

Podcast 289 Blood Washed White Robes

Scott: Welcome to the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme! I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today! Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I'm well. I just got back from Jacksonville. Another wonderful time. That's three weeks at conventions, back to back to back, and I don't know if it was the fact that I did something differently or just the fact that it was the end of a three-week push, but I've been feeling good since Sunday and ready to go.

Scott: Awesome!

Steve: We're wrapping up our sections on our identity in Christ, who we are in Jesus and what He has done for us. And that's the key, is what He has done for us. We're going to talk about our clothes today. So let's pray.

Father, thank You for what You have done for us and what You are doing for us. We are not only saved by Your death; we're saved by Your life. And thank You for being our Savior. We worship You, we draw near to You, and we thank You that when we call upon You, that You answer us and You hear us. Help us. Give us ears to hear what Your Spirit is saying to us today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Steve: Romans 3:9–12 describes our condition. This passage is quoted from Psalms 14 and 53. "What then? Are we Jews any better off?" This is Paul writing to the Romans. "No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.'" We're all in the same condition. We are needy. We all start at ground zero.

There's an interesting verse that came to me as I was preparing for this podcast, in 2 Samuel 14:14. I don't know if you remember the context, but Absalom, after killing his brother who had violated his sister, had been banished from the kingdom, and Joab devised a method to bring him back. Joab sent a wise woman who she pretended to be someone else. In her appeal to King David, she said, "We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But God will not take away life, and He devises means so that the banished one will not remain an outcast."

I love that expression, because that is indicative of our God. But for God, we would all be banished. We would all be outcasts. But He devises means so that we will not remain an outcast but will be restored back to our Father. Amen?

Steve: To recap, all of us are needy, all of us are outcasts, all of us are estranged. We're separated from God because of our sin. Yet in the book of Revelation, we see this countless multitude, these people that have been redeemed. So how were they redeemed? Let me read these passages. They're long, but they're good, because this is the end of the matter. God has devised means for us to be restored, and we are a part of these restored individuals.

Revelation 6:9–11: “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, ‘O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before You will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.”

These were the martyrs, but notice what happened. They were given a white robe, which is our topic for today. In the next chapter, Revelation 7:9–14, says, “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes” – get that? – “Clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’

And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.’ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?’ I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”

This is a group of people that are clothed in white robes. These people were not martyrs. These people came out of the Great Tribulation, which we might be in right now. Because of the Spirit of God, they were taught how to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.

We have sinned. We have been forgiven absolutely, and we have been saved to the uttermost. As far as the east is from the west, our sins have been removed from us. We're cleansed and forgiven, our sins, which were scarlet, are now white as snow. We've talked about these blessed truths in previous episodes.

All of these incredible benefits are because of our Great High Priest. Hebrews 5:9: “He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” Hebrews 10:10: “We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:14: “By a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.”

It’s only because of Jesus and only because of His blood that we have been able to receive this great salvation. We began in Romans 3. We’re all sinners. And then we see in Revelation there’s a whole pile of people, martyrs, people who came out of the Great Tribulation, they’re standing before the throne, and they have white robes. Where did these robes come from? Ephesians 2:13: “Now in Christ Jesus” – those are the three operative words – “in Christ Jesus” – “you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” “In Christ Jesus.”

2 Corinthians 5:21, “For our sake He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him” – in Christ Jesus – “we might become the righteousness of God.” In Him, we are no longer sinners. We are “righteousness of God.” Okay, most of us know Romans 3:23, right? I mean, when somebody asks us, “How do you believe in Jesus,” generally I say, “Well, let’s go read Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23.” We call this the “Romans Road.” We stop at 23, but look at 24: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Yes, we’ve sinned and fallen short of His glory, but we are also justified by His grace. 1 Corinthians 1:30: “Because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”

Romans 8:1–2: “There is therefore now no condemnation” – none, zero, nada, I don’t know any more languages – “for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”

Between Romans 3 and Revelation, Christ Jesus enters the picture. Once for all, He pays the price for our sins, and now, because we are in Christ Jesus, we no longer are condemned. We now are the righteousness of God in Christ. We have become righteousness, redemption, wisdom, all those things, because of Jesus. If you’re like me, you like visuals. I mean, why else would I write a math program, right, called Math–U–See? I like visuals. I like pictures. So here you go. I’ve got one, two, three, four pictures for us today

The first one, Genesis 3:21: “The LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.” These two dear people didn’t even know, before sin entered the picture, that they were naked. They were completely at ease in their own beings the way that God created and designed them. And then sin entered the picture, and now they’re standing before the God of all the earth naked.

