

Testimony to the Love of God by David Macrow

David is the son of Eric Macrow who, as well as being a part of the Campaign when it started in 1953, also was a great friend of Pastor Den's.

Psalms 56:3-4 – 'But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. I praise God for what He has promised. I will trust in God, so why should I be afraid?'

It is so easy to run away from the things that scare us. You may be terrified of spiders! You may dread going to work because someone there taunts you everyday! You may be scared of getting close to someone in case they hurt you!

But Hey! You can always run away. Those nasty fears and problems will just stay where you left them and you can start again. Wrong! Your fears will follow you and bug you and drive you mad for eternity, unless you face them.

I know what it's like to run away. I spent almost 20 years trying to escape that which I thought was trying to entrap me and control me. I was afraid to let go of my worldly desires. My parents didn't understand me. I knew best, I could make it on my own. I certainly didn't need God getting in the way and spoiling all my fun. Boy, was I wrong!

Proverbs 1:7 'Fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.' Fools despise wisdom and discipline. I was such a fool. I've always known deep down since as far back as I can remember that the Lord has been with me, looking after me and guiding everyday of my life. Yet I chose to ignore Him. I was going to do things my way. At least I thought I was.

Isaiah 41:10 'Don't be afraid for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God.'

Don't be afraid for I am with you! What was I afraid of? I was afraid that my friends would shun me if I said I believed in God. I didn't want to admit that my parents were right and I was wrong. I was afraid that I couldn't have fun if I was a Christian. I was scared of all the worldly things I would lose, without realising all the blessings and love that I could gain from a life with my Lord and Saviour.

To live with God in your life is not all singing hymns and doing good deeds

as most non Christians probably think or indeed what some Christians think. The Lord tests us continually. He has a plan for each and every one of us. My life is now more challenging. Accepting Christ as your Saviour and living your life by His laws and God's Commandments is a serious and a spiritual commitment that will change your life forever.

The more we praise the Lord and pray and do the Lord's work, the more the enemy wants to stop us. But the devil can not win. My God, your God, our Saviour in Heaven will defeat him.

Some of the challenges and hardships we will face in our Christian lives will test us immensely, sometimes to the point when we might ask the Lord, 'Why is this happening? What have I done wrong?' That's when the words of Isaiah 41:10 become a reality.

DON'T BE AFRAID FOR I AM WITH YOU. DON'T BE DISCOURAGED FOR I AM YOUR GOD.



If you truly love the Lord and trust in Him then fear should not get a hold on you. No matter what life throws at you, you can deal with it and turn any situation into victory. My beloved wife often says to me, 'We have the victory through Christ's blood.'

Imagine you are outside on a beautiful starry night. You look up and you see thousands of twinkling stars. Wait a few moments until your eyes adjust to the darkness and you can suddenly see millions more. Most people just

look at the sky briefly and think, 'Ooh that's nice. Look at all those stars,' and then dismiss it.

A few of us take our time, allow our eyes to focus and explore the night sky, searching for constellations, planets and shooting stars. We take the time to enjoy the moment.

Our Christian life can be that way also. It's no good just going to church on a Sunday, singing a few songs, praying a bit and hoping that will suffice until next week. Knowing Jesus is a lifetime commitment, we have to look harder at our relationship with Him. We have to open our eyes and see what He has given us.

Christ our Saviour is with each of us every minute of the day. He doesn't just turn up on Sundays and then wander off for the other six days. The Lord our Shepherd is there for us always, not just when we need Him or want Him. We must glorify His Name in everything we do, so that others can see Him.

I'm not saying that we should walk up and down the high street with a loud speaker and a placard. Just be aware of the Lord's presence in your daily life. If you see an opportunity to talk about the Saviour, then do so.

But people will be able to tell that you have something that they don't because He will shine through you. His glory and His presence is there for all to see. The closer you get to Jesus, the more you want to know Him. And the more you want to know Him, the more He wants to know you.

So don't be afraid. The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit will never fail you. It is only you that can fail God.

Photos are David with his wife Keila

tiny teamwork

No. 108a



Power in the Blood

This article 'Blood in Scripture' is part one of the teaching series given at one of our recent conferences

We are going to briefly look at what the Scriptures say about the blood. Let's start at the beginning – right back with Abel at the start of Genesis. Hebrews says that Abel's faith pleased God. I think it was more than just his faith that pleased God, because he brought to God a blood offering – he killed his first lambs, he brought their fat portions as a blood offering and it was found acceptable to God.

In many ways Abel was the very first believer we have in scripture. Not believer in the sense that you might talk about now, he didn't believe in Jesus Christ, he believed that if he came and sacrificed the things most precious to him, those first lambs from his flock, that God would bless him, and he was right. I'm sure that blood

offering was primarily important. It's not the only reason, I'm sure, why Cain was rejected by God. Obviously there was an attitude in Cain's heart that manifested itself later when he killed his brother. But Cain brought produce and although he worked with produce, it wasn't a blood offering.

