

Text: John 1: 11-13.

Title: Born Not of Blood

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Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, New Jersey

Sinners are made the sons of God by the power of God alone. Sinners became sons of God by God the Father's power of grace when he chose whom he would in Christ before the world began. Sinners are the redeemed sons of God, by the power of God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who effectually, freely, forever perfected all whom God gave him by his one offering at Calvary. By the power of God the Holy Spirit, sinners are brought into the realization of sonship—into the adoption of sons--re-birthed, born again, when the new inner man is created and renewed in knowledge after the image of Christ Jesus our Everlasting Father. Those who have experienced the power of the triune God say in full agreement, salvation is not of him that willeth, not of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy.

Our text tonight is John 1: 11-13.

John 1: 11: He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even to them that believe on his name:*

This giving of power to become the sons of God is not a power given by which then the sinner chooses to accept or reject Christ. Such fictitious power is contrary to the word of God and contrary to the context here. The power spoken of here is the power which glorifies the triune God of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God our King Messiah.

Psalm 110: 1: <<A Psalm of David.>> The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2: The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3: Thy people *shall be willing in the day of thy power,* in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. 4: The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

That is what we read in verse 13:

John 1: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

These three phrases, “Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man” all amount to the same meaning. That is, sinners are born again and brought into a saving union with Christ, not by the power of the sinner, but by the power of the triune God.

THE WILL OF THE FLESH

The will of the flesh is the will every sinner is born with the first time. It is that will bound in sin which is the product of the corrupt seed of our first father Adam. The will of the unregenerate sinner is carnal, corrupt and is enmity against God.

THE WILL OF MAN

As badly as I may desire to see all to whom I preach born of God, I have no power to do so. As badly as I desire to see my children, my family members, and my friends to be born of God I have no power to do it. There is no way any man can give any other man the power to become the sons of God.

NOT OF BLOOD

We will focus on this first phrase “not of blood.” The word “blood” is plural, “not of bloods.” There were three kinds of blood in which national Israel, as well as the Gentile proselytes, as well as sinners in our day, ignorantly put their confidence.

DIVISIONS

I. The Blood of Circumcision

II. The Blood of Kinship

III. The Blood which they shed in their act of bringing a passover lamb

Proposition: In this one phrase, “not of bloods”, we see the uselessness of the will of the flesh and the will of man, and we see that all three of these “bloods” were given to glorify the power of the triune God of glory.

I. THE BLOOD OF CIRCUMCISION

God commanded Abraham to be circumcised in the flesh as a token of the righteousness of faith which God gave to Abraham 15 years before.

A. First, this outward, fleshly token symbolized—was a sign—of what God had done for Abraham through Christ the Surety, God’s own Son, Christ Jesus the Lord.

The gospel, even the gospel declared before to Abraham, declares that we are circumcised in Christ Jesus, in the circumcision made without hands, the baptism made without our hands, wherein every elect child of God was baptized into death and raised to newness of life.

Colossians 2: 10: And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

B. Secondly, this outward fleshly token was a sign of how Abraham was created anew in the inner man through the Holy Spirit.

It was through Christ his Surety—and it is through Christ that has now already shed his blood and is seated in heaven—that our hearts are made new.

Romans 2: 28: For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

Paul puts this power of Christ’s resurrection wherein our sins are put off, together with the power of spiritual circumcision exercised in the hearts of sinners in Ephesians 2—

Ephesians 2: 17: That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19: And what *is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21: Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23: Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

C. Let's bring this into our day. The Gentiles were never under the national covenant of Israel.

You recall, at Antioch, some believed Paul's gospel. They had been circumcised in the burial and resurrection of Christ, circumcised in the heart by the power of God; they were sons of God, they were children in whom God had written the law of his everlasting covenant. Yet, when the ignorant legalists came down to Antioch going about to establish their own righteousness, they said to the Gentiles,

Acts 15: 1....Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

The truth is except ye be circumcised after the manner of Abraham—by God, by the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, by the Holy Spirit—made new in the inner man, ye cannot be saved.

Philippians 3:3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

So then at Jerusalem, do you realize what the apostle Peter said when he gave the account of Cornelius and those who heard the gospel in his house that day?

