

CFBC Hymns Class 11

Count Nicolaus Ludwig Von Zinzendorf

"I have done this for you; what have you done for me?"

Inscription accompanying Ecce Homo by Domenico Feti in Dusseldorf

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" is one of more than 2,000 hymns written by Nicolaus von Zinzendorf. Born at Dresden, Germany, to a noble, wealthy, and highly cultured family, Zinzendorf was educated at Halle and Wittenberg. Influenced both by his pietistic maternal grandmother, and by Francke, a teacher at Halle, the fundamental ideals of Pietism and a deep interest in foreign missions were inculcated in him.

Upon completion of legal studies at Wittenberg, Zinzendorf took a post as Councilor to the Elector of Saxony. While serving in this position, he purchased a large estate and offered it for use as a home for religious refugees. The largest refugee group to settle on his estate was the Moravians, believers who traced their roots back to fifteenth-century followers of John Hus. The Moravians' history was one of frequent persecution and ridicule because of their religious zeal and enthusiasm. Between 1722 and 1729, about 300 Moravians emigrated to Zinzendorf's estate, establishing a religious community called Herrnhut. Zinzendorf himself became a Moravian minister and bishop.

In 1735, the Herrnhut congregation published its own hymnal, *Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeinde in Herrnhut*. Of the 999 hymns in the collection, 208 were by Zinzendorf. His hymns reveal not only pietistic influence but also strong evangelical and missionary zeal. Many of them deal with the suffering and death of Christ and are lyric expressions of personal devotion.

The real birth-moment of Zinzendorf's religious life is said to have been simultaneous with his study of "Ecce Homo" in the Dusseldorf Gallery, a wonderful painting of Jesus crowned with thorns. Visiting the gallery one day when a young man, he gazed on the sacred face and read the legend superscribed, "All this I have done for Thee; What doest thou for me?" Ever afterwards his motto was "I have but one passion, and that is He, and only He."

It is to the praise of God that throughout his life Count Zinzendorf continued to focus not on what he was doing for Christ, but on the sole and complete sufficiency of what Christ had done for him. "Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" is an outstanding expression of that focus.

No tunes were included in the Herrnhut hymnal, so the original setting or settings for this hymn are uncertain. More recent hymnals have set the lyrics to various tunes, including “Malvern” and “Uxbridge,” both by Lowell Mason,¹⁰ “Germany” by William Gardiner, and “Herr Jesu Christ, Mein’s Lebens Licht,” from a 1625 hymn collection.

The lyrics of “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness” must surely comprise one of the clearest, simplest, and most straightforward poetic expressions of the total efficacy of the Lord Jesus for the salvation of fallen humanity. In each stanza the author proclaims his absolute assurance of being justified before God, not because of any work or merit of his own, but solely because of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 64:6 states that “...all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags...” How gracious, then, of God the Father to provide us instead with Jesus’ righteousness as “our glorious dress.” Second Corinthians 5:21 assures us, “for He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

The hymn’s second stanza seems inspired by Rom 8:33-34: “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”

Bold shall I stand in Thy great day;
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully through these absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

The final stanza finds scriptural support in 1 Tim 2:5-6: “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

O, let the dead now hear Thy voice;
Now bid Thy banished ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness!

<https://faithalone.org/journal-articles/a-hymn-of-grace-jesu-thy-blood-and-righteousness/>

WordWise Hymns Commentary...

German Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf wrote about two thousand hymns during his life, but only this one remains in common use. *Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit* was translated into English by the count's friend, John Wesley. Incredibly, the original song had thirty-three stanzas. Wesley eliminated some in his translation, and they're customarily pared down further by hymn book editors, usually to four or five...

When a sinner puts his faith in Christ for salvation, he is recognizing that when Christ died on the cross, the death paid his or her debt of sin, and when He rose from the dead, the sinner was given likewise new and eternal life in Him. To put it another way, when the Father looks at Christians in terms of judgment, He sees His holy Son. It's as though we are clothed in Christ, and His righteousness. "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ [by a work of the Holy Spirit] have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27). And "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (II Cor. 5:17). The prophet Isaiah anticipates this when he says:

"He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10).

