

# When is the Blood Applied?

© October 24, 2002 by Bernie L. Gillespie All Rights Reserved.  
No part of this book/paper may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the author.

## Part Three

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

### **Spiritualizing the Blood**

One of these unbiblical teachings was what I call a “spiritualizing” of the blood. The blood, rather than representing the death of Christ, takes on the nature of a spiritual substance, much like some Pentecostals view the Holy Spirit. Rather than seeing the blood as symbolic of Jesus’ death, it is treated as a force, or power that the believer can use when applying the proper kind and amount of faith. The ultimate form of spiritualizing the blood is to equate the blood with the Holy Spirit. This idea combined in a unique manner with those Pentecostal teachers who held to a radical view of Spirit-baptism. Contrary to most Pentecostals, some taught that receiving the Spirit with the sign of tongues was the only true Spirit-reception, and that all must experience this to be saved. The early advocates of this position also held to the “spiritualizing” of the blood of Jesus.

Frank J. Ewart, whom I believe was the first to propose the Acts 2: 38 doctrine as held by the UPCI,<sup>1</sup> spiritualized the meaning of the blood:

---

<sup>1</sup>Francis John Ewart (1875/6-1947) was a very intelligent teacher and prolific writer in the early Pentecostal movement. He is the most significant person in the formation of Oneness Pentecostal doctrine. I do not seek to diminish his accomplishments nor his

Beloved, when God's saints get a revelation of this great truth, they will not be surprised when the sick are healed at the Lord's Supper. They will not wonder why the saints are so wonderfully blessed. We will not be constantly listening to discussions as to where the blood is applied for we will see that normally speaking, the life that is in the blood comes in when the spirit (sic) comes in, and we are made holy then, but not till then.<sup>2</sup>

Ewart founded his view of the blood on a unique interpretation of the phrase, "the life is in the blood" (taken from Genesis 9:4f; Leviticus 17:11). He built his teaching using the logic that every child gets its life from his father. Since Jesus received his life from the Father, he therefore had his Father's blood. That is why Acts 20:28 states, "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Next, he adds that Calvary is the "blood bank" of Jesus' shed blood (a repository to which one must come to obtain the blood). How do we obtain this blood? According to Ewart, it "is available to all who claim a transfusion by the Holy Spirit. A check on God's Blood Bank in the Name of Jesus will be honored by the gift of eternal life."<sup>3</sup> Specifically, he meant that through water baptism in the name of Jesus one had the right to expect Spirit-baptism with tongues. It was then, Ewart taught, that the blood was applied.

Ewart held to this belief throughout his ministry. In 1944, writing about "God's Blood Bank," he echoes his earlier statement:

God's Blood Bank is Calvary. Into that Bank went the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It suits every type, every nationality, every color and race of men, and it is available for all who will submit to its transfusion by the Holy Spirit. Thus Calvary is God's Blood Bank and Pentecost is the Laboratory where the transfusions are given. . . . May God help His precious people to see the real meaning and absolute

---

character by what I write. He was a great man and was greatly devoted to what he believed. I acknowledge his love for Scripture, for the Person of Christ and substantial influence on the entire Pentecostal movement. I am presently working on a book dealing with his life and teaching.

<sup>2</sup>Frank J. Ewart, "The Blood of Jesus," *Meat In Due Season*, Feb. 1917, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Frank J. Ewart, a letter sent out to the community of Monterey Park, CA from "The Country Church of Monterey Park," January 13, 1944.

necessity of Pentecost. It is through the Holy Spirit that we get the "Life and immortality that Jesus brought to light" by His resurrection.<sup>4</sup>

For Ewart, historically, it was at Calvary where Christ's blood was given for us. But, it was only through the Pentecostal effusion that the "transfusion" or appropriation of that blood occurred. For him, when one receives the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal way, one thus receives the life of Jesus' resurrection, which is the same as receiving the blood of Calvary. The life is in the blood, the Holy Spirit is the life of Jesus, therefore the blood is received when the Holy Spirit is received. For him the application of the blood is mystical since one receives it directly, without means or mediation, directly from the Spirit.

