

Power in The Blood

The oldest reference to it is a 3,000-year-old carving from ancient Egypt. It has plagued at least one President. Even though it affected only about 1% of the population, this disease resulted in about 58,000 cases in the United States in 1952. At its peak it was probably the most feared disease of modern times.

I would assume that everyone over age 50 knows exactly what I am talking about. Those 40 to 50 probably know, but have never seen it themselves. To those under age 40, this sounds like a strange ghost story that is just made to scare you. The disease is Polio. Well known in the United States since at least the 18th century, Polio was a disease that occurred every summer. In 1916 an outbreak affected 9,000 people in New York City alone. By the time of the Great Depression, Polio was described as the worst fear among parents for their children. Tens of thousands of children were infected by the disease every year. At its peak, there were 58,000 cases reported in 1952 and 35,000 in 1953. Sufferers could experience paralysis in the limbs, deformity in the extremities, and possibly death. Children who were healthy and strong would suddenly be confined to a bed, their legs twisted and in pain. The most extreme sufferers were confined to a metal contraption called the “iron lung” which helped them to breathe, but kept them confined for the rest of their lives.

The difficulty for treating Polio was not determining its cause – the Polio virus had been identified in 1908. The difficulty was in determining why some people got it and some did not. Of those that did contract it, why did some suffer debilitating paralysis while others simply ran a small fever?

It turns out that before the Polio vaccine was developed in 1957, the best way to avoid becoming paralyzed by Polio as a child was to contract the disease as an infant. You see, for the first six months of a baby’s life, the child has all the protection of its mother living within it. Antibodies are small chemicals which are created to disrupt the operation of diseases. Each disease requires a different antibody. Think of the diseases as “locks” and the antibodies as “keys” that our bodies create to kill each disease. If your body can learn to create the proper antibodies before the disease gains a significant hold, then your body can likely avoid most of the damage that the disease would cause.

When a baby is in its mother's womb, certain chemicals can pass between the mother and the baby. The mother and child do not share blood supply, but oxygen and nutrients pass from the mother to child, while carbon dioxide and waste products pass from baby to mother. One of the other things that can pass from the mother to the child is the mother's antibodies. Every protection that the mother has developed over her life she shares with her baby.

This protection continues after the baby is born. Doctors typically do not give a baby vaccinations until they are six months old because the mother's antibodies still course through the baby's veins. Doctors will often ask the mother if she has had certain diseases such as Chicken Pox or Measles. They are not being nosy, but they are trying to find out the protections that the mother may have passed onto the infant. It is only by sharing of one body that protection passes from one to the other.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (KJV)

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; **15** And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The writer of Hebrews is saying that Jesus became human (flesh and blood) so that He could extend his holiness to us. Because Jesus was fully God and fully man, the holiness of God was passed through the blood to us.

Hebrews 2:16-18 (KJV)

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. **17** Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Just as a mother will pass on the protection from disease to her children through her blood, so Jesus has passed on power to resist disease, temptation, and spirits through His blood. When God became flesh, mankind inherited the "antibodies," if you will, of God. The power that is in the blood of Jesus comes to us.

Colossians 1:12-20 (KJV)

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: **13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: **14** In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: **15** Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **16** For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: **17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. **19** For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; **20** And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

God held nothing back from the blood of Jesus. It says that in him all fullness dwells. Only God can forgive sins, yet through the blood of Jesus our sins are forgiven. Only God can create life, yet through the blood our life can be saved. All things in earth and in heaven are available to us through His blood. How do we acquire the power of the blood? By taking on His name in Baptism.

Acts 2:28 (KJV) Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

It is the blood which cleanses us from our sins, and it is through the application of the blood through baptism and the infilling of the Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking in tongues that we have it applied to our lives. Once we're covered in his blood we can invoke the power of the blood by calling upon His name.

A few weeks ago, while my daughter Cara was at camp, my wife and mother-in-law painted her room. When they were at the store, my wife called and asked me if we had any brushes and rollers. Now my daughter did not say, "I want my room to be brushed and rolled." Rather she said, "I want my room painted." Yet it was through the brushes and the rollers that the paint was applied to the walls. When a woman is about to give birth, one of the signs for her is that her "water breaks." This action usually sets off a chain reaction of travel to the hospital

followed by hours of labor. When the baby is finally delivered, the first thing the doctor does is to “smack” the child to get it to take its first breath. So, a child’s life is brought about by water followed by a breath.

In spiritual rebirth, we are also brought about by water and a breath.

Romans 6:3-7 (KJV)

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: **6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. **7** For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Paul is saying that we should treat Baptism as our own death. That by going under the water we are dying. Only our first life is subject to sin, but our second life will be without sin. You can be Baptized and merely get wet. You can die and be without hope of resurrection. But if you are buried with Jesus, then you can be raised from the dead as he was. We use the shorthand of “Baptism in Jesus Name.” By being baptized in Jesus Name, we must take on the death of Jesus and the power of His blood is applied to our lives.

I know of a group that says that Baptism is not necessary for salvation. That same group, however, does require baptism to join their church. So, in that sense it is harder to get into their church than it is to get into heaven. We do not find this in our Bible. All the scriptures that we find say that Baptism in Jesus Name is essential to salvation.

I sometimes preach a sermon on all the places in the Bible where water separates two parts of someone’s life.

The earth is void and without form when God moves on the water to start creation.

The Jews are slaves in Egypt when they move through the Red Sea and into the desert.

Forty years later they move from the desert through the Jordan River to the Promised Land.

Pregnant, water breaks, baby.

Sinner, water Baptism, salvation.

Through the mystery of Baptism, we find that we have the blood of Jesus applied to our lives. It is only through Baptism that the blood is applied, and it is only through the blood that we have power over the enemy.

Acts 3:6 (KJV) Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

By simply invoking the name of Jesus, Peter could heal a man. The ability of the blood of Jesus to remove disease flowed through Peter's veins.

Acts 16:18 (KJV) And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Just as it says that all things in heaven and in earth are subject to the blood of Jesus, so Spirits are also subject to the blood. Peter was able to heal a man's physical body, but Paul healed a woman from a Spiritual affliction.

So, it is through Baptism that the Power of the blood of Jesus is applied to our lives. This power is like the antibodies that a mother gives her young child. They are not part of the baby's body, but they provide the power to overcome diseases that would harm the baby, which the mother has already defeated. The blood of Jesus gives us the power to overcome physical and spiritual afflictions that would defeat us.

Scientists have recently discovered some interesting behavior among the Western Ground Squirrel.

These squirrels will approach a snake and begin to flick their tails, trying to get the snake to reveal its position and size. The squirrels will then stay just outside the snake's strike zone and throw dirt and twigs at the snake, harassing it until it leaves. What is more amazing is that the adult squirrels are immune to the venom of the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake. In the blood of the adult squirrel is the ability to take a bite from a rattlesnake without dying. Why, then, do they do this? It turns out that while the adult squirrels are immune to the venom, the baby squirrels are not. The rattlesnakes will often cruise the ground squirrel burrows looking for the young. When the adults find a snake, they will do whatever they can to drive the threat away.

Those of us who are covered by the blood of Jesus need to do the same. When young members join our congregations, we should pray down the blood of Jesus as a barrier of protection around them. Just as the squirrel parents will harass the snake until it leaves, we should ensure that the spirits that attempt to troll around those under our care are harassed and told to leave.