

## **Application Of The Blood Of Jesus When And How Our Sins Are Washed Away In The Conversion Experience**

© 2017 by James V. Maurer, Sr.

For more info, write jim@intothe deep.today

Revised 7.26.24

### **Remission of sins is the most important aspect of salvation.**

When the writer of Hebrews says, "*...without the shedding of blood, there is no remission*" (Hebrews 9:22), he not only makes a statement of fact about the necessity of blood to provide remission of sins, but he also presumes what all his readers knew—that remission of sins is vital for salvation. His chain of reasoning is that sacrifice is necessary for remission to occur and remission is understood by all to be necessary for salvation. More simply put, there is no salvation without remission of sins.

There is no human need so great as the need for remission of sins. Sin is the quintessential problem with the human race and, indeed, has been since the initial one was committed. Sin is what separates us from God. Sin sends souls to hell. Remission of sins, therefore, is fundamental to Christian salvation. Nothing should appeal to a human being more than the prospect of having his sins washed away. It is a profound and special freedom beyond words.

Since Old Testament times, a blood sacrifice has been necessary to atone for sin. It is well known that Christ's blood was shed so that we could be saved from our sins. It was foretold in the prophetic proleptic account of Jesus' crucifixion in Isaiah 53. Verse 11 of that famous chapter reveals that justification comes to us because Jesus came and died on the cross to take away our sins. Therefore, by His blood, we can have complete remission.

### **When does remission occur?**

But at what point in the conversion experience can we correctly claim to have remission of sins? This is an important question because there is division in the Christian community as to when remission takes place. And, who would want to miss it?! To miss remission of sins would equate to missing salvation. It would equate to personally missing the benefit of Christ's death on the cross. Therefore, it would equate to missing Christ, however religious a person may be.

Many people teach that remission of sins takes place at the point of belief in Christ. If that is the case, then no believer has anything to worry about. All who believe in Jesus are covered. But is that the case? An important caveat exists here. Like any other doctrine of Scripture, remission of sins can only be *legitimately* claimed by exclusive

biblical provision, not by any other authority or means. The Bible is our sole rule of faith, properly interpreted. So, does the Bible actually *show* that remission of sins takes place at the point of faith in Christ, or does it show otherwise? That question cannot be avoided, though a shallow soul may lightly dismiss it. A sincere person seeking salvation will want to know for sure and has the right to be correctly informed.

**We find in the New Testament that there are three means by which remission of sins is said to occur, namely:**

**1/ By Christ's blood**

**Matthew 26:28**

*27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;  
28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

**Revelation 1:5**

*5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*

**2/ Through baptism**

**Acts 2:38**

*37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?  
38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.  
39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

**Acts 22:16**

*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

**3/ Through the name of Jesus**

**Acts 10:43**

*42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.  
43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

**These three aspects of remission combine in baptism.**

These three facts about remission of sins will only reconcile one way— when they are realized concentrically. The three converge to effect remission of sins because the blood of Christ is applied by baptism when it is administered in the saving name of Jesus. We will show this in the remainder of this lesson.

**There must be application of the blood of Christ.**

**1John 2:2** says, *"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"*. Christ's blood was shed for all and is, therefore, efficacious to wash away the sins of every person.

But, according to Jesus, many will not be saved. In **Matthew 7:13-14**, He said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*

How do these two Scriptural facts agree? Of course, the answer is that many people do not avail themselves of Christ's precious blood, either out of disregard to the Savior or negligence to, or ignorance of, the means to receive its benefits. In this alarming passage from the Sermon on the Mount just quoted, Jesus gave the reason many will be lost. The answer is that they won't find the way to be saved. I can think of one major way many people miss salvation. They do not realize what the Word of God provides for the application of the shed blood of Christ.