That is the gist of this wonderful hymn which sees Christ as the right spiritual clothing for each of us, a robe that can be ours through faith in Him.

Stanza 1...

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Stanza 8...

Lord, I believe, were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

Stanza 2...

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

Stanza 24...

O, let the dead now hear Thy voice;
Now bid Thy banished ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness!

<https://wordwisedhymns.com/2018/05/09/jesus-thy-blood-and-righteousness-2/>

Justification (Westminster Shorter Catechism 1647)

Q 33. What is justification?

A 33. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, (1) and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, (2) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, (3) and received by faith alone. (4)

(1) Rom. 3:24-25; 4:6-8.

(2) II Cor. 5:19, 21.

(3) Rom. 5:17-19.

(4) Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9.

Justification (Westminster Confession 1646) Of Justification

I. Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth; (a) not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, (b) they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God. (c)

(a) Rom. 8:30; Rom. 3:24.

(b) Rom. 4:5, 6, 7, 8; II Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24, 25, 27, 28; Tit. 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Jer. 23:6; I Cor. 1:30, 31; Rom. 5:17, 18, 19.

(c) Acts 10:43; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:19; Acts 13:38, 39; Eph. 2:7, 8.

III. Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf. (f) Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them; (g) and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; (h) and both

freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace;(i) that both the exact justice, and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners.(k)

(f) Rom. 5:8, 9, 10, 19; I Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 10:10, 14; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12.

(g) Rom. 8:32.

(h) II Cor. 5:21; Matt. 3:17; Eph. 5:2.

(i) Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7.

(k) Rom. 3:26; Eph. 2:7.

The “Complete” Text...

The original German had 33 verses, which John Wesley pared to 24.

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in Thy great day;
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully through these absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

The deadly writing now I see
Nailed with Thy body to the tree:
Torn with the nails that pierced Thy hands,
The old covenant no longer stands.

Though, signed and written with my blood,
As hell's foundations sure it stood,
Thine hath washed out the crimson stains,
And white as snow my soul remains.

Satan, thy due reward survey;
The Lord of Life why didst thou slay?
To tear the prey out of thy teeth;
To spoil the realms of hell and death.

The holy, the unspotted Lamb,
Who from the Father's bosom came,
Who died, for me, even me, to atone,
Now for my Lord and God I own.

Lord, I believe the precious blood
Which at the mercy-seat of God
For ever doth for sinners plead,
For me, even for my soul, was shed.

Lord, I believe, were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean-shore,
For all Thou hast the ransom given,
Purchased for all peace, life, and Heaven.

Lord, I believe the price is paid,
For every soul the atonement made;
And every soul Thy grace may prove,
Loved with an everlasting love.

Carnal, and sold to sin, no more
I am; hell's tyranny is o'er:
The immortal seed remains within,
And, born of God, I cannot sin.

Yet naught whereof to boast I have;
All, all Thy mercy freely gave;
No works, no righteousness are mine;
All is Thy work, and only Thine.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
Even then, this shall be all my plea,
"Jesus hath lived, hath died for me."

Thus Abraham, the friend of God,
Thus all heaven's armies bought with blood,
Savior of sinners Thee proclaim;
Sinners, of whom the chief I am.

Naked from Satan did I flee,
To Thee, my Lord, and put on Thee:
And thus adorned, I wait the word,
"He comes: arise, and meet thy Lord."

This spotless robe the same appears
When ruined nature sinks in years:
No age can change its constant hue;
Thy blood preserves it ever new.

When Thou shalt call in that great day
For my account, thus will I say:
“Thanks to my gracious Lord, if aught
Of good I did, glad I it wrought:

And while I felt Thy blood within
Cleansing my soul from every sin,
Purging each fierce and foul desire;
I joyed in the refining fire.

If pride, desire, wrath stirred anew,
Swift to my sure resort I flew:
See there my Lord upon the tree!
Hell heard: instant my soul was free.