When God took Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, one of the first things that God did was kill animals – to give them clothes – but God made a blood sacrifice there. It wasn't in the terms that He later asked the Jews to make a blood sacrifice, but right here at the beginning, whether it's God's blood sacrifice where He made clothes for Adam and Eve or whether it's Abel's blood sacrifice, at the very beginning of things, God accepts a

blood sacrifice. Abel was able to read the mind of God, knew what God was expecting and God blessed him for it.

We'll skip forward to Noah – the very first thing that happened when Noah came out of the arc was that he built an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings on the altar, a blood offering. I can't tell you why blood offerings meant such a lot to God, and still do but in a different way today. There are still many things in our Christianity, many situations where we say 'Why does this mean so much to God?' Sometimes we don't understand but nevertheless if we know it does offend God, we don't do it. If we know it's something that blesses God and causes Him to smile, we should do it. And maybe these people, Noah and

Abel, didn't know why a blood offering was so important to God; maybe I don't know why a blood offering was so important to God, all I know is that it was and they were obedient. So this new earth started with blood and God smelled a soothing aroma, a soothing aroma of obedience and God said 'I will never destroy the earth again because of man's evil heart'.

Let's jump forward again to Abraham when he took Isaac up to the mountain, Moriah. You know I used to think of that, and wonder how God could command him to kill his son. Why was this arbitrary command given – go and kill your son? It was, of course, a type (example) of Jesus; God was going to send His Son to die. And I thought to myself, 'ok I can see that' but Isaac being sacrificed wouldn't have accomplished anything apart from showing that Abraham was so obedient that he would sacrifice his own son; it wasn't going to save my sins if Isaac was sacrificed.

There is more to it, there's a revelation of a divine truth here, and this is one thing we've got to grip. That only through death is a life entirely given to God. In fact only through death can a truly dedicated life be given to God – it's the only way. You may already know this and see this but it's good to be reminded of what Jesus did, He substituted Himself for me. Otherwise that would have been me on the cross.

We'll leap forward again to Egypt and to the very first Passover. The Angel of Death came to take the first born of every family and there, around the Hebrew homes, was blood. The blood of the lamb on top of every door, around the lintel. The Angel of Death knew where the blood was. The blood became a protection, a wall against God's punishment and judgement for us. Again perhaps we can see a parallel with what Christ has done for us there.

Unfortunately for the Egyptians they didn't have any knowledge of the power of the blood in God's eyes. We know that Pharaoh was warned, and probably most of Egypt was warned that they should put blood across the lintels - even so, they didn't do it. This nation has been warned, this world

has been warned that blood has been shed and we need to cover ourselves with that blood. We need to turn to that Lamb that was shed for us. You know we're suffering floods, landslides, tornados, earthquakes, violence, wars etc. We need to plead the blood of the Lamb, the power of the blood to keep Christ's judgement away from us. We need to do it as individuals; it starts with you and me!

50 days after the Passover they were on Mount Sinai and Moses came with the Book of the Covenant, which he had written after spending time with God. He got the young men to kill bulls and took half of the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. He then read the Book to the people and the people said 'We all agree we will be obedient.' Moses then took the blood and he sprinkled them and that was the sealing of the covenant. From that moment God said 'Build Me a tabernacle and I will dwell with you!'

Before this God had not dwelt with any of his people, but now He would. The difference here is that before this blood had been shed and painted on but this time the blood was sprinkled on to the people. After the people had agreed to the covenant, to His laws, Moses sprinkled blood directly on to the people. God is moving on in telling us about the power of the blood and all of a sudden because blood had moved on to the people, whatever that may have meant in the spiritual world, God could suddenly dwell with His people. Not in the way He dwells with us now, but He could dwell in the Holy of Holies. He then gives instructions as to how to build the tabernacle and Arc of the Covenant with the mercy seat.

In the temple there were areas which, all day long, were sprinkled with blood. There was something in the life and power of the blood that meant that God could come closer. This is the key; the death or blood of another takes the place of my blood that needed to be shed, of my life that needed to be given.

Blood was so important to the Hebrew religion (most if not all laws involved blood) and as Christians we have lost that - we focus on blessings!. We

focus on what happens at the front of churches, prayers, and our time with God; none of which are evil or nasty, but we have lost the key thing to our family as the Hebrew people, the Jews, are our family now. We have been branched on to their vine, so to speak, and in that vine the key nutrient wasn't water, it was blood. We need to get back to it - the power and necessity of the blood! There's lots more about the blood in the Old Testament which is worth looking at if you have the time.