Acts 15: 7: And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8: And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, [witness that by his power they heard and believed] giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;

As Peter preached the gospel, God circumcised the hearts of Cornelius and those who sat there hearing Peter preach—and because of what God did in their heart those Gentiles in Cornelius house believed. So, in manifesting the glory of Christ Jesus, and to make their fellow Jewish brethren to see what the triune God did--God gave an outward, open witness, to what he had done in their hearts, by pouring out the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner on Cornelius and his household and then they were baptized.

Acts 11: 16: Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

This is the issue! It is the glory of Jesus, the King and Christ! Remember, Peter's word at Pentecost?

Acts 12: 33: Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear...36: Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

So here in Acts 15, listen to what Peter says about that:

Acts 15: 7:...8: And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; 9: And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10: Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

D. Back to Abraham. When Abraham was born of the Spirit of God, he saw Christ's day.

He saw that he was complete in Christ through the coming death and resurrection of Christ his Surety. It was by inward circumcision of the heart, that, God wrote the law of his everlasting covenant on Abraham's heart. By the power of God, Abraham received power to enter into the reality that he was an everlastingly loved child of God.

E. This is what God showed in type when he commanded for Abraham's natural sons to be circumcised in the flesh? God used an entire nation to illustrate this.

God made an earthly covenant with Abraham and his natural children. It was a covenant entirely of earthly promises. It was given to bear witness of this glory. (I don't have time to read it all but read it and notice how it was all earthly promises. In Genesis 17: 8-14.) The seal, sign, token of that earthly covenant was the earthly, fleshly sign of fleshly circumcision. In order to be under that earthly covenant, every son born in Israel had to be circumcised. In spite of their rebellion, God fulfilled every earthly promise.

Do you see how God declared the glory of his power in that earthly model? When God commanded that not one son, born of Abraham, was to go uncircumcised, his law bore witness, that for all true Israel—all God's elect, both Jew and Gentile—3 things shall happen: 1) all shall be circumcised by the work of Christ putting off their sin, 2) all shall be circumcised in the heart by the Holy Spirit and 3) in fulfilling every earthly promise in that earthly covenant, God assures you who believe that all the promises of God are in Christ, yea and Amen, to the praise of the glory of God.

If any man uses circumcision, or any thing to take the place of circumcision, for example: If I counted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to have some saving efficacy, the same principle applies. To do so is to look to the will of the flesh, to the will of man and to deny the power of God. That is why Paul said,

Galatians 5:2: Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

God's everlasting covenant is of God's grace, fulfilled in Christ Jesus the Son of God, made by God the Holy Spirit in the hearts of his elect alone. That is why the Pharisees rejected Christ.

Now turn to Romans 4. Paul declares this most plainly, this will lead into our second point, and we will not spend as much time on the next two points:

Romans 4: 9: *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10: How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11: And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12: And the father of circumcision [the circumcision made without hands by Christ, in the inner man by the Holy Spirit] to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised. 13: For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14: For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. 16: Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, 17: (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18: Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

This brings us to the second blood in which natural Israel and men of our day put their confidence.

John 1: 12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

II. THE BLOOD OF KINSHIP—

Christ Jesus stood directly in front of the most religious of the day.

John 8: 39: They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40: But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham....43: Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. 44: Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.

Sinners foolishly think that God's grace is toward the sons or daughters of believing fathers or mothers. "Oh God, please circumcise our hearts and give us ears to hear your word."

A. After Abraham was circumcised God gave him a son.

You may say, "No, Abraham already had a son, Ishmael. In fact, Abraham was told to circumcise Ishmael." Abraham was commanded to circumcise Ishmael because he was a natural son. God fulfilled every earthly promise to Abraham, even making Ishmael a great nation. But just as the beggarly element of circumcision only reached as far as the flesh, Ishmael's sonship to Abraham only reached as far as the flesh. Ishmael was not vessel of God's mercy.

Yet, Abraham's sin in producing Ishmael did not alter God's unchangeable grace toward Abraham nor did it alter God's grace toward Isaac. This goes hand-in-hand: a believing father does not have power to make his son a child of God, but by the same grace of God, the rebellion of an earthly father can not change God's everlasting love toward God's true children. Aren't you glad!

B. Again, the issue is the glory of the triune God and his Son, Christ Jesus. Who receives the glory in a believer being counted a son of God?

