



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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THINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BLOOD

Eddy Gilpin

In vain will one search the Scriptures for the passage that states that man’s belief brings him in contact with the blood of Jesus.

Blood was revealed as being connected with physical life from man’s earliest existence (Gen. 9:4). This thought is reiterated in Scripture (Lev. 17:11,14; Deut. 12:23). Blood is also often associated with spiritual life (Exod. 30:10; Heb. 9:7, 22). Certainly, the blood of sacrificial animals could not provide spiritual life in actuality (Heb. 10:1-4), but the shedding of their blood was nonetheless required by God as a means of picturing for man the blood that could do so which was forthcoming from His only begotten Son (Heb. 9:12-28; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 10:5). Particularly, among other things, the blood of Jesus is seen as:

- Essential for the remission of man’s sins (Matt. 26:28),
- Essential for the sacrifice required by God’s justice (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 10:12),
- Essential for man’s sanctification, justification and reconciliation (Rom. 5:6-10; Heb. 1:3; 9:12, 15; 10:14) and
- Essential for the washing away of man’s sins (Rev. 1:5).

Much more could be observed regarding the essential nature of the blood of Jesus. The foregoing matters, however, are sufficient to the establishing of this principle for the purpose of this study.

The word “associate” means, “to unite in company or action” and implies intimacy, equality or close affinity.

Thus, when one matter is associated with another it demonstrates that the two are banded together through some mutual connection. This is true of persons, but also of objects and concepts. Looking to the blood of Christ, we find there are some things intimately connected with it.

In understanding the essential nature of the blood of Jesus to man’s redemption, one must also be able to understand that those things which are intrinsically connected with that blood are likewise just as essential. Let’s notice three such matters that are so closely connected with the blood of the Lord that they are just as necessary to the salvation of man.

THE BLOOD AND THE BODY

The body of Christ is the church of Christ (Eph.1:22, 23; Col. 1:18).

- There is only one body (Eph. 4:4).
- The prophets spoke of it (Isa. 2:2-4; Dan. 2:36-44; Joel 2:28-32).
- Jesus promised to build it (Matt. 16:18).
- Saved people were/are added to it (Acts 2:47).
- It was purchased with the blood of Jesus (Acts 20:28).

Being purchased by His blood, it is thus closely associated with that blood. That association makes the body that was purchased by the blood just as essential as the blood itself!

The Scriptures bear out this truth. Those who obeyed the Gospel were added to this body by the Lord Himself (Acts 2:47). He is the Savior of this body (Eph. 5:23); thus, He is the Savior of none other. Since His blood purchased the church and He is the Savior of the church (adding, as He does, those who are saved to it), the church is just as essential in God’s scheme as the blood that purchased it. How, then, can anyone say that the blood of Jesus is essential but the body (church) which His blood purchased is not essential?

THE BLOOD AND THE BOOK

Jeremiah revealed that God would make a new covenant with His people (Jer. 31:31-34). The first covenant (the law of Moses, the 10 commandments) was ratified with blood. The Hebrews writer stated that it was established with blood and that the blood was sprinkled upon the book (Heb. 9:18, 19). When this was accomplished Moses stated, “*This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you*” (Heb. 9:20). The new covenant that God would make with man would likewise be ratified or established with blood. The establishment of a testament (will) demands the death of the one who leaves it

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Things Associated...



Editorial...

MATTHEW 6:33

Garland M. Robinson

Jesus said, “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...*” Every single person, with no exceptions, is obligated to seek God — seek Him FIRST. As a matter of fact, there is absolutely nothing in life that is more important. Family is at the top of the list of obligations, yet does not rank as high as one’s obligation to “*seek...the kingdom of God.*”

The people of Athens Greece in the first century were very religious, so much so, they had erected idols to every god imaginable and did not want to leave one out. Yet Paul told them that God does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is he worshipped with men’s hands. Every human being is equal — none above the other. Every single person has the same obligation — “*...they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us*” (Acts 17:27).