**An Old Testament example of the needed application of Christ's blood**

An illustration of the need for the application of the blood of Jesus exists in type form in the Old Testament at the time of the Exodus when the death angel would visit every home in Egypt with the death of the firstborn. The only way for the Israelites to escape death in their home was to obey the command of Moses regarding the application of a blood sacrifice. A young male lamb without blemish was to be sacrificed for each household (Exodus 12). But the sacrifice alone, along with its blood collected in a basin, was not sufficient to deliver the firstborn in each house from death. Indeed, the blood of the lamb was efficacious to save, but not while sitting in its container in or outside the house. It had to be personally *applied* by each household to the doorposts and lintel. *That sign of faith and obedience was all that the death angel could respect concerning the sacrifice.* Of course, the blood was necessary. No deliverance was possible without it. But application of the blood was *equally important*.

The Exodus marked the time when God's people were thus delivered from Egyptian slavery and freed to travel toward the Promised Land. It was the foreshadowing of the

greatest deliverance of all time, in which we were emancipated from the slavery of sin by the blood of Christ and begin our journey to heaven. But Christ's blood must similarly be applied personally. As Paul said, He is our passover (1Corinthians 5:7). Water baptism in Jesus' name is the means for the personal application of the blood of Jesus.

**There has to be personal knowledge of precisely when remission of sins takes place in one's conversion experience.**

It is important that there be a point in the conversion experience when we can be assured and proclaim with biblical certainty that our sins are gone. Salvation is too important a matter to lack such assurance. Baptism in Jesus' name gives us that certainty. It is expressly and profoundly stated in the New Testament, beginning on the Day of Pentecost, the first day of the Christian era, to be for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). This is a doctrinal assertion of the Bible that cannot be explained away or dismissed without spiritual jeopardy. It must be accepted and reconciled with every other biblical statement about salvation in Christ. Since God's Word declares that baptism is for the remission of sins, it, therefore, pinpoints the exact time at which the blood of Christ is applied to us. From a mere logical standpoint, there simply is no other possibility. *The point of cleansing from sin in the conversion experience is the point of application of Jesus' precious blood, which is the true cleansing agent of sin.*

Referring to Revelation 1:5 again, the Apostle John reminded us that we're each personally *washed from our sins in His blood*. Obviously, this was a mystical washing since none of us ever had contact with the physical blood of Jesus. But being washed from sin is, likewise, said to occur in baptism. This is exactly what Ananias said at the conversion of the Apostle Paul. *"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (Acts 22:16). These two Scriptural assertions concerning washing can only reconcile if they refer to the same event. Together, then, they must mean that we're washed in Christ's blood when we are baptized in His name.

**The Apostle Paul told us *how* baptism in Jesus' name remits sins.**

In his Roman epistle, Paul explained *how* baptism is efficacious to wash away sins.

**Romans 6:3-5**

*3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

*4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

*5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

Through baptism, we are buried with Christ into His death. Therefore, in that mystical burial into Christ's death, we encounter His blood. And, at that moment of faith and obedience to God's redemptive plan, His precious blood is applied. There is no other occasion in the conversion experience that brings us so near the blood as when we're buried with Him by baptism into His death. This is how baptism is said to *remit* and *wash away* sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

And, because baptism is efficacious to wash away sins, it is, therefore, necessary for salvation. Jesus and Peter both made it clear that baptism saves.

### **1/ Jesus— Mark 16:15-16**

*15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

*16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

### **2/ Peter— 1Peter 3:21**

*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:*

### **Christ's blood validates baptism.**

To be sure, baptism, apart from Christ's blood, would have no validity at all to remit sins. But, according to God's redemptive plan, baptism functions as the divinely appointed means for those who believe the Gospel to receive remission and be saved. This is evident in all three occasions when Jesus gave His Great Commission.

### **1/ The first commission was on the day of His resurrection in Jerusalem (John 20:21-23).**

*21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*

*22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

*23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

The reference to the Apostles remitting sins was through baptism. That had been the understanding of baptism for the previous three and a half years— specifically, since

John the Baptist, whose baptism was declared to be for the remission of sins (Luke 3:3). So, when Jesus spoke here of the Apostles remitting sins, it was clear to them that He was referring to baptism.

Neither the Apostles, nor anyone else, ever received power to remove a person's sins but through the means of baptism.

