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Spirit." (Acts 2:38). Unless one repents, he will perish (Luke 13:3).

A verbal confession must be made. Rom. 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Peter confessed "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16). The Eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts 8:37). These various confessions are similar and proclaim that Jesus is ruler and king, the anointed of God, and the One who is to be worshiped and obeyed. Everyone must confess with his mouth Jesus as Lord.

Christ requires a burial in water (Acts 10:47; Col. 2:12). Jesus was immersed to fulfill all righteousness and thereby left us an example (Matt. 3:13-16). Jesus commanded baptism in His great commission as a condition of pardon (Mark 16:15-16). It is for remission of sins and puts one into Christ (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27). It places one in the body which is the church (1 Cor. 12:13). Thus, baptism is the final act of obedience that completes one's membership.

When people obey God, their sins are forgiven and God recognizes and accepts them as His own. They are added to His church and enjoy the privileges and share the responsibilities of that relationship.

Credit: <http://oakridgechurch.com/riggs> ♦

An immersion in water is essential. The baptism of

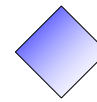
The church of Christ

Has:

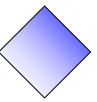
- One Builder – Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:9-11)
- One Purchaser – Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28)
- One Head – Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22-23)
- One Savior – Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:23)
- One destiny – eternal salvation (Eph. 5:23)

IS:

- The spiritual body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23)
- The kingdom of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19; Heb. 12:28)
- The depository of those saved (Acts 2:47)
- One body, not many bodies (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23)
- One way to be added to the church:
- One must believeth that Christ is the Son of God (Jno. 8:24)
- One must repent of sins (Lk. 13:3)
- One must confess that Christ is the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10)



The Voice of Truth



December 18, 2011

Only One Way! By Jimmy Pettigrew

You go to your church and I'll go to mine. We're going to the same place, only on different roads. This statement is made by many people who mistakenly believe there are many ways to God in heaven. However, the truth of the matter is, there is only one way to God, and Jesus said it is strait and narrow (Matt. 7:13-14). Christ declared, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6). In Acts 4:12, speaking of Christ, Peter said, Neither is there salvation in any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Therefore, it is necessary to conclude that the only way to God is through Christ.

Being saved and brought to God is a spiritual blessing. Paul said, all spiritual blessings are in Christ, (Eph. 1:3). Moreover, Paul wrote of Christ stating that it is in Him whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace, (Eph. 1:7). Hence, all spiritual blessings and redemption . . . according to his grace are in Christ. Please notice these passages: Redemption is found in Christ (Rom. 3:24); There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ (Rom. 8:1); the love of God is found in Christ (Rom. 8:39). We are sanctified in Christ (1 Cor. 1:2); in Christ will all be made alive (1 Cor. 15:22); we are new creatures in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17); Gal. 6:15); we are reconciled back to God by being in Christ (Isa. 59:12; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 2:13); we are all children of God by being in Christ (Gal. 3:26-27); all blessings are found in Christ (Eph. 1:3); we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 2:6); the grace of God is found in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10); eternal life is found in Christ (Rom. 6:23). It should be obvious to all that one has to be in Christ to gain these wonderful benefits. But, how does one get into Christ?

One should be aware of the difference between unto and into as used in the English. Unto means going in the direction of or toward. Into signifies that the destination has been reached, entered.

Without faith it is impossible for one to please God (Heb. 11:6) and be saved (Mark 16:16). However, a person must understand that he does not believe into Christ. Belief is unto, going in the direction of Christ. Paul uses the unto with belief in Romans 10:10 saying, For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. No Scripture says one believes into Christ.

If one will not repent of his sins, he will perish (Luke 13:3-5). Yet, it must be understood that repentance on the part of an individual is another act unto or toward God. As a matter of fact, Paul is recorded as saying that both faith and repentance are acts which are toward rather than into. Paul testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). No Scripture says one repents into Christ.

Confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37) is absolutely essential for salvation (Matt. 10:32-33). But again, confession is unto salvation. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:10). No Scripture says one confesses into Christ.

Faith, repentance, and confession are unto but do not place one into Christ. Just as there is only one way to God (that is through Christ), there is only one way into Christ, in whom all spiritual blessings are found. Faith, repentance, and confession are essential for one entering into Christ, but one does not enter into Christ by any one of them or by all three of them together.

The only way revealed in the Bible for one to get into Christ is by being baptized in water (Acts 8:36), in the name of Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), washing them away (Acts 22:16). Roman 6:3 finds Paul stating, Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. In Galatians

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| About the Hillcrest church of Christ | | |
|--|---|--|
| Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew | | |
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| <p>Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com</p>   | <p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p>  | <p>Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p><small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small></p> |
| <p>www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com</p> | | |

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3:27 Paul wrote, *for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* When one believes

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, repents of his sins, and has confessed Christ with his mouth, he is only then ready to be **baptized into Christ!** •

“The Blood Of Christ”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Our Lord shed His blood on the cross over 2000 years ago. Yet, it is still as powerful as ever. It has cleansing power, the likes of which has not been equaled by man. In fact in this study, we will see that there is nothing man can do to cleanse himself from sin, but Christ’s blood can cleanse man from every sin! Let us study about our Lord’s shed blood and its meaning and purpose in the lives of people today. Certainly this is a subject worthy of our study.

Christ’s Blood Remitted Our Sins.

