Christ cheers the prospect. Everything connected with Him has light and gladness thrown round it. I look out of my window-the scene is scowling-dark-frigid-forbidding: I shudder, my heart is chilled. But, let the sun break forth from the cloud-I can feel-I can act-I can spring.
2. God descending and dwelling with man is a truth so infinitely grand, that it must absorb all other, "You are his attendants! Well! but the KING! There he is! the KING!"
3. Out of Christ God is not intelligible. A sick woman said to me, "Sir, I have no notion of God. I can form no notion of Him. You talk to me about Him, but I cannot get a single idea that seems to contain any thing." "But you know how to conceive of Jesus Christ as a man! God comes down to you in Him, full of kindness and condescension." "Ah! Sir, that gives me something to lay hold on. There I can rest. I understand God in his Son." But if God is not intelligible out of Christ, much less is He amiable, though I ought to feel Him so. He is an object of horror and aversion to me, corrupted as I am! I fear-I tremble-I resist-I hate-I rebel.
4. A preacher may pursue his topic, without being led by it to Christ. A man who is accustomed to investigate topics is in danger. He takes up his topic and pursues it. He takes up another and pursues it. At length Jesus Christ becomes his topic, and then he pursues that. If he cannot so feel and think as to bend all subjects gracefully to Christ, he must seek his remedy in selecting such as are more evangelical.
5. God puts peculiar honor on the preaching of Christ crucified. A philosopher may philosophize his hearers, but the preaching of Christ must convert them. John the Baptist will make his hearers tremble; but, if the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he, let him exhibit that particular feature of his superiority-Jesus Christ. Men may preach Christ ignorantly-blunderingly-absurdly: yet God will give it efficacy, because He is determined to magnify his own ordinance.
6. God seems, in the doctrine of the Cross, to design the destruction of man's pride. Even the murderer and the adulterer sometimes become subjects of the grace of the Gospel, because the murderer and are more easily convinced and humbled: but the man of virtue is seldom reached, because the man of virtue disdains to descend. Remember me, said a dying malefactor! God, I thank Thee, condemned a proud Pharisee! Richard Cecil 1830
(Contributed by Ron Rumburg)

OUR HOSTILE CULTURE

Our culture is hostile to Christian faith. We no longer live in a time or a place where what we believe constitutes the norm, or even an accepted point of view. What we believe flies in the face of the cherished principles of religious relativism, tolerance, and philosophical pluralism. We are considered "untrained and uneducated" men and women from whom our culture needs to be protected. We are the modern version of Peter and John standing before a Sanhedrin armed with television and radio stations, colleges and universities, newspapers and books, all being leveraged against "the faith that was once for all handed down to the saints." Struggle is inevitable. Conflict is at hand. Will we bow before the god of culture? Or will we plant our feet, square our shoulders, lift our heads, and give an account to all those who ask us not just what we believe but why? Voddie Baucham *The Everloving truth*