Men don’t see the obligation to seek God first, or when it is presented to them, they refuse to recognize it and heed it. It doesn’t seem real to them — out of sight, out of mind! But thinking this way does not make the reality of it go away. As Christians, our job is to warn people night and day (Mark 16:15; Acts 20:31). But sadly, Jesus said, “*For many are called, but few are chosen*” (Matt. 22:14). He also tells the world: “*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*” (Matt. 7:14).

Why will only a few (out of the masses of humanity) find the way that leads to everlasting life? It’s because they do not seek it diligently. Jesus also said, “*Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*” (Luke 13:24). Why won’t

they be able? Because they make up their own rules and attempt to bring the world’s baggage along with them. We live in a world of “have it your own way” religion.

While everyone is different, different likes and dislikes, different opinions and beliefs, there’s ONLY ONE WAY that is right and EVERY OTHER WAY is wrong. By inspiration, Jeremiah summed it up well, “*O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*” (Jer. 10:23). Solomon recorded, “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). Because of such, “*The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous*” (Prov. 15:29).

Serving the Lord is about doing things HIS WAY, not our way. Jesus said, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*” (Luke 6:46)? He summed it up in these words: “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*” (Matt. 7:21-23). Notice these words: “*he that doeth the will of my Father.*” If we do what we think or the way we see it, it’s not the will of God!

Paul told the brethren in the church at Colosse to “*...seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*” (Col. 3:1-2).

David once wrote: “*O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power*

and thy glory...” (Psalm 63:1-2).

Solomon wrote these words: “*My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path*” (Prov. 2:1-9).

Ecclesiastes 9:10 declares, “ *whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do [it] with thy might; for [there is] no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*”

To seek the Lord’s way is the way that leads to eternal life. “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Matt. 5:6). If we hunger and thirst after God’s eternal word, we’ll find the greatest treasure that man could ever imagine. We will gladly pay whatever the price. That’s the way Jesus speaks of it. “*The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it*” (Matt. 13:44-46).

Living a faithful Christian life can and will cost us everything. But it’s worth the price. Jesus said, “*I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my*

sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:36-39).

If family or anything else stands in your way of being faithful to the Lord, then you must choose God and not family. It's a matter of priorities. If you choose family before the Lord, then heaven will not be your home.

But, "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:29).

"Wherefore the rather, brethren,

give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:10-11).

WORSHIP PLEASING TO GOD

Denver Thomas

People like being entertained and there are those who are more than willing to oblige. From the very beginning there have been those who thought there was a better way.

That reverence and sanctity that once characterized worship services in days gone by seems to have come and gone. Just a generation or so ago, people came to worship services prepared to serve the Lord in Spirit and in Truth (cf. John 4:24). They knew the hour set aside for meeting, and were present on time. They assembled quietly and were ready to worship. They knew and followed the book.

Today, it seems many come to entertain and to be entertained. I heard one preacher say from the pulpit, "We are here to entertain God." Many people do not seem to know the need to arrive on time. Many come at the last minute and want to "visit" a while. Starting time seems unimportant to them. Others come and chat about any number of topics, none of which have to do with worship or spiritual matters. One is left to wonder just what has happened to people today.

Jesus, in His encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, said, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." That hour is the "here and now." That saying applies to His followers this day. This saying encompasses two distinct parts. The first is in "spirit" and involves our attitude and our commitment in His service. If our heart is not in the proper "frame-of-mind" then we will not be able to worship in "spirit" as we are instructed. Paul spoke to this when he wrote, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Cor. 11:26-30).

And then, there is the in "truth" which relates to how well worship follows the acceptable pattern. We

have been incorporating five items in worship from early days and have Scriptures for what we do. We **sing** (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), we **pray** (Acts 1:14,24; James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12; Jude 1:20), we **study** (2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 5:12-13; 1 Peter 2:2), we **commune** (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-30) and we **give** (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7).

