

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

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The Water and the Blood

As his lifeless body hung upon the cross, a roman soldier took his spear and ran it into Jesus' side. From the opening caused by the spear, water and blood flowed out. This was very strange because once the heart has ceased to beat a body does not bleed. Nevertheless, John is adamant; it was water AND blood that flowed from the side of Jesus Christ. *John 19:34.* John continues, saying, *"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true..."* *John 19:35.* Of course John saw the water and the blood, but in this statement he is speaking of someone much greater than John who also witnessed this event.

Over sixty years after the crucifixion of Christ, the apostle John is an old man as he gives a written record of how we can know that we abide in Christ. *1 John 4:13.* John is very clear, those who abide in Christ do not sin, *1 John 3:6* they do righteousness, *1 John 2:29* and they overcome the world *1 John 5:4.* It is when speaking of those who overcome the world that John gives us the great source of their victory, saying *"This is he (the overcomer) that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood..."* *1 John 5:6.* In this simple statement John lets us know that to come *"by Jesus Christ"* is to come by the water and blood that flowed from his pierced side. John reminds us that it wasn't just water that came forth that day, but water AND blood. The truth of what happened is so

important that John says *“And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.”* ^{1 John 5:6, John 19:35.} The apostle Paul confirms that *“he that came by water and blood”* is speaking of the believer coming to God, when he exhorts us to *“...enter into the holiest **by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, **through** the veil, that is to say, **his flesh.**”*** Hebrews 10:19-20.

The importance of both *“the water and the blood”* is revealed in the epistle to the Hebrews. The Law, having only a *“shadow of good things to come”* ^{Hebrews 10:1,} could only give us “shadowy glimpses” of the reality Christ would bring to us. At the heart of the Law’s ceremonial cleansing was both water and blood. The apostle said *“...almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”* ^{Hebrews 9:22.} The other important part of these cleansings were the *“divers washings”* ^{Hebrews 9:10.} Many different *“washings”* were required, both for the priest and the people; perhaps the foremost of these being the *“water of separation”* of which we will speak later.

The blood of goats and bulls, being only a foreshadow of something better, could never take away sin. ^{Hebrews 10:4.} If it could, the worshipper would no longer have a *“conscience of sins”* (a sinful conscience). ^{Hebrews 10:2.} The conscience spoken of in the book of Hebrews is the *“moral consciousness.”* It is the inner thoughts and feelings of a person. The scripture is clear that the *“blood of Christ purges our conscience from dead works”* ^{Hebrews 9:14} and *“sprinkles our heart from an evil conscience.”* ^{Hebrews 10:22.} In fact the sum of the message of the

blood in the book of Hebrews is that “...*Jesus also, that he might **sanctify the people with his own blood**, suffered without the gate.*” Hebrews 13:12. The blood of Christ was shed to purge us from the source of sin, which is the sinful conscience (the sinful nature). Only when your conscience is purged by the blood of Christ does your struggle with sin cease.

Under the Law, the purpose of the “*divers washings*” was a bit different than the purpose of “sprinkling the blood.” While the blood ceremonially dealt with the iniquity of the people, the washings were more about dealing with filth and contamination. The priests would wash before entering the holy places or doing certain priestly services. There were washings for the people that in most cases seemed to deal primarily with keeping contaminations from being passed on to others. At the center of this was the “*water of separation.*”

The Law commanded the priest to offer a “*red heifer*” as a burnt offering. Then “*a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a **water of separation**: it is a purification for sin.*” Numbers 19:9. In calling this “*water of separation*” a “*purification for sin*” the Law was speaking of the reality that would one day come into being through the offering of Christ. In fact, the water of separation was used by Israel to cleanse the people who had come in contact with unclean or harmful contaminants. Paul said it “...*sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh.*” Hebrews 9:13. Consider the following passage:

*“And whosoever **toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave,** shall be unclean seven days. And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave: And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even. But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because **he hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD:** the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.”* Numbers 19:16-20.

Until their bodies were washed, the contaminated person was forbidden to enter the congregation lest they “*defile the sanctuary of the Lord.*” When a person is truly born of God, their conscience is purged from sin, and sin is no longer their heart or nature. Yet their body had been the tool of iniquity and borne the contaminations or “stains” of sin such as fornication, adultery, perversion, wrath, and many other like things. Many children of God rejoice that their heart has been purified, but still carry condemnation over the sins they once committed through their body. “Will my body which was once used for fornication be accepted into the holy presence of God?” “Can these hands that once smote in anger and hatred ever be instruments of righteousness

before the Most High?" Some believers wonder if the stain of sin is still present upon their fleshly members. "Am I defiling the sanctuary of the Lord with my presence?"

The apostle answers each of these questions in his simple exhortation to the children of God. He says, "*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, ...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 10:19-22. It needs to be established in every child of God's understanding that not only has Christ sprinkled their heart from an evil conscience, but he has also washed their body with pure water. He did this with the blood and water that flowed from his pierced side.

The apostle Paul reminds us of this wonderful truth when speaking of those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God. He names fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, and doers of other similar things. He then speaks to the children of God saying, and such WERE some of you: but **ye are washed**, but **ye are sanctified**, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." I Corinthians 6:11. The water and the blood that flowed from the side of Christ has sanctified our hearts from sin and washed our bodies from its every contamination and stain. Draw near into God's presence "*with full assurance of faith!*"