Then shall Heaven’s hosts with loud acclaim
Give praise and glory to the Lamb,
Who bore our sins, and by His blood
Hath made us kings and priests to God.

O ye, who joy to feed His sheep,
Ever in your remembrance keep,
Empty they are, and void of God,
Till brought to the atoning blood.

Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,
Whose boundless mercy hath for me,
For me, and all Thy hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

Ah, give me now, all-gracious Lord,
With power to speak Thy quickening word;
That all who to Thy wounds will flee
May find eternal life in Thee.

Thou God of power, Thou God of love,
Let the whole world Thy mercy prove:
Now let Thy word o'er all prevail;
Now take the spoils of death and hell.

O, let the dead now hear Thy voice;
Now bid Thy banished ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness!

At the Price of God's Own Blood

A Communion message by John Piper

Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son.

Acts 20:28

I have been moved deeply recently in reading about the life of Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Many of you know about him. Some don't. He was a German, born in 1700, who founded a community of earnest Christians called Herrnhut ("The Lord's Watch"). The community became part of the Moravian Church and was best known for its unparalleled missionary zeal.

Zinzendorf's Commitment to the Blood of Jesus

In 1727 the community started a round the clock "prayer watch" that lasted unbroken for 100 years. There were about 300 persons in the community at the beginning, and various ones covenanted to pray for one of the 24 hours in the day. In 1792, 65 years later, with the lamp of prayer still burning, the little community had sent out 300 missionaries to the unreached peoples of the West Indies, Greenland, Lapland, Turkey, and North America. They were utterly, and radically dedicated to making Jesus known.

I mention this not only because I dream of a church saturated with prayer and sold out utterly to Christ and ready to leave everything for his call. I mention it this morning because behind this community at Herrnhut there was an experience of deep humbling, and cleansing, and power based on the blood of Jesus.

After Zinzendorf had finished the university, he took a trip throughout Europe looking at some of the cultural high-spots. And something very unexpected happened. In the art museum at Dusseldorf he saw a painting by Domenico Feti entitled "Ecce Homo" ("Behold the Man"). It was a portrait of Christ with the crown of thorns pressed down on his head and blood running down his face. Beneath the portrait were the words, "I have done this for you; what have you done for me?" All of his life Zinzendorf looked back to that encounter as utterly life-changing. As he stood there, as it were, watching his Savior suffer and bleed, he said to himself, "I have loved him for a long time, but I have never actually done anything for him. From now on I will do whatever he leads me to do."

For the rest of his life the blood of Jesus had a central place in the doctrine and devotion of Zinzendorf and his community at Herrnhut. And the story goes that when the first two young missionaries boarded the ship in Copenhagen to sail for the West Indies, perhaps never to return (20 out of the first 29 missionaries to St. Thomas and St. Croix died in those first years), they lifted their hands as if in sacred pledge and called out to their friends on shore, "May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering!"

The Question Before Us Today

My message is going to be short today because I want to save a good portion of time to worship the Lord and to pray together before we take the Lord's Supper. And the question I want you to ask yourself and ask the Lord as you prepare for the Lord's Table is this: "Has the Lord obtained the reward of his sufferings in your life?" When you think about the blood of Jesus running down his face from the thorns, and from his hands and feet and his pouring side, are you content with what he has of you? Has the purchase that he made been obtained freely from your hand. Or are you withholding any of the reward of his suffering?

What God Purchased at the Price of His Own Blood

To help us answer that very personal question, let me take a few minutes and meditate with you on the blood of Christ. What did God purchase at the price of his own blood?

Acts 20:28 says that he purchased the church. "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son."

So when Zinzendorf stood before the painting in Dusseldorf as a believing, faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, he could say on the authority of this text: "These wounds were meant to purchase me. These drops of blood were shed to obtain me." He could never get over it. He was not his own; he was bought with a price. Do you get up in the morning and say, "I am not my own today. I belong to another. I have been bought with a price. And I will live every moment of this day so that the Great Purchaser of my soul will receive the full reward of his suffering"?

Three Elements of the Reward of Christ's Suffering

And what would that mean in daily practice? Let me mention three things.