But then, there are those within the brotherhood who find the Book insufficient for their needs, so they commence to add items. Sermons quite often contain material for which there is no Bible support. All too often, mechanical instruments of music are added to singing. Choirs are assembled in place of congregational singing. And of late, women are being used in leadership roles in worship. And, not to be overlooked, is the entertainment issue which has become all too commonplace, especially in larger congregations. Frivolity has become an all too frequent part of many lessons and sermons. People like being entertained and there are those who are more than willing to oblige.

From the very beginning there have been those who thought there was a better way. Jeremiah spoke to this in Jeremiah 10:23 when he wrote "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The writer of Proverbs said, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12).

God has always demanded that His people follow that which He has instructed. Jesus gave us two warnings that many seem to totally ignore. In Matthew 7:21 He said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And in John 12:48 He said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Are we listening?

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DEMONS

Jon Gary Williams

They were conscious, responsible beings, having the ability to perceive, reason and speak. They existed for a specific purpose and do not exist in the world today.

Demons are widely mentioned in literature contemporary with the New Testament. Demons meant different things to different cults and religions. They were given all types of grotesque forms and were thought to be everywhere. All sorts of things were attributed to them: unexplained illnesses, toothaches, outbursts of anger, and natural disasters. However, in the Bible we have a different picture of demons. The Greek word is *daimonion*, meaning “evil being” (or “evil spirit”). Thayer renders the term as, “A being inferior to God, superior to man.”

WHAT WERE DEMONS?

Here are a few widely accepted views: myths and superstitions, offspring of angels and women, a form of some “pre-adamic” race, and fallen angels. However, a more rational, sensible view is that they were spirits of deceased men. Many early writers had this understanding: Josephus, Philo, Plutarch, Justin Martyr and others. Many reliable Bible scholars have held this view. Most scholars of the restoration held this view.

From Luke 8:31 the suggestion is that they were from the “abyss” (“deep” KJV) and Paul equates the “abyss” with the realm of the dead (Rom. 10:7). Thayer says demons were “the spirits of wicked men deceased.”

Whatever they were, God allowed them a degree of freedom, even to dwell in physical bodies. Their existence allowed Jesus and the apostles to show power over the demonic world of Satan.

ATTRIBUTES OF DEMONS

They were conscious, responsible beings, having the ability to perceive, reason and speak. They demonstrated attitudes of rage and hate. They could harm their victims. They were under Satan’s control (Mark 3:22-23). They gave out false doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1). They knew their eventual doom (Matt.

8:29). They could believe and tremble (James 2:19). They could demonstrate unusual strength (Mark 5:4; Acts 19:16).

In regard to Jesus, they knew him (Mark 1:24; Acts 19:16), worshiped him (Mark 5:6), called him “Son of the Most High God” (Mark 5:7), entreated him (Luke 8:31), were rebuked by him (Mark 1:25), were cast out by him (Luke 9:42) and were kept from speaking about him (Mark 1:34).

DEMON POSSESSION

Of the more than one hundred times demons are mentioned in the New Testament, twenty-six of them deal with demon possession. Demons had a liking for human bodies. They possessed men (Matt. 8:28), women (Acts 16:16) and children (Matt. 15:22). They possessed human bodies even in plural numbers (Mark 5:8-9). They preferred the bodies of pigs rather than no habitation at all (Mark 5:12). The Bible says that “many” were possessed with demons (Matt. 8:16).

Demon possession caused wild, fierce actions (Matt. 8:28-34), blindness and dumbness (Matt. 12:22; 17:14-18), personal injuries (Mark 9:17-18), divination (Acts 16:16) and attacks (Acts 19:13-16).

Demon possession was not mental illness. Rather, demon possession was real. A distinction is made between mental illness and those actually possessed with demons. In Matthew 4:24 we read that Jesus healed, “...those which were possessed with *devils*, **and** those which were *lunatic*...”