Moving on to the New Testament, in John 6:53-56 Jesus speaks about drinking His blood, and this is quite graphic. Without the drinking or shedding of His blood there was nothing Christ could do for me. That sounds awful doesn't it? God can do anything. Well I tell you one thing, and I'm not being blasphemous, God could do nothing for me without the shedding of Christ's blood, because I would have no life in me and God only deals with life doesn't He? He punished death, He's got rid of that, praise the Lord and He has made life available so He could deal with those with it; see Matthew 26:27-28.

When Jesus' blood was shed, it obtained new life for us, and it's only in the drinking of that blood that He shares it with us. Do you see the difference there? He shared that cup around on that table that night and He knew what He was going to go and do. He shared with His friends and loved ones, and all those there at that supper, His blood. It wasn't His real blood we know but we're talking in the terms of the spiritual world. Christ's blood on Calvary has given us life.

That ram on Mount Moriah spared life, blood on the lintels spared the life of the Hebrews first born but the blood on Calvary gives life.

Again moving forward in the Bible to the book of Hebrews. It was written in many ways to show why temple service wasn't needed – the sacrifice of animals wasn't needed anymore. You would think the writer would just shy away from mentioning blood because it is the key thing in the whole law of the Hebrews. But the writer doesn't: Have a look at Hebrews 9:11;

10:19; 12:22-24; 13:12,20. Hebrews talks about the blood of Christ taking the place of all these animals, giving us entry into the Holy of Holies.

There was a veil in the temple that was consistently sprinkled with blood but when Jesus died it tore in half because the blood of Christ consumed that veil. It was so weighty on that veil that it tore in two – it no longer needed to be sprinkled with some other covering for our sins. God had made the way open by the blood of Christ.

Blood in Scripture is so very important, no matter where you look in the Bible. If you look at Revelation, in the 'song of the redeemed', you will find that they are washed in the blood. Completely made pure in the blood.

One thing a lot of churches like to be is an overcomer for God – do you want to be an overcomer for God? The song of those who overcame in Revelation overcame 'by the blood'. Only in the blood did they overcome. If we're living in the days of persecution as some believe we are (or if we're not - my goodness they're going to be bad) we are going to need to live by the blood. It is the only way to overcome.

We have taken a brief tour from Genesis to Revelation and skipped over 4 thousand years, and we can see everything is about the blood, whether it be sacrificial blood which gave a right to God or in the New Testament the blood of the Lamb which gave direct access to the throne of God and the Holy of Holies.

We must learn that, before the foundation of this earth, God revelled in the blood, God rejoiced in the blood of the Lamb because only through that blood could He know you and me and, more importantly, only through that blood could we know Him. I'm sure He still revels in it today.

Here in Saltcoats when we pray with people we start off every time of prayer by pleading the blood of Christ. I always thought that was just for protection, we get protected by the blood of Christ, the enemy can't come over the blood. But there's more to it than that. Blood is God's life force – the Holy Spirit comes to us through the

blood of the Lamb, God's power comes to us through the blood; it's like veins.

It's incredible but we need to learn how to revel in the blood of the Lamb. We need to learn the full power of the blood. It will take time, it took God 4,000 years before He revealed the true power of the blood. He gradually revealed it in different ways through the Bible and eventually came the full power of that blood revealed.

We could spend all the time in the world trying to find out what the power of the blood of Christ is, but there's something about the blood of Christ that is inert. In that blood was a spirit of Self Sacrifice.

If you go through the Scriptures or hear people's testimonys or ask people questions but you are not willing to have that same spirit of Self Sacrifice that dwells in the blood of the Lamb, it will do you no good.

Some people think Christ died for me, that's great I have a great life now that is it! But that spirit of Self Sacrifice He came with is still here today. It's not a Self Sacrifice that we die off and that's us done but that the blood's power might truly be manifested in us. I want the power of the blood. Not simply to say 'Be healed' and they are healed, 'Be set free' and they are set free, 'Rise from the dead' and they are raised from the dead. All those things are possible in the power of the blood and more besides.

Pastor Den would have said that the first and main power given to us in the blood is the power to die. Jesus didn't want to go to the cross but He used the power of the blood to go and do it. There are many things in this world that I don't want to die to, those things I like or whatever. Only in the power of the blood, if I let it, can I sacrifice those things for God. Then maybe once I have allowed His power to so work in me, I can go raise the dead and see people healed and set free. But that's not the primary instance, the primary instance is the power to die totally to yourself and the world.

I truly believe that only in the power of the blood are most things made possible. Whatever your need today, and maybe it's a specific need, the power of the blood is the answer to it!

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Other parts of 'Power in the Blood' include:

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