Ewart was not alone in this interpretation. Lee Floyd<sup>5</sup> wrote in *The Voice in the Wilderness* (G. T. Haywood's paper) about "The Blood of Humanity and the Blood of Divinity." I quote at length both to illustrate this interpretation of the blood and to show where the spiritualizing line of reasoning leads:

This blood on the cross was the pouring out of the life of the natural man, the man Christ Jesus. The blood or life of God was poured out at Pentecost. We are not redeemed by the life of humanity but by the life of God, divinity. It was divinity speaking when Jesus said: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have not life IN YOU."

The Spirit is the life of God, and is, therefore, the blood of God. Acts 20:28. The blood of the man Christ Jesus the human, was poured out on the cross. The blood of Jesus the One True God was poured out at Pentecost. The blood of the man Christ Jesus must of necessity be spilled before the blood of the divine could be poured out.

---

<sup>4</sup>Frank J. Ewart, "God's Blood Bank," *Apostolic Call*, Vol., 10, No. 2, Feb. 1944, pp. 1,4.

<sup>5</sup>David Lee Floyd was a old time Pentecostal pioneer who left the Assemblies of God over the New Issue. He preached for G. T. Haywood and was the original publisher of one of the first Oneness periodicals: *The Blessed Truth* (started in January, 1916 in Kinder, Louisiana). He was a friend of many of the early Oneness leaders, including A. D. Urshan. He also knew about Herbert O. Scott and his paper *A Living Word* (*cp. below*).

Human blood was poured out on the cross. It in its literality was powerless; but, Oh the power of the blood of God which through this literal blood was shed upon us abundantly at Pentecost. O glory!<sup>6</sup>

Floyd's thinking reveals the latent Nestorianism that lies behind Oneness theology. Nestorianism was the early Christian heresy that denied the union of the two natures of Christ. Floyd asserts that the blood shed at Calvary was only that of a man and was powerless in itself. The blood of the Cross only makes the real "blood" available at Pentecost. The literal blood of God is the Holy Spirit given on the Day of Pentecost, and consequently received in the Pentecostal reception of the Spirit. Floyd appears to follow Ewart in identifying the blood with the Spirit.

This teaching is clearly heretical. First, if the blood of Christ on the Cross is not the blood of one Person with two united natures, then the power of the Cross is ineffective. There would be no real atonement. A mere human Jesus would not be able to die for the sins of the whole world. Only a perfect, sinless God-Man could bear the world's sins. The blood of Calvary was shed by God incarnate, fully human and fully divine, and not by a human alone.

Secondly, he is confused as to the effectiveness of the blood of Calvary. It is the literal blood of Christ on the Cross which redeems. Not symbolic, spiritual, or divine. It was literal blood. It was the true blood of Jesus, the one true God. It has power before God and not because it is believed in or experienced by us. When God saw the literal blood of the Passover lamb he spared the first born. Because the Father saw the literal blood of Jesus literally shed on Calvary, He spares all those who trust in Jesus. *The effectiveness of the Cross is in God's acceptance of it* and not in our experiencing or appropriating it.

Thirdly, this spiritualizing of the blood provided an understanding of the blood of Christ that led many Pentecostals away from a biblical view of justification by faith. Rather than justification by faith, this view holds to a justification by the experience of Spirit-reception. Why is this incorrect? Because justification is what *God does* when he declares the believer in Christ righteous on account of Jesus.

---

<sup>6</sup>All three quotations are taken from Lee Floyd, "The Blood of Humanity and the Blood of Divinity," *The Voice in the Wilderness*, No. 22, n. d. [1918?]. p. 3?.