That demons were actually cast out is a matter of record. In the great commission Jesus said this would occur (Mark 16:17). Peter cast out demons (Acts 5:16). Philip cast out demons (Acts 8:7). Paul cast out demons (Acts 16:16-18; 19:12). Note: Casting out demons is *not* to be confused with the so-called “exorcism” of modern times. When Jesus and the apostles cast out demons, they left

immediately. It was not prolonged for many days. Demons did not come out of their victims as “frogs,” “bats,” or “green blood.” Demons did not speak against Jesus as seen in the modern concept of demons, but were submissive and obedient to him.

Demons do not exist in the world today. Since the gifts of the miraculous age (including the power to cast out demons) have ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10), it follows that demon possession has also ceased. (If they did exist today, of necessity the gift of casting them out would also still exist. But it does not!) With the passing of the age of the miraculous, and since the completion of the New Testament (God’s final message to man), such things as demon possession and the miraculous appearance of angels no longer have a place in God’s program of work. If demons were present today, there would be no doubt about it. No one could question it! Most everyone would have witnessed them.

Demons were real and they existed for a specific purpose — so Jesus and the apostles could show their power over the forces of Satan. “*He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:8).

Demons no longer exist.

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“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies” (Psalm 119:9-14)

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JOHN MARK

Roger D. Campbell

*It is fair for each disciple of Jesus to ask himself:
Am I useful salt or good for nothing...
am I a fruitful branch, or a barren one that needs to be cut off...
as a vessel in the Potter's hands, am I a vessel of honor or dishonor?*

Sometimes we hear about “a human-interest story.” To the Lord, each person is a human-interest story. Every Bible character, in fact, each person in history, is a “major” person in God’s sight.

Studying “*John, whose surname was Mark*” (Acts 12:12), is an interesting undertaking. Let us make some observations from a number of Bible verses.

Acts 12:12. John was the son of Mary, a woman who hosted a prayer meeting at her house. That means John’s family had enough financial power to have a house big enough to host many people. His family was a family with faith — they prayed. And, his family opened the doors of their dwelling place for spiritual activities. John was blessed to be in such a family.

Acts 12:25. John was a companion of Barnabas and Saul. He was blessed to be with such godly men. Joint participation/sharing in an activity with faithful brethren in the Lord is a wonderful thing! We also are reminded that our choice of companions is extremely important. Being with the righteous reaps great benefits, but we also recall this truth: Evil company corrupts good habits (1 Cor. 15:33).

Acts 13:5. John was an assistant/minister to Barnabas and Saul. The word “minister” means “servant; an underrower, subordinate rower; anyone who serves with hands: a servant; in the New Testament of the officers and attendants of magistrates, of the officer who executes penalties; of the attendants of a king... the soldiers of a king, of the attendant of a synagogue; of anyone ministering or rendering service; anyone who aids another in any work; an assistant” [Thayer, word no. 5257 via e-Sword]. As a servant, John may have done things “behind the scenes,” such as taking care of material needs, which

would free up Barnabas and Saul to focus on teaching the Gospel. There is always room for servants among God’s people (Mark 9:35). On a trip to Southeast Asia, one young brother and his wife graciously showed us hospitality. When we thanked them for it, he said, “When we were kids, we saw others doing it. Now it is time for my generation to step up and do it.”

Acts 13:13. In the midst of a teaching trip, John departed from Paul and Barnabas and returned to Jerusalem. It would be sad if this is the only thing a person remembers about John Mark. Was John a quitter? Well, the Bible does not tell us how long of a commitment he made before beginning his work with Barnabas and Saul. Was John just immature? Was he just ready to move on to the next adventure? Was he homesick? Did he miss his mama’s cooking or a fiancée? Did he prefer a dentist back home? It is obvious that Paul was not happy about John’s choice to go back home mid-journey, but let us be hesitant to speculate about matters that the Bible does not reveal. Note: This would not be John’s final teaching trip.