**2/ The second commission was later in Galilee (Mark 16:15-16).**

*15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

*16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Here, Jesus mentioned that baptism would save those who believe. A person might ask, "What saving power does baptism provide?" The answer is: by the aforementioned remission of sins.

**3/ The third commission was back in Jerusalem on the day of Christ's ascension into heaven (Luke 24:45-47)**

*45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,*

*46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:*

*47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

*48 And ye are witnesses of these things.*

*49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

This final commission of Christ confirms that remission of sins (baptism) is to be administered in the name of Jesus (v.47). The fulfillment of this would occur in about ten days.

**The fulfillment of the Great Commission serves as its interpretation.**

Proof of this understanding about the Great Commission lies in its fulfillment. We see in Christ's commissions to His Apostles that baptism was the means to receive remission of sins. In the last commission, Jesus said it was to be preached in His Own name, beginning in Jerusalem. That is exactly the scenario that played out, beginning on the Day of Pentecost just ten days later. When the Jews, convicted by Peter's preaching, asked what they should do, here is how he responded (Acts 2:38-39):

*38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

*39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

From there, the message of Jesus' name baptism went into all the world as Christ directed in Luke 24:47. In the evangelism of Acts, we see that the candidates for salvation were expressly told by God-called ministers to be baptized in Jesus' name. We see this happening with the Jews in Acts 2:38, the Samaritans (Acts 8:16), the Gentiles (Acts 10:48). Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles involves every people group in the world. Additionally, when Paul was on one of his missionary journeys, he found *believers* in Ephesus, who were initially baptized by John the Baptist, but whom he *re-baptized* in Jesus' name (Acts 19:5). It is a powerful example to all who believe in Christ, but are not yet baptized in Jesus' name for the remission of sins, to do so.

### **Could remission possibly occur as soon as a person believes in Christ, as many claim?**

Some people believe remission of sins occurs at the moment of initial faith in Christ. But, biblically, that is not so and is easily refuted. Often they claim that the Apostle Paul taught this in his Epistles. But that is impossible. It is faulty interpretation to make such a claim. Had Paul done so, he would have contradicted his own conversion experience. We will show this from Paul's own example of salvation in a moment. But, before we go further, let's get a little perspective on the New Testament.

### **The answers to all Christian salvation issues are in Acts.**

There is one book in the New Testament that is invaluable in forming and settling matters of salvation doctrine. It is the book of Acts. Nothing in the New Testament showcases salvation as does this book. In it are all the examples of Christian salvation that are in the Bible, involving thousands of people. There is no word of Scripture to be considered for Christian salvation doctrine that is more significant than the examples of it God gave us in Acts. They make salvation doctrine foolproof because they involve real people who got saved. Any attempt to formulate Christian salvation doctrine without serious regard to these actual examples of it is reckless and lacks biblical scholarship. Acts actually dissects the conversion experience, making each tenet of faith and what is accomplished by it, observable. With this history of salvation taking place before our

eyes, as it were, we can correct many errors that exist in our day and offer souls sound, biblical assurance of salvation.

**What does Acts show regarding the possibility of remission of sins taking place at the point of initial faith in Christ?**

One of the examples of salvation found in Acts is that of the Apostle Paul. This is profoundly significant because he came to be a prolific writer of the New Testament, authoring more of it than anyone else. His own salvation experience would provide the basis for his salvation theology in his Epistles. Also, his conversion experience occurred almost in slow motion, lasting three days, so that we can analyze the tenets of salvation very easily.

Let's outline how Paul got saved. His coming to Christ is very well known. In fact, his is the most famous conversion in the Christian era. It is recorded in Acts 9. He also recounted his conversion in his own words twice—once to his fellow Jews, who sought to kill him (Acts 22), and another at a judicial hearing when in Roman custody (Acts 26). As the accounts say, he was headed to Damascus to arrest Christians and bring them bound to Jerusalem. But, on the way, Christ confronted him from heaven and he fell to the ground. In an exchange of conversation following Christ's revelation of Himself to Paul, he came to believe in Jesus Christ and surrendered to Him saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Before going further, let's ask the question again:

**Could remission of sins occur as soon as a person believes in Christ?**

Paul's example of conversion shows that it doesn't. Paul believed in Jesus wholeheartedly at his point of surrender on the Damascus Road. This was indeed the turning point for him. But the inspired narrative is abundantly clear that, at this point, he had not received remission of sins. We know that because, when Ananias met him three days later, he said to Paul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and *be baptized, and wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). His sins were not remitted until *three days after* he came to believe in Jesus. Since Paul did not receive remission of sins when he believed, the necessary theological conclusion is that neither does anyone else. Paul received remission of sins when he was baptized. The necessary theological conclusion is that so does everyone else. Salvation for one is salvation for all. There is one Gospel for all persons. Paul made this point concisely in one of his epistles saying, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). The Apostle Paul would never have taught differently about salvation than what he himself received. (Incidentally, neither did Paul receive the Holy Spirit upon initial faith in Christ. That also occurred three days later. See Acts 9:17.)

**The name of Jesus is necessary for remission of sins.**

Also evident in the fact of Christian baptism is that *it must be administered in the name of Jesus*, for that is one of the three Scriptural things we looked at regarding remission of sins. Recall that Peter said in Acts 10:43 that remission of sins comes “*through His name*”. And, in that same context, Peter baptized the household of Cornelius in the name of Jesus (Acts 10:48).

Peter once told the Jewish Sanhedrin, “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). In these words, “*whereby we must be saved*”, Peter was asserting that there is a use of the name of Jesus that results in salvation. The saving efficacy of the name of Jesus is through baptism because it effects the remission of sins. It is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel to call upon the name of the Lord (Joel 2:32). Listen again to Ananias attending Paul’s conversion and notice how he alluded to Joel’s prophecy. It would have been very recognizable to Paul. “*And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*” (Acts 22:16). Paul would have understood by Ananias’ reference to Joel that baptism in Jesus’ name fulfills Joel’s promise. Baptism in Jesus’ name was used as the fulfillment of Joel 2:32 since the Day of Pentecost. It is the very reason Peter quoted Joel down to this very point (Joel 2:28-32)— so that he would have Old Testament authority for using the name of Jesus in a salvific way, namely, in baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

**Expect opposition to baptism in Jesus’ name.**

Anything so effectual and spiritually significant as baptism must come under the attack of hell. The devil doesn’t want souls to be saved by the precious blood of Christ. So, how does he prevent souls from being washed by the blood? —by keeping them from baptism. *Opposition to baptism in Jesus’ name is literally opposition to the blood of Christ. Nothing reveals the evil activity of the devil in religion more than error in baptism.* As we said earlier, to miss remission of sins is to miss salvation. It equates to personally missing the benefit of Christ’s death on the cross, which equates to missing Christ. Therefore, obscuring the truth about baptism has been the greatest priority and deception of the devil. Sadly, many have been his victims.

**Baptism in Jesus’ name for the remission of sins is one of the very greatest truths of Scripture.**

I think baptism in Jesus’ name ranks in the top three of biblical subject matter. It must have been highly regarded by the Apostle Paul for him to include it in the stable theological triad, *One Lord, one faith, one baptism* (Ephesians 4:5).

## Application Of The Blood Of Jesus

Water baptism in Jesus' name is the amazing grace of God in freely granting remission of sins. It cost Jesus His blood. It wasn't even prescribed by Christ until His post-resurrection teaching, suggesting that it could only be made available by His shed blood, which would validate it. In fact, Christ's progressive line of teaching on baptism in the Great Commission, began on the very day of the resurrection (John 20:21-23). He was indicating by that promptness that the groundwork for salvation had been accomplished and that He was eager to teach the means by which it could be received.

### **Thank God for His unspeakable gift!**

The efficacy of Calvary is evident in the fact that there is nothing left for us to do but to exercise our will to have the precious blood applied to us through the simple act of baptism in His name. Obedience to the command to be buried with Him in baptism is the purest expression of faith in Him and His atoning sacrifice. And it renders the most wonderful result of complete remission of sins. It is the greatest single act that a person can do. Blessed are those who understand it.