Justification is not focused on subjective experience. It is focused on the literal, objective work of Jesus on the Cross. It is focused on the literal, objective acceptance by God of the literal death and resurrection of Jesus in time and space. Spiritualizing the blood turns one to focus on their own experience rather than look away to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

### **Sacramentalizing the Blood**

Ewart's doctrine of Acts 2:38, traveled by way of Glenn Cook, to G. T. Haywood in the Spring of 1915. Bro. Haywood was probably the most influential man in the history of Oneness Pentecostalism. He was an excellent song writer and often wrote great songs about the blood.<sup>7</sup> From many reports Haywood was a wonderful teacher, pastor and preacher. Without question he loved Christ and was greatly devoted to his work. My intent is not to question his character or dedication. It is only to show where, even among great men, misunderstanding key doctrines can lead many astray.

While Ewart stressed the blood coming through the Pentecostal Spirit-baptism, Haywood's emphasis of the application of the blood was more on water baptism in Jesus' name. While Ewart's view spiritualized the blood, Haywood's view "sacramentalized" it. By sacrament I mean, "a rite in which it is believed God's saving grace is uniquely active."<sup>8</sup> The Roman Catholic Church defines a sacrament as something that channels grace in and of itself. They stress the *objective* power of the sacrament which produces grace (spiritual work) when properly performed. On the other hand, Protestants maintain that a sacrament does not produce grace through its operation (by literally doing it). For them a sacrament proclaims the promise of God, and it is *faith* in that to which sacrament points – Jesus Christ – that mediates grace. When I say Haywood "sacramentalized" the blood, I am really saying that he returned in his understanding to the Roman Catholic view of water baptism as a sacrament. The point is that his view was not a new break-through

---

<sup>7</sup>"Peace Thru the Blood of the Cross," Thank God for the Blood," "I See a Crimson Stream of Blood," and "The Blood Prevails."

<sup>8</sup>Van Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1964), p. 211.

revelation, or a rediscovery of the teaching of the earliest church, but it was a return to basic Roman Catholic theology.

While Ewart viewed the blood as received without means, directly through the Spirit, Haywood taught that the blood came by the means of water baptism. His reason for this position was his view that the blood and the name of a person are inseparable:

Water alone does not save us. "Not by water only but by water and blood." The blood and the name of an individual are inseparable. John Smith's son is a "Smith" no matter what other name you may give him, because he has Smith's blood in him. By this I want to show that the Blood and Name are inseparable. You cannot honestly bear the name of Smith unless you have Smith's blood in you; neither can you deny that you are a Smith as long as you have Smith's blood in your veins.

Unfortunately, Haywood based his whole doctrine on a human analogy not given in Scripture. Haywood does not even allow for a basic flaw in his analogy: a person can be a Smith by marriage or adoption and not have Smith blood. More importantly, Haywood has no biblical text to support his reasoning about the blood. It may be logical to one that a person with the name Smith has the blood of a Smith, but that does not give one legitimate grounds to establish it as a doctrine of Scripture. The Scriptures do not use any such analogy, especially in the teaching of the Apostles, to link the meaning of the blood with the name of Jesus.

Haywood had another interesting understanding of the how the blood of Jesus works. He asserts that confession and repentance brings forgiveness of sins, but only being baptized in Jesus' name brings "remission" of sins:

God forgives all who confess and repent of their sins, but it requires the blood of Jesus to obtain the "remission of sins." The blood of Jesus was shed for both "forgiveness" and "remission" of sins. The blood of goats and bulls was for forgiveness but the blood of Jesus does that and "much more" . . . We may have our sins forgiven by confession and repentance (Lu. 17:3), but the only way the Bible

teaches for a man to obtain the “remission,” or “washing away” of his sins, is by being baptized in water “in the name of Jesus Christ.”<sup>9</sup>

The word “forgiveness” in Acts 5:31 is translated from the Greek word *aphesis*, which can mean deliverance, forgiveness, or remission. The word “remission” in Acts 2:38 is also translated from the Greek work *aphesis*. This is consistent throughout the New Testament, because forgiveness and remission were largely synonymous.<sup>10</sup> In Haywood’s case, this mistake is critical. He acknowledges that forgiveness comes through repentance. This is consistent with Scripture. But, he then, based on a mistaken knowledge of biblical words, redefines the nature of water baptism. He does this to support his idea that the blood or remission of sins only comes through the use of the name of Jesus in water baptism. I believe this epitomizes the conflicted view of salvation that has existed among Oneness Pentecostals and the UPCI in particular.