Acts 15:36-39. John Mark was the center of disagreement between two good men. When Paul suggested that he and Barnabas return to visit brethren in cities where they previously had preached, Barnabas agreed. But, when Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, Paul insisted they should not do such. That is when Paul and Barnabas had a temporary falling out. As a result, Paul took Silas to go preach in one area, while Barnabas and John went elsewhere. It was unfortunate there was a strong disagreement, but it doubled the number of teams going out to spread the Gospel.

Acts 15:39. John went with Barnabas to the island of Cyprus. Give

John Mark some credit. He was not done doing the Lord’s work. He had not turned his back on the Lord (Heb. 3:13). He had not quit. Lost folks everywhere need the Gospel and all saints in all places need to be built up, so going with Barnabas to Cyprus was not a bad thing.

Colossians 4:10. About 7-9 years after Paul insisted that John Mark not go with him and Barnabas on a second preaching trip, Paul wrote this about him: “*Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him).*” So, John Mark was a relative of Barnabas, which may give us some insight into why Barnabas was willing to give Mark a second opportunity. What a blessing to have family members who are in God’s family! And, notice that Paul encouraged the saints in Colosse to welcome John Mark. It is obvious that Paul’s outlook about his former co-worker had changed.

2 Timothy 4:11. Paul told Timothy, “*Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*” This message from Paul, which was written around twenty years after the first journey when John Mark had left the apostle and Barnabas to go back to Jerusalem, shows that by that point in time, Paul thought highly of John. There had been a positive transformation in John’s life: he had gone from unprofitable to profitable/useful. It is fair for each disciple of Jesus to ask himself: Am I useful salt or good for nothing (Matt. 5:13)? Am I a fruitful branch, or a barren one that needs to be cut off (John 15:1-6)? As a vessel in the Potter’s hands, am I a vessel of honor or dishonor? There is much to learn from the biblical record of John Mark.

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THE SUPPER WITH JESUS

Marvin L. Weir

The return of Christ from “*the country near to the wilderness...a city called Ephraim*” (John 11:54) can only mean that the shadow of the cross is imminent. On His way to Jerusalem, the Lord travels to Bethany to visit with dear friends one last time. It is reasonable to believe that Simon the leper (Matt. 26:6) has invited Jesus to honor Him for raising Lazarus from the dead. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus are also present and no doubt have a deep desire to again profess their profound gratitude to the Savior. Others were present who did not have the best interest of the Son of God at heart. It is a trying time for Christ whose earthly ministry will end in six days with His death and burial in the tomb.

Let’s study the attitude and mindset of some of the people present on this occasion. May we learn as we reflect on...

Mary — One Willing To Sacrifice! Martha, the sister of Mary, possessed a servant spirit that all Christians need to acquire. She desired to be as hospitable as humanly possible in providing the Lord with food and drink. More people like Martha are needed to make this world a better place in which to live.

In this study, however, let us learn from Mary who took this opportunity to make a personal sacrifice to show her love and devotion to the Master. We are reminded in the book of Acts that Jesus said, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive*” (20:35). Indeed it is, but the world has an abundance of people who would much rather “take” than “give” and would also rather “seek” than “sacrifice.”

First, let us observe the motivation and substance of the sacrifice Mary made. Tom Waycaster comments on what Mary’s thoughts might have been at this particular moment in his commentary (*The Magnificence of Jesus*, Vol. 11, p52): “While Martha was busy serving, Mary’s attention was drawn to the Lord. Keep in mind that following the resurrection of Lazarus, that Mary had no opportunity to show her deep adoration and appreciation for giving Lazarus back to her. Now imagine if you will, Mary, sitting in

Simon’s house, observing not only her brother, but the One who had raised him from the dead. Her deep appreciation was now about to burst forth in praise and honor. Words escaped her, and in this one moment, she would express her love to Jesus in a most unique, and sacrificial way.”