God knows that, and God provided for them by killing some animals, because He clothed them in garments of skins. These dear animals had to pay the price with their life so that Adam and Eve could be clothed. That’s what we know, and it’s a tremendous picture. It’s a tremendous reality. Rightly in Genesis God pays the foundation for what His Son would do for us. Jesus would have to die for us as the Lamb of God, not only to take away our sins, but so that we could be clothed in His righteousness.

Prodigal son (Luke 15:21–22): “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before You. I am no longer worthy to be called Your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robes, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.’” He clothed him. He forgave him, and he clothed him.

Zechariah 3:1–5 is probably one of the best examples of this. “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD” – so Zechariah, like John in Revelation, was in heavenly places. He was seeing realities that nobody else saw because he was before the throne of God. He was in the presence of God. And Joshua the high priest was standing right there, “And satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to satan, ‘the LORD rebuke you, O satan! The LORD Who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?’” That’s all of us! We’re all brands plucked from the fire. “Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. And the angel said to those who were standing before him, ‘Remove the filthy garments from him.’ And to him he said, ‘Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.’ And I said, ‘Let them put a clean turban on his head.’ So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD was standing by.”

That transaction is the picture of each of us. The devil accusing us, the Lord rebuking him, the Lord taking away our iniquity, taking away our filthy garments, clothing us with pure garments. That’s it. But it’s all because of

Jesus. Jesus took away our sin. Jesus became righteousness to us. And here's the end. I wish I could have a song based on this.

Isaiah 61:10: "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

That's exactly what God does for us so that someday, we're going to be part of that great multitude standing there, clothed in white robes because of Jesus. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Amen.

This concept of being clothed in Christ is what makes it, to me, so that God looks at us and, just as He said in John 15:9, Jesus says, "As My Dad loved me, so have I loved you," and how did He love Him? He said, "You're My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased" or "Who brings Me great joy," and because we are in Christ, because His righteousness has been imputed to us, it's been put on us, now our adopted Dad – we as His adopted children – He can say to us, "Steve, Scott, everybody listening, you are My beloved children. I love you to pieces. I'm so glad you're a part of our family, and you bring Me great joy." Not because of anything except Jesus.

Jesus has taken away our sin. He's restored us to the Father. He's covered us with His robes. He hasn't done a halfway job. He's an amazing Savior. He's perfect. He's a Great High Priest. He came, took the form of a man, died for our sins, and then puts His robes around us. It's hard to grab, but this is the thing, is that we have to, as it says in Romans, reckon this to be true. We have to believe this. We have to mix it with faith, as Hebrews says. And the more that we do, the more it kind of percolates down into our being, and so we don't have to stand before our God with our head bowed, because we're clothed in Christ. We're clothed in His garments. Our robes are white. Amen.

Steve: When we see that kind of white with our glorified eyes and our glorified bodies, we're going to just revel in it. And it might be one of those things that's shimmering, because we know that white has all color, the whole spectrum is in white.

Scott: I can't wait to see it.

Steve: Yeah. We're going to be complete! We're going to be what God designed us to be. And He's going to take away our sin, He's going to take away our sin memory, He's going to take away our guilt and our shame, and we're going to get up in the morning, and we're just going to be, "Oh! Love this robe. Love the

Man the bought it for me. Love the Man that washed it and made it white. Love the Man that clothed me in it.” And that’s it.

Father, thank You for Your wonderful salvation. Thank You for Your complete forgiveness of sins. Saved to the uttermost. Thank You that there’s no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. Thank You that because of Jesus, we have become the righteousness of God in Christ. Thank You for our robes, white robes because of the blood of Jesus. And though our robes used to be scarlet and filthy, now they are white and they’re pure. Thank You for these vestments. Thank You that You have provided all things that we need to be fully restored to what You intended in the beginning. That’s Your job. You do it magnificently. Great job, Dad! We worship You. In Jesus’ name, amen.