

His Blood, Our Obedience

I Peter 1:2

We take as our text today the words of the Apostle Peter in his first epistle as once more we turn our attention to verse 2 of chapter 1.

We have considered that we “have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit.”

Today our thoughts turn to his words “for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by His blood.”

As we ponder this phrase today, let’s bear in mind that many of those reading this were Jewish believers. For a moment Peter’s thoughts return to the Old Testament sacrificial system which was a picture of the sacrifice of Christ.

Let me also remind you that when it comes to our salvation, all three members of the Godhead had a role. They did not act alone or to the neglect of one of the other members of the Trinity.

As John Phillips in his commentary on I Peter so aptly put it “*God the Father thought it, God the Spirit wrought it, and God the Son bought it.*”

I want to once again say that the Bible is clear regarding the electing work of the Father, who through the Holy Spirit convicts the sinner opening his or her eyes to the need of a Savior and at the moment of belief applies the righteousness of Christ making that person a new creation. Our part in salvation is faith, to believe that the sacrifice of Christ on the cross satisfied the debt we owed that He took on Himself on our behalf. Hebrews 11:6 states that “without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that comes to God must believe that He is (that He exists) and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Let me mention that we are beginning a new study on Wednesday night looking at the doctrine of Christ. This Wednesday is our Business meeting,

so we’ll begin the following week and I invite you to come out to pray and to study.

As I look at our passage, I notice right away that word “obedience”. The first thing I would suggest to you this morning is that in salvation our submission is required. We must obey the call of God through the Holy Spirit urging us to believe the message and hope of salvation through Christ. Submission is very much a part of obedience. But in this case it is not dutiful resignation to the demands of an owner, but the willful and deliberate decision of the individual toward the call of a new Master. It is a choice.

I. OUR SUBMISSION IS REQUIRED

The dictionary goes on to define obedience as the act of carrying out the instructions or orders given by another or to submit to the control of another. It comes from a root word that means to hear.

Vine’s Expository Dictionary on New Testament Words adds an important component that helps us understand more clearly the intent of Peter in this phrase that is part of the context dealing with salvation.

“Faith is one of the main subjects of (Romans), and is the initial act of obedience in the new life, as well as an essential characteristic” of the ongoing life of the believer. As I said a moment ago, without faith we cannot please God either in being saved or in daily living after we are saved.

Last week we discussed the work of the Holy Spirit who, at the moment of salvation, makes us righteous so that God sees us as holy. But then from that moment on until we either leave this world through death or through the return of Christ, the Holy Spirit continues to work in us in our progress or practice toward holiness in this life. We’ll never achieve that perfect state or holiness now, but with the empowering work of the Holy

Spirit, we become more in practice what we already are in position.

For those of you who were here last week, you will remember that I used my Jr. High basketball experience to explain that even though I wasn't any good, I had a position on the team with a Jersey to prove it. But as I continued to grow and develop in skill I wasn't just positionally on the team I actually looked like a basketball player when I was on the court playing.

The role of the Holy Spirit is to convict me of my need for a Savior, showing that I have fallen short of God's standard and that only through faith in the righteousness of Christ and His death on the cross which is applied to me at the time of salvation, only then, will I be saved and at that moment He applies the righteousness of Christ so that in standing I am right with God. So when we look at the phrase we are considering today, my response, if I am to be saved, is obedience to the effectual call of God on my life through the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Let's be clear that our obedience to this call is a choice.

Now some will argue that the effectual work of the calling of God through the Holy Spirit is so powerful that the person will believe regardless, making it look like the person has no choice in the matter of salvation. But obedience to me is a matter of the will. The evidence is presented, I weigh out the options, and make a choice to obey or not, to believe or not.

In the case of salvation, obedience to the Holy Spirit's work is a choice. Let me return to a story I have shared in the past about the experience of my theology professor. In the church he pastored, week after week he could see the visible conviction of the Holy Spirit in the life of a man who faithfully attended with his wife. Each week at the invitation to receive Christ by faith he would notice the man struggling to make a decision. Each week he would

resist the call of God on his life to believe for salvation by gripping the pew in front of him or clenching his fists. One week he noticed the conviction was so strong the man clenched his fists and paced in a circle where he stood, unwilling to allow the Holy Spirit's call and conviction to surrender his life to Christ. The following Sunday the man returned with his wife, sat in the same pew, heard the same invitation, but this time when it was given, the man stood with a cold and expressionless demeanor. He had rejected the call of the Holy Spirit to the point where it had no effect.

When we hear and believe the result of the Spirit's work is our obedience, not just in salvation, but then in sanctification – to allow the Holy Spirit to continue to make us more like Christ in character. It is man's responsibility to hear and heed, to be submissive to God's Word.