The ASV states that “*Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious*” (John 12:3a). The KJV says, “*Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly.*” It is obvious that Mary would not be stingy with this very expensive perfume. Judas Iscariot believed the value of the pound of perfume to be worth “*three hundred pence*” [KJV] or “*shillings,*” [ASV] (John 12:5). Some people might have reasoned that a few ounces would be sufficient to anoint the Master, and the remainder could be used by themselves or other members of the family. This was not the reasoning of Mary. The more costly the gesture, the more it reflected her deep devotion and love.

It is believed by many that the coin mentioned on this occasion was worth about seventeen cents. Coffman, in his commentary on John, notes that “the relative value of the coin appears in the fact of its being a day’s wages (Matt. 20:9), making the value of the nard to have been the amount of money a man might have earned for three hundred days of labor.”

Hypocritical worshippers are content to give the Lord the lame, the sick, and the blind. However, like David (2 Sam. 24:24), Mary refused to give to the Lord that which cost her nothing. Little did Mary realize that her devotion and deed would be recorded in the Scriptures and serve as an encouragement and blessing to Christians as long as this world stands.

Second, Mary “*anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment*” (John 12:3b). Some might give generously, but resent having to part with the gift. Not Mary! She freely gave the pound of costly nard but also laid bare any personal glory at His feet. The *Bible Exposition Commentary on the New Testament* observes: “When she came to the feet

of Jesus, Mary took the place of a slave. When she undid her hair (something Jewish women did not do in public), she humbled herself and laid her glory at His feet (see 1 Cor. 11:15). Of course, she was misunderstood and criticized; but that is what usually happens when somebody gives his or her best to the Lord.”

Judas — The Greedy And Critical One! There will always be one who does not appreciate a deed done out of love. Judas, the betrayer of Christ, asks, “*Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor*” (John 12:5)? His hypocritical plea was as hollow as a rotten log! The truth of the matter is that “*This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein*” (John 12:6). Judas has many cousins in the Lord’s church today who do not consider the Lord or faithful brethren, but only themselves! The faithful today should imitate Mary who was willing to part with all. Sadly, a great many follow in the steps of Judas who could not overcome his own sinful self-interest!

Jesus Christ — The One Who Justifies! The Lord answers, “*Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this*” (John 12:7). Coffman captures the impact of this verse in saying: “Scholars misunderstand this as meaning Mary had not used all the nard ... The cruse had been broken; there was nothing left in it (Mark 14:3). ...Moreover, the peculiar use of the present tense (and we believe prophetic tense), ‘Suffer her to keep it,’ indicates the achievement of a timeless and world-wide memorial to Mary’s name and honor. Christ commanded that the record of this loving deed be preached throughout time until the judgment; and, in such a proclamation, she did in fact truly ‘keep’ the last drop of that precious perfume poured upon Jesus’ feet. ...Did anyone ever give anything to Jesus without at the same time ‘keeping it’? What is given to the Lord is kept; all else is lost; and can it be any different with this nard? Mary poured out all the nard on Jesus; but ‘she kept it all.’ Against the day of His burial? Yes,

but also for all time until the judgment!”

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matt. 6:19-20).

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Things Associated...

(Continued from page 41)

(Heb. 9:16, 17). Jesus stated that His blood is “*the blood of the New Testament*” (Matt. 26:28). It was with His blood that He ratified or made the new covenant effective. Its institution rendered the old (Old Testament) ineffective (Col. 2:14), as Jesus fulfilled it with His life and death (Matt. 5:17; John 19:30). His new covenant/will/testament was thus established as the better covenant, established upon better promises, having a far superior mediator (Heb. 8:6-13). With the Lord’s death, the Old was “taken away” (Heb. 10:9) as a binding covenant upon man, and the New was firmly established as the will by which man would be sanctified (Heb. 10:10). Thus, His testament is just as essential to man as His blood.