Take a look at the genealogies. You will find that there are large gaps from a great, great grandfather, to a great, great grandson, so that it would appear that the great, great grandfather is really the father of the great, great grandson. So it was when God made his everlasting covenant to Abraham. As God regarded it, the Seed which God promised would come from Abraham is Christ.

Galatians 3: 16: Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Isaac is glorious type of Christ.

Romans 9: 6: Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8: That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the Promise are counted for the seed. 9: For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

God's children became sons when God the Father put them in the Son of his love in sovereign election—in the power of his choosing.

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Here is the issue: Isaac was a son of God, not because he was the son of Abraham, but because God chose Isaac and blessed him with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places when he put Isaac in the Son of his love, Christ Jesus

Galatians 4: 4: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6: And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7: Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. [through God's Son.]

Back there in:

Romans 4: 18: [Abraham] against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

Some newer translations say “descendents” instead of seed. God did show Abraham the stars and say so shall they seed be. But here Paul says it so that Abraham's seed would be called the Father of many nations. Abraham did have one son who is the “Father of many nations.”

Isaiah said in chapter 9: 6: Christ shall be called, the “Everlasting Father.” Our first father, Adam, gave us life of corrupt seed and we died. The Everlasting Father, the second Adam, rebirths his children of his incorruptible seed; He remains our father for everlasting.

Romans 8:15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16: The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Let's make this as practical as we can make it. If my son is made a son of God because of me—then I get the glory instead of the glory being of Christ Jesus the Son of God. But if my son is God's son because in sovereign electing power God put him in Christ Jesus, the Son of his love, if Christ in power put off his sin by his death and resurrection, and if he is born of the incorruptible seed of Christ Jesus, the Everlasting Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit, then God gets all the glory and I get none. Just how I want it! And my son is everlastingly secure by the power and glory of God's grace. And this is why religious men turned their backs on Christ and made their boast that we be sons of Abraham—we don't need you.

John 1: 12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

III. THE BLOOD PRODUCED IN THEIR ACT OF BRINGING THE LEVITICAL PASSOVER LAMB.

A. When Christ the true Lamb of God came, this religious world rejected him, rejected his gospel, and rejected his ambassadors because they cared only for their works of righteousness.

One of the most telling manifestations of human depravity, of self-righteousness, of man's satisfaction of a mere form of godliness while denying the power of God is this:

John 19:31: The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

Still, the Son of God is the Lamb by whose blood God passes over us.

Genesis 22: 7: And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering? 8: And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

John cried,

John 1:29: The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Just as it was typified that night in Egypt, God was in Christ the Lamb, reconciling not only his elect in Israel but his elect Gentiles unto himself.

I Corinthians 5: 21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In Christ, very elect child whom he represented died.

Illustration: Death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Romans 7:4: Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Galatians 2:19: For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

The law that the elect died to is the law we broke in our first representative Adam. We died by the law in Adam—we died TO the law in Christ Jesus.

We broke the law of God in a representative and we have fulfilled it in a representative.

Just as the law given by Moses magnified the horrible offense of that one trespass in the garden, the fulfillment of the whole law of Moses by Christ declares the magnitude of just how fully the law is satisfied and how righteous the believer is in Christ by grace.

Now, there is only God and us in Christ with no distractions. Better than what Adam had. Now we are under the law of—the rule of—the effectual power and grace of Christ Jesus the Lord. Now we understand the right use of the law of Moses and we use it lawfully, not to yoke, or bind or motivate, but only to give the knowledge of sin. Our righteousness, our constraint, our motivation, our drive is not the law of Moses but the love of Christ shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. It is that love he sheds through the gospel, through faith, through the power of his grace which he reminds is fully sufficient through every trial.

You Have Endured Some Trial and Likely Face More Trials Ahead

Until we have truly experienced the power of God, we will attempt to exalt ourselves to the throne of God—claiming for ourselves what only Christ can do, attempting to make the saints of God do what only Christ do, insisting on having our own way even if we cause others to suffer and deny the glory of God in the process. Sadly, we often do so in the name of glorifying God. How many various religious beliefs came together to crucify the Prince of life? And there common thread was they claimed to reject him for the glory of God.

Remember this if you have tasted the Lord's grace:

Galatians 5: 22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23: Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24: And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Colossians 3: 12: Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13: Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. 14: And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15: And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Trust the God of all power.