Exodus 24:7

Romans 1:5

Romans 15:18

Romans 16:25-26

John MacArthur writes in his commentary that “to obey Jesus Christ is equivalent to being saved...Believers do not obey perfectly or completely, but none the less there is a pattern of obedience in their lives as they, through Christ, become servants of righteousness.”

I believe MacArthur is saying that the sinner is not only obedient to the call for salvation but to continue to be obedient in character from that moment on. When the disciples heard the call of Jesus to follow Him, they obeyed.

Romans 6:16-18

Romans 8:1-3

We see that saving faith and obedience go together. When we are obedient to the Spirit's conviction and we in faith believe, then our life demonstrates genuine change, we show the evidence of our being a new creation through how we live from that

moment on.
I John 2:3-6

I find that our obedience to Jesus Christ results in three things.

A. It Admits Our Guilt

If we are going to be saved we must first agree with God about our lost condition. We must admit that we are a sinner and have fallen short of His glory. There isn't a person, except Jesus Christ, who has met God's standard of holiness. There isn't anyone who is righteous.

If I have a problem some addiction the first step in getting help is to admit I have a problem.

The problem every one of has is called sin. God has the remedy but we must first admit that a problem exists that we can do nothing about on our own and He has the only remedy. In our obedience, admission is just the first step, but admission of our sin and lost condition alone doesn't save us. Obedience requires something else besides admitting we have a problem. Obedience accepts His gift.

B. It Accepts His Gift

God has offered to us a gift, one that He extends to everyone because He loved the world so much and is not willing that any should perish in their lost, sinful condition. So He has taken the initiative even before the foundation of the world to prepare a plan that would benefit anyone who would be saved. But we must accept that gift. Accepting that gift is another step in obedience. We hear, we believe, we take it – free of charge to us. It costs us nothing but we must accept it by faith, that what He has promised He is able to do.

I believe that faith is implied in the believing. We have faith in the promise of being saved solely on the basis of the One who made the promise that if

you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you will be saved, whoever believes will not perish but have everlasting life, if you have the Son, you have life. The word "have" in that verse implies an acceptance of the gift that has been offered by God that is in His Son.

By grace you are saved through faith. Eph. 2:8

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

"Call on the name of the Lord and you will be saved." Acts 2:21

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." Acts 16:31

If we are going to be saved we must be obedient to accept the gift offered to us. In his commentary Bruce Barton wrote "The act of God in their lives (referring to the believers in Asia Minor) turned them from their sin, as they submitted to the call of the gospel." They accepted the gift by faith.

And it is in that that I see the third result of obedience. Obedience applies His grace.

C. It Applies His Grace

When the Spirit calls and convicts and I in my part admit my sin and need of a Savior, accept that gift by faith, His grace applies the work of Christ to my life that brings about the result of salvation. Let's once again be clear that salvation is only by God's grace through our faith. It is God giving to me what I don't deserve, not based on any merit of my own, but something that is solely His doing out of love for us.

Someone once offered me a gift that initially I refused. It's not that I didn't want it but rather that I believed it should go to someone else, someone

more deserving. I didn't feel worthy of the gift. He insisted that he really wanted me to have that gift. After some additional encouragement I accepted it.

If I truly saw my sinfulness before a holy God, I should conclude that I don't deserve anything from God except His wrath and judgment. Some believe that they aren't worthy of it and so refuse it. They won't accept it.

Some think others are more deserving. But let's face it, none of us deserves His gift of eternal life. But He offers it anyway and we choose to accept it fully understanding that it is by His grace.

If we are to receive eternal life, our submission is required. And it is in the second part of that phrase we see how it is possible. It comes through the sprinkling of His blood. Now by sprinkling it is not meant that Jesus only had to cut a finger and squeeze out some blood as we might do for a blood sample. When Peter speaks here of the sprinkling of Jesus' blood death is implied.

When the High priest took blood into the Holy of Holies to sprinkle on the altar, it came from an animal that had been slain.

The author of Hebrews emphatically reminds us that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. It is in reference to the shed blood of Christ on the cross. The reference to sprinkling would be especially noteworthy to his Jewish audience. They would understand the word picture used by Peter here. Through the sprinkling of His blood His sacrifice is redeeming.

II. HIS SACRIFICE IS REDEEMING

I love the old hymns. Maybe it's because it's what I grew up with. There is something about the richness of the music both in the melody and the harmony. I also love the deep theology. Songs like Trust and Obey
Victory in Jesus

Amazing Grace
Mansion Over the Hilltop
I'll Fly Away
In the Garden
Holy, Holy, Holy
All Hail the power of Jesus' Name

But I suppose if there was one genre of hymns that I never get tired of singing it would be songs about the blood of Christ. Of all the hymns they hold the greatest significance for me. They resonate at the very core of my being. The shed blood makes it possible for me to be saved.