Man cannot be saved without faith (Heb. 11:6), and faith comes through the hearing of and obedience to the will of Christ (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 5:8, 9). Hence, since God has intimately tied the Will to the blood, the New Testament is just as important for man’s redemption as the blood that purchased it. Therefore, those who proclaim humanity’s need of “the man and not the plan” woefully fail to see the inconsistency of their thought.

THE BLOOD AND WATER BAPTISM

The blood of the Lord was shed in His death (John 19:34). Since it is His blood that cleanses man from sins (Matt. 26:28; Rev. 1:5), the question arises as to “how” man contacts this cleansing agent. Obviously it is not possible to traverse the 2,000 years in time and the 8,000 miles or so in distance, and go back to Calvary in actuality. But, even if we could do so, a physical application of the “literal” blood of Christ would do man no good spiritually. If one could literally bathe his body in the Lord’s blood, ingest that blood into his system, or inject it directly into his veins, would he have accomplished anything in regards to his sins? To ask is to answer. No, the blood must be applied through God’s prescribed means or else it has not been applied. Today, men call on mankind to “accept Jesus as your personal Savior,” “ask Jesus into your heart,” “just pray the sinner’s prayer,” or some other concocted, unbiblical

scheme in a vain attempt to obey what God has said without doing what God has required.

In vain will one search the Scriptures for the passage that states that man’s **belief** brings him in contact with the blood of Jesus. The same is true of **repentance** and **confession** (both of which are required, but neither of which brings one in contact with the saving agent — the blood of Christ). The only means by which this is accomplished is **water baptism**. We are “baptized into His death” (Rom. 6:3, 4), where His blood was shed. This is the only way one can contact the blood of Jesus! And, since the blood of our Lord has been forever tied to this obedient act, for the sinner, baptism becomes just as important as the blood, as it is the only means of contacting that blood.

One speaks hypocritically who claims faith in the blood of Christ, but denies the essentiality of that which is inherently associated with that blood.

No one can possibly truly claim belief in the essential aspect of the *blood of Christ* without also claiming belief in the essentiality of the *body of Christ* (His church), which that blood purchased.

No one can rightly hold to belief in the necessity of the *blood of Jesus* who does not also hold to the necessity of the *New Testament* (the book) which His blood made a reality.

No one can truthfully maintain an acceptance of the absolute essentiality of the *blood of Jesus* for salvation while denying *water baptism*, the only means whereby that blood can be contacted and sins thus be washed away and remitted (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

That which is purchased by, obtained with and made an avenue to the blood, is every bit as essential as the blood itself. God has so associated the *blood of Christ* with the *body, the book* and *water baptism*. “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

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To contact the Lord’s blood, one must:

Hear the Gospel (Rom. 10:17; John 6:45)

Believe in Jesus, the Son of God (John 8:24)

Repent of sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30)

Confess faith in Christ (Acts 8:37;

Rom. 10:9-10)

Be baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21)



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

bleed our country; maybe some really not of faith. We don't know how God will answer them, but we can rest assured it will be that which is best for His cause. What the government does will be based upon the decisions the lawmakers decide. The Christian's part in helping get our country back to pleasing the almighty is: live a faithful Christian life, pray without ceasing, and vote for the candidate who wants this nation to honor God! *Seek The Old Paths* is a very good periodical for one not very interested in what God has to say and also one who is trying his/her best to please Him so they can live in heaven with Christ and all His faithful followers. May God continue to bless each one connected with STOP is my prayer"

...Joe C. Turbeville, Dresden, TN. "I am incarcerated in Texas. I found the March and April 2021 editions of *Seek The Old Paths* on the 'wall' where us prisoners put literature for anyone seeking different types of ideas. I enjoyed the content and biblical breakdown on every topic you wrote about. Please consider adding me to your mailing list that I may begin receiving this great Christian understanding you offer by mail. I would also like to ask for you to pray for my mom, that God would give her peace, safety, joy, health, gratitude and give her and family a desire to read their Bible and to pray. Thank you for your prayers and consideration to begin sending me *Seek The Old Paths*. May God almighty continue to bless you, your supporters, and everyone at Leoni Church of Christ"