Early in Oneness history, a number believed that the blood was applied in repentance. For the most part this is true among those in the Assemblies of God:

Is it correct to say that Christ’s blood has been applied to our hearts? Does any person feel it applied? . . . When we sing about the blood flowing from Calvary we do not mean that an actual, literal stream of blood still flows from that mount of crucifixion. It is only a figure of speech . . . When we say the blood has been applied to our hearts, we simply mean that we have apprehended the meaning of Christ’s death on the cross, and that we accept His atoning sacrifice personally to cleanse away our sin. . . . We may say that the blood has been applied to our hearts; what we mean is that the blood has become efficacious to bring God’s forgiveness for our sin.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>G. T. Haywood, *The Voice in the Wilderness*, Vol. 2, No.?, n.d. [probably 1920?], pp. 1-2.

<sup>10</sup>The only place where is “remission” is not translated from *aphesis* is Romans 3:25 where the word is *pareisis*. In this case the word means “overlooking” or allowing sins to go unpunished. This would not be remission in the sense of taking away sins, as the context of the verse bears out.

<sup>11</sup>Frank M. Boyd, “Questions Answered by Frank M. Boyd, *The Pentecostal Evangel*, Mar. 22, 1953, p. 13.

Others, who held to a radical view of the New Birth, like Haywood, said that it needed to be applied in water baptism as well. This view is the majority view in the UPCI as expressed by David K. Bernard:

Using the terminology of the blood, the blood is applied to our hearts at the first hearing of the gospel to enable us to seek God, at repentance to enable us to turn from sin to God, at water baptism to remit sin, and at the Spirit baptism to enable us to receive God's Spirit. After the new birth, we continue to live an overcoming, holy life by the power of the blood. Thus, the blood is applied not just at one point in time, but throughout the salvation process, from the first hearing of the Word until the return of Christ for His church.<sup>12</sup>

We can see from this at least one reason why there is conflict in the quotes made by the ministers at the beginning of this paper. They are expressing an unconsciously held conflicted theology of the Atonement.

Ewart's line of reasoning was also built on a human analogy.<sup>13</sup> The life was in the blood so to get the blood one must get the "life" through the Holy Spirit. Haywood, using a similar human analogy, saw the blood being conveyed through the name. He believed that one took on the name of Christ only through "Jesus' name water baptism":

To be *saved* by water baptism, it must be administered in the name of Jesus, for there is "no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be *saved*." The life of the Blood of Christ is connected with baptism when it is administered in His Name. It is not by water only, but by water and blood, and the blood is in His name. (See Acts 5:28)<sup>14</sup>

Thus, for Haywood, the blood was applied through the name, and the name was applied only in water baptism, administered with the Jesus' name formula.

---

<sup>12</sup>David K. Bernard, *The New Birth*, (St. Louis, MO: Word Aflame Press, 1986), p. 98.

<sup>13</sup>Though is too often a practice of Bible students, human analogy must never be the basis of a doctrinal conclusion. Unless it is a human analogy made by Scripture itself, it is poor Scriptural reasoning to interpret a text from an unrelated, arbitrary analogy.

<sup>14</sup>Eld. G. T. Haywood, *The Birth of the Spirit*, (Indianapolis, IN: Christ Temple Book Store, n.d.), p. 24.

Haywood makes the blood dependent on the name of Jesus and the name of Jesus is dependent upon water baptism. By comparing Ewart's and Haywood's method of applying the blood we have insight into why some ministers in the UPCI would say the blood is applied in water baptism, while others would say it is in Spirit baptism. They are drawing from two streams of interpretation running through their theological history. Some subscribe to one reasoning about the blood, while others favor the second.