Without the blood of Christ there is no victory.
Without the blood there will be no garden in which to pray.

Without the blood I have no mansion or cottage.

Without the blood there is no grace.

Without the blood of Christ there is no salvation.

In and with and through His blood there is purpose, there is power, and there is promise.

- A. His Blood's Purpose
- B. His Blood's Power
- C. His Blood's Promise

Hymn #329 – There Is Power in the Blood

Hymn #330 – Are You Washed in the Blood?

Hymn #332 – I Know a Fount

Hymn #333 – O the Blood of Jesus (1)

Hymn #334 – The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power

Hymn #336 – There Is a Fountain

Hymn #337 – Nothing but the Blood

I John 1:7 speaks to all three – the purpose, the power, and the promise.

“The blood of Jesus, His Son, *purifies* us from *all* sin.” (Emphasis added)

I am purified from all sin.

All means all that's all all means.

Not partially cleansed or temporarily cleansed, not from some of them but not others, not sins I commit today, but not tomorrow, not from those I committed in the past but not the future, not just

from certain types of sins, but instead I am cleansed from ALL my sin. Someone give a witness.

It is in His shed blood that we find the purpose – it is to purify us from sin.

It is in His shed blood that we have power over sin – to purify us from all sin.

It is in His shed blood that we have the promise – we are cleansed from all our sin.

In the Old Testament the sprinkling of blood was a symbol of cleansing.

Exodus 12:14

Leviticus 7:14

Leviticus 16:14-15 – Day of Atonement

In the New Testament

Hebrews 9:11-15

Regarding this passage John Phillips concludes that “Jesus has presented His blood in the heavenly sanctuary and sprinkled it as an eternal witness that our salvation is secure and eternal and that God is completely and eternally satisfied.”

While the Old Testament sacrifice had to be offered year after year, it could never atone for sin. It was only temporary. It was only a picture of what the Messiah would do on the cross and had to do only once if we were to be saved. Christ’s shed blood is permanent. They had to believe that a redeemer would come. We have to believe that the redeemer has come.

Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest adds an important truth. “The act of the believer’s faith is found in the word obedience, which is not the obedience of the saint, but that of the sinner to faith; for this act is answered by his being cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus.”

At the moment of faith, the sinner is cleansed by the blood of Christ applied to him by the Holy Spirit at which time the sinner becomes a saint, holy before God. The Spirit brings the sinner to the act of faith.

In obedience the sinner is then cleansed by the blood of Christ and made right with God.

If there is no sprinkling, there is no sacrifice.

If there is no sacrifice, there is no Savior.

If there is no Savior, there is no salvation.

Charles Spurgeon asks a very important question: Has the blood (of Christ) ever been applied to you? You cannot be saved without the sprinkling of blood. You cannot be saved if you don’t believe.

An anonymous author penned this hymn:

Oh! how sweet to view the flowing

Of our Lord’s atoning blood

With divine assurance knowing

He has made my peace with God.

What has the sprinkling of His blood done for us?

1. His blood provides forgiveness of sin
Ephesians 1:7-8 “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.”

2. His blood removes sin
Hebrews 9:26b, 28 “...But now He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself....so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.”

3. His blood provides freedom from sin
Romans 6:1-2 “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”

4. His blood provides fellowship with God
Romans 5:1-2 “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we

have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”

Colossians 1:19-20 “For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.”

5. His blood provides a full inheritance

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

H.A. Ironside wrote “All who are sheltered by the blood of sprinkling may be assured that they stand where the wrath of God will never reach them.”

6. His blood purchased the church

Acts 20:28 “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood.”

7. His blood justifies the believer

Romans 5:9 “Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through Him!”

8. His blood redeems the believer

Ephesians 1:7 “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.”

9. His blood redeems forever

Hebrews 9:12 “He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

10. His blood reconciles the believer

Ephesians 2:13 “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood Christ.”

11. His blood cleanses our conscience

Hebrews 9:14 “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God.”

12. His blood sanctifies the believer

Hebrews 13:12 “And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through His own blood.”

13. His blood makes us perfect in God’s sight

Hebrews 10:14 “because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy”

14. His blood gives us access to God

Hebrews 10:19-20, 22 “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, His body...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart. In full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”

Charles Wesley wrote two wonder hymns that state the obvious for us. They compel us to ponder anew the benefits we receive from the blood of Christ.

Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin?

Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
Groaning beneath your load of sin!
His bleeding heart shall make you room;
His open side shall take you in.
He calls you now, invites you home:
Come, O my guilty brethren, come.

O for a Heart to Praise My God

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely shed for me!

Let me come back to a question I asked a moment ago.
Have you applied the blood of Christ to your life?