...Cipriano Alanzo, III, Rosharon, TX. "I received this publication for years. My daughter brought me her copy today. I'm looking forward to receiving it"

...Melvin Copeland, Manchester, GA. "Thanks for the papers you send"

...John & June Roberts, West Plains, MO. "Thanks. Add these names to the mailing list"

...Mattie Ann Owens, Chattanooga, TN. "We have shared some issues of STOP with our aunt. She would like to be added to your mailing list. Thank you"

...Barbara Sperow, Prescott, MI. "Thanks for the soundness and excellence of your productive publication *Seek The Old Paths*, of which I have received over the many years. It is one of the few publications that still teaches the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth and exposes moral and religious error (Isa. 58:1; 1 Tim. 5:20). Keep up the good work as time swiftly passes by. It is needed more today than ever before as there is a severe moral and spiritual decline both in our nation and in the church, and that is an understatement! Over the years, I have sent you requests to put many on your mailing list where I have preached. I know that it has been very helpful for them in knowing, practicing, and defending the truth. Please put our new convert on your mailing list. I am enclosing a contribution to help. Thanks for your help"

...Lawrence Williamson, Putnamville C/C, Cloverdale, IN. "I have, for many years, been enjoying and benefit from your STOP paper. Last year I sent you a good size contribution. I have a friend who reads a lot and who would also enjoy your paper. She is a faithful member of the church. I thank you for enrolling her"

...C. A. Feenstra, Dickson, TN. "We appreciate your good work in *Seek The Old Paths*. You may have already seen the news item from ACU (Abilene Christian University). I am sure it was not what the founders had in mind"

...J. K. & Betty Gossett, Oakland, TN. [NOTE: We had an article about their continued digression in the 9/2020 issue. ACU's announcement read: "ACU has launched a new Center for Baptist Studies as part of its Graduate School of Theology. The center was created in

"Thank you so much for the elders of Leoni C/C and the writers for their great study and informative articles. Also from voices from the past. Keep up the great work and God bless each of you"

...Bert Kramer, Modesto, CA. "Lots of prayers of faith have gone up for God to

response to the closure of nearby Logsdon Seminary at Harin-Simmons University and provides a pathway for the displaced students." [Editor, gmr]. "Thank you for teaching the truth"

...Robert Pruett, Cedar Grove, TN. "I really enjoy STOP. It has a lot of good articles and they are things that need to be told again as many congregations have forgot what used to be taught to them and then they taught it to others. Keep up the good work"

...Selmer Schow, Lamar, MO. "I'm so thankful for *Seek The Old Paths*, the word of truth. The lesson on 'The Virgin Birth of Christ' was powerful. Beware of change. Christians need to stick with the King James Bible — the true Bible, the true word of God. I'm a member of the Lord's church here in Powhatan County. We preach and teach the truth"

...Harold Langley, Powhatan, VA. "Thank you for the STOP publication and for standing for the truth. We're thankful for the sound brethren who write the articles"

...Dalton, GA. "Ray Leavins has passed away"

...Nashville, TN. "We have enjoyed your paper for a long time. Thanks. Keep up the good work"

...Henderson, TN. "I get *Seek The Old Paths* and just love it. Would you send it to these names? This paper will really help"

...Anita Beason, Monroe, TN. "Thank you"

...Rochester, NY. "We love your *Seek The Old Paths* publication and wish to continue getting it. However, we don't need as many copies. You can reduce our bundle. Pray for our church as we continue fighting, not only denominationalism, but progressive 'social' country-club type churches in our area"

...TN. "Olen Moore has passed away"

...Amory, MS. "I enjoy every issue of the paper. It's a wonderful paper and has good reading in each and everyone of them"

...Wartrace, TN.

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