Perhaps we are already aware of this fact, but it does good to consider some pertinent passages on this subject. First, Jesus Himself said His blood would be shed *“for many for the remission of sins”* (**Matt. 26:28**). The word “remission” means, “freedom; (fig.) pardon: – deliverance, forgiveness, liberty” (**Strong’s**). Can we think of anything more wonderful than liberty? More important than political liberty, we can have liberty or freedom from sin because of the shed blood of Christ! This is truly a gift from God.

Read the apostle Paul’s words as he stated the importance of Christ and His shed blood. *“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”* (**Rom. 3:21-26**).

Put simply, there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for *“all have sinned.”* This being true, our Lord justified all and became the *“propitiation”* (sin offering) for all mankind through the shedding of His blood. Therefore, as we believe in Jesus Christ, doing what He has said to do in order to be saved (repent of our sins and be baptized, (**Rom. 10:16; Acts 2:36-38**), we can have forgiveness of sins (liberty) because He shed His blood for us!

What a wonderful thing for men to consider! Without the blood of Christ, there is no salvation. In addition to the statements in the book of Romans, study the books of Ephesians and Colossians. In those letters, the apostle Paul again made it clear that Christ’s blood brought about the forgiveness of sins (**Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14**).

The apostle Peter wrote the *“strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia”* and told them that they *“were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”* (**I Pet. 1:18-19**). This same truth applies today. Our redemption did not come through physical power or prowess; nor can we “earn” our way into Heaven. Rather, Christ’s shed blood made it possible for us to one day see Heaven!

Another text worthy of our study is the apostle John’s words in the book of Revelation. This apostle was banished to the island of Patmos, and was allowed to pen the following: *“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 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”* (**Rev. 1:4-5**). Truly, we cannot say enough about what the blood of Christ means to every man and woman!

Christ’s Blood Purchased The Church.

We know that Christ promised to build His church in **Matthew 16:18**. Yet, in addition to this promise, Christ also paid the purchase-price for the church! The apostle Paul declares that Christ’s church was purchased when He shed His blood on the cross. This fact is recorded in the book of Acts when this dear brother met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus for the last time. He told them, *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with*

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his own blood” (**Acts 20:28**). He later wrote a letter to to the Ephesian Christians and told them that Christ *“loved the church, and gave himself for it”* (**Eph. 5:25**).

After learning this, how can anyone belittle the importance of the Lord’s church with a clear conscience? Jesus Christ thought the church was so important He died and shed His blood to purchase it (**Jn. 19:33-34**)! If it was that important to Christ, it must be that important to me! If the Lord saw the church as a prized possession, I am not going to belittle her! Let us make sure that we hold the Lord’s church in high regard. Something that is this precious, this valuable, deserves our honor and our respect!

Seeing that these things are true, I see it as no coincidence that when one becomes a Christian, and is washed in the blood of the Lamb, that he is also added to the Lord’s church at the same time (**Rev. 1:5; Acts 2:47**)!

Christ’s Blood Can Be Counted Unholy.

After Christ has done so much for us, we see that there are some who would count Christ’s blood as *“unholy”* or common (**Heb. 10:29**). Who are these people? They are the ones who would *“sin wilfully”* after receiving *“the knowledge of the truth”* (**Heb. 10:26**). The word *“wilfully”* in that text is defined as “voluntarily; willingly” (**Strong’s**). Therefore, when one will voluntarily forsake God’s laws, whether it be in forsaking the assembling of ourselves

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

By David J. Riggs

Jesus said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”* (**Matt. 11:11**). This exalts the kingdom revealing that all therein, no matter how insignificant, have a station superior to John’s. This being true, the requirements for membership in the kingdom should be of grave importance to everyone. Let us, therefore, carefully examine the Scriptures to fully understand what God requires, to avoid the traditions of men, and to better equip ourselves to teach others.

The Word of God must be heard. Peter said, *“...God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.”* (**Acts 15:7**). John showed that the written word produces the faith that brings life in the name of Jesus (**John 20:30-31**). Thus, before one can become a member of the church or king-

dom, he must hear with open mind the gospel which is God’s power to save.

together (**Heb. 10:25**, this is in the context); in using filthy language (**Eph. 5:4**); in lascivious actions (**Gal. 5:19-21**); etc., then we are leaving the commands and precepts of God! Therefore, we are guilty of counting Christ’s blood as unholy or common.

This is why we need to be reminded daily to stay faithful to the Lord God (**Rev. 2:10**). We need to be *“steadfast and unmovable”* (**I Cor. 15:58**). We need to continue to *“walk in the light, as he is in the light”* (**I Jn. 1:7**). One way we do this is by remembering who we are, and remembering where we once were. The Ephesians were reminded of this when they were told they were once *“dead in trespasses and sins”* (**Eph. 2:1**). At one time they were *“without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, ... having no hope and without God in the world”* (**Eph. 2:12**). Yet, it was the blood of Christ that made them *“nigh”* to God (**v. 13**)!

Conclusion

Since we were once in the same position as the Ephesians, let us never consider Christ’s blood unholy or common through willful sin; but let us live according to the will of God as Christ did (**Jn. 12:49-50**) so that one day we can be with our Lord in Heaven for eternity! How wonderful is the power of the blood of Christ! Let us thank God for His wonderful sacrifice (**I Cor. 15:57, II Cor. 2:14, 8:16, 9:15**)!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com •

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