1. The Cleansing and Beautifying of His People

The reward of Christ's sufferings and the purchase of his blood is the cleansing and beautifying of his people, his bride.

Ephesians 5:25–27, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."

What then did he bleed to purchase? What was the reward of his suffering? Verse 26: to sanctify his church. The holiness of his people will be his reward. Verse 27: to present her to himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle. So his reward will be the beauty of his bride—she will be splendid and glorious at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

So I ask you again before we take this sacred cup, are you striving with all your might to render to Jesus the reward of his suffering—to offer up to him what he has purchased? Or to put it differently, Is your heart in tune with his heart? His heart that considered your holiness something worth dying for? Are you putting the same price on your holiness that he did? Or do you neglect what he died to purchase?

First then, the reward of Christ's sufferings is the holiness of his people. He suffered and bled and died to obtain a people and to make that people holy—to make his bride clean and beautiful.

Your holiness—your spiritual beauty—is the reward of his sufferings and the purchase of his blood. And he will have it from all those who are truly his.

2. The Zeal of His People for Good Deeds

Second, the reward of Christ's sufferings is the zeal of his people for good deeds. Titus 2:14 says, "He gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds." He gave himself to make a people zealous for good deeds. He shed his blood to purchase your zeal for practical righteousness and mercy, for benevolence and kindness, for courage and compassion. Notice this carefully: he did not die merely to get you to stop doing some bad things. Nor did he die merely to get you to do some good things. He died to make you zealous for good deeds. He suffered and bled and died to give you a zeal for doing good.

Do you have a zeal for doing good to people? Eternal good through their salvation? And temporal good as a means to that end? Or are you denying Christ the reward of his sufferings? What does it mean that Christ gave himself in wracking pain to make you zealous for good deeds, if you are taking no steps to become zealous for good deeds?

The zeal of those early Moravian missionaries was unquenchable. And I think the reason is that they never forgot the blood of Jesus. They never stopped thinking: my life, my holiness, my zeal for the good of souls was purchased at the price of his blood. How can I not live for his honor with every breath I take! How can I not freely offer up to him what he has purchased with his blood?

Your zeal for the good of people is the reward of his suffering. Are you with him or against him in his suffering?

3. A Ransomed Church from Every People Group

Finally, the reward of Christ's sufferings is a ransomed church from every tribe and language and people and nation. In Revelation 5:9 the Lamb of God is worshiped with these words, "Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom persons for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

By his blood he has ransomed persons from every people group in the world—every tribe, every language group, every culture, every ethnic cluster. The reward of his suffering is the ingathering of the elect from all the peoples of the world. In other words, the blood of Jesus was shed not just to purchase your holiness and your zeal for good deeds; but the holiness and the good deeds of all the worldwide church of God including those sheep that are not yet in the fold.

Does Your Heart Beat with Jesus' Heart?

So I ask again: does your heart beat with his heart this morning? Are you pursuing in your life the things he bled to obtain? When we come to the Lord's table in a few moments and with the cup and the bread proclaim his death, will you be able to say to him with a clear conscience, "There is nothing I want more in my life than what you bled to obtain; there is no reward in my life that I want more than the reward of your suffering"?

If you look at your life and come up wanting (as we all will), do not forget this: the reward of his suffering is also the forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7), and justification by faith (Romans 5:9), and reconciliation with God (Romans 5:10), and cleansing of conscience (Hebrews 9:14), and final victory over Satan (Revelation 12:11).

In the next few minutes let's do some real serious business with God and with his Son. There is confession enough for all of us. And some serious praying is needed about defects in our lives that reveal a terrible indifference to the price Jesus paid for our holiness and our zeal for good deeds and our passion for world evangelization.

Don't let go of God in this hour until you can say from the bottom of your heart, "Lord, Jesus, there is nothing I want more in my life than what you bled to obtain."

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/at-the-price-of-gods-own-blood>

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When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
Ev'n then this shall be all my plea,
Jesus hath lived, hath died, for me.

Jesus, be endless praise to thee,
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