There were other early Oneness Pentecostals who attempted to relegate the blood to the New Birth in a more comprehensive way. Hebert O. Scott, pastor of the Pentecostal Assembly, St. Paul, MN, was an early teacher of the Oneness message.<sup>15</sup> In an article about "The Blood of Jesus in Relation to the New Birth," he wrote:

The blood has a threefold aspect. It is first, REDEMPTIVE. It is secondly, CLEANSING, and thirdly, it is LIFE-GIVING.<sup>16</sup>

Scott believed that blood of Calvary was the payment price for redeeming the fallen human race. Its power in this sense is to *purchase* or pay for salvation. This aspect affects the payment for our sins, but it does not affect the cleansing of our sins. It is the second aspect which affects the cleansing power of the blood. "There is a place in God's plan where the cleansing qualities in the blood of Jesus are brought to bear upon our sinful natures. That place is water baptism."<sup>17</sup> The third aspect is the life-giving power of the blood:

When we speak of the blood as having life-giving propenalties (sic), we always think of the one great and only giver of life, the Holy Spirit,

---

<sup>15</sup> He printed one of the first Oneness papers, called *A Living Word* (probably in 1915), whose main purpose was to promote the "present truth" of "baptism in the name of Jesus." He was friends with Harry Morse (who worked with Ewart) and G. T. Haywood. He was known to David Lee Floyd (above) who said that Scott "almost went back on the message." (Transcript of an interview with David Lee Floyd, North Miami, Oklahoma, Assemblies of God Archives, By Wayne Warner, Feb. 26, 1981, Tape 3-11.)

<sup>16</sup>H. O. Scott, "The Blood of Jesus in Relationship to the New Birth," *The Voice in the Wilderness*, Indianapolis, IN, No. 18, n.d. [1916?], p. 3?.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

and we see Him as the Agent importing to us that divine flow of life that Jesus said was in His blood and flesh. . . . The Holy Spirit then imparts to us the life of the Son of God.<sup>18</sup>

Scott summarized his article and thought in this manner:

The conclusion of the whole matter is this. In the water element of the "One Baptism" we receive the cleansing part of the New Birth, and in the Spirit element of the "One Baptism" we receive the Divine Life part of the New Birth that every normally born new creature possesses. How plain! We can now understand Acts 2: 38: "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, FOR REMISSION OF SINS (CLEANSING) and you shall receive THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST (LIFE), thus making one new creature."

Very early in the Oneness Pentecostal movement we see an example of an attempt to connect the meaning of the blood with their new interpretation of Acts 2: 38. Scott separates the effectiveness of the objective blood of Calvary from the subjective, conversion aspects of the blood. The effectiveness of the blood is not in the act of the Cross itself, nor by faith in the work of that Cross on our behalf, but it is in the subjective experience of water baptism in the name of Jesus and the experience of Pentecostal Spirit-reception, speaking with tongues. This is a radical departure from the orthodox understanding of the blood of Jesus.<sup>19</sup>

It is worth noting, that red flags should fly whenever we hear talk about grace as a substance,<sup>20</sup> the Holy Spirit as a force (an it), or the blood of Jesus as a power available to the one with the right or most faith.<sup>21</sup> Its power is historical and literal as an means of atonement in the sight of God, and is not mystical force - a capacity to do some spiritual act - possessed by the more spiritually qualified. The

---

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Billy McCool, a Oneness Pentecostal minister, spoke at the recent UPCI *Steadfast* 2002 conference in Indianapolis. He said very forcefully that you can't preach Acts 2: 38 to the neglect of the blood of Jesus, because Acts 2: 38 is the way you get the blood of Jesus.

<sup>20</sup>Compare my articles on *The Proper View of Grace* at: <http://www.inchristolone.org/ProperViewGrace.html>.

<sup>21</sup>This terminology reflects an underlying Roman Catholic Theology of "infused grace" and "formed faith."

Bible speaks of saving grace as a relationship, the Holy Spirit as a Person, and the blood of Jesus as a graphic and powerful symbol of the death of Jesus on our behalf. When the later view is abandoned, and the former understanding is promoted, a fundamental shift in one's definition of the Atonement takes place.