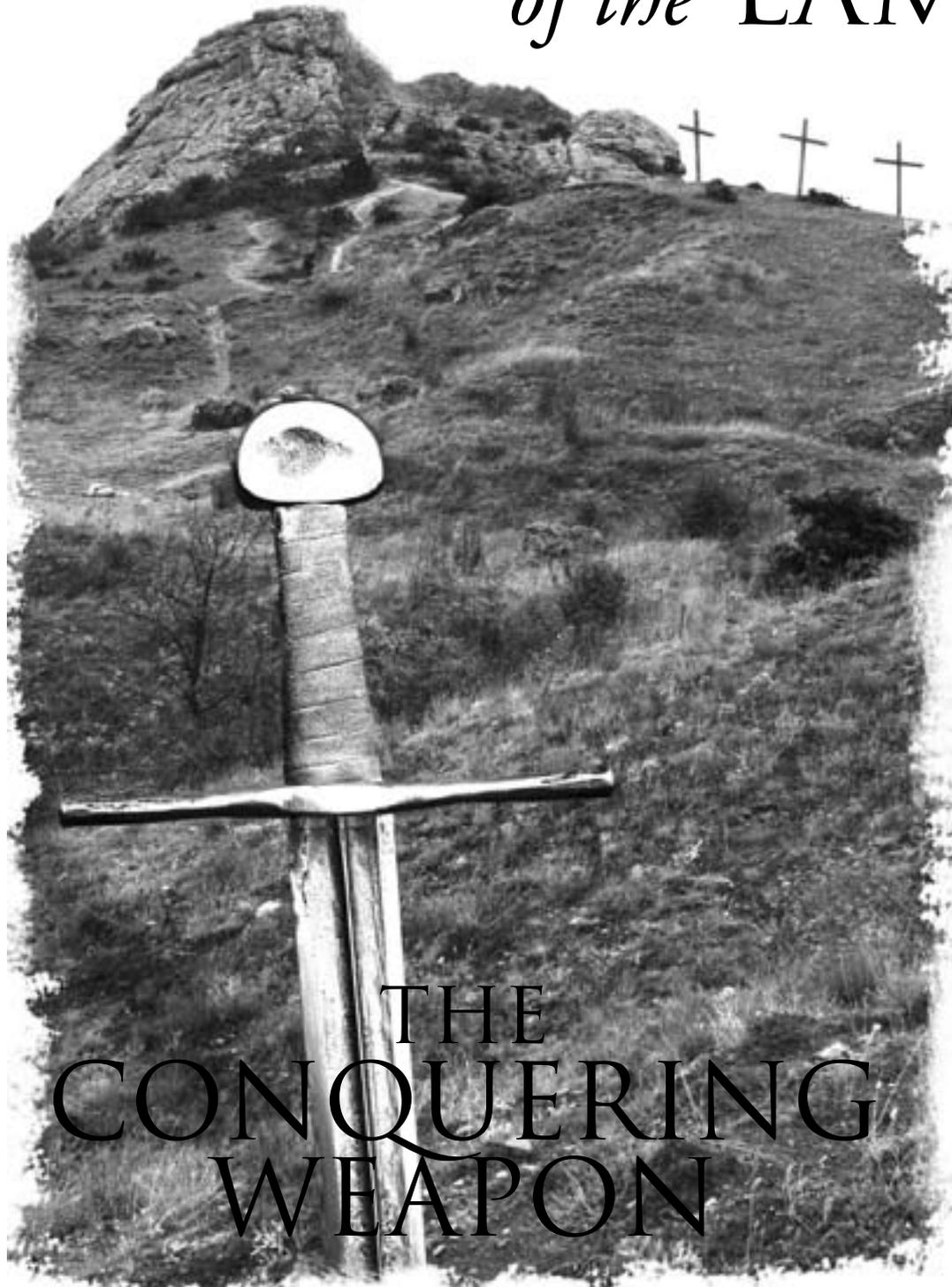


THE BLOOD *of the* LAMB



THE
CONQUERING
WEAPON

by Charles Spurgeon

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The BLOOD *of the* LAMB *the* CONQUERING WEAPON

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death (Revelation 12:11).

Wherever evil appears, it is to be fought by the children of God in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. When evil appeared in an angel, at once there was war in heaven. Evil in mortal men is to be opposed by all regenerate men. If sin comes to us in the form of an angel of light, we must still war with it. If it comes with all kinds of unrighteous deception, we must not negotiate with it for a single moment, but begin the battle immediately, if we really belong to the armies of the Lord. Evil is at its very worst in satan himself: with him we fight. He is no ordinary adversary. Any one of the evil spirits under his control is a terrible foe. But when satan himself personally attacks a Christian, we will have the fight of our lives on our hands.

When this dragon blocks our road, we will need help from heaven to force our way through. A pitched battle with Apollyon may not occur often, but when it does, you will know it painfully. You will record it in your diary as one of the darkest days you have ever lived, and you will eternally praise your God, when you have overcome the enemy. But even if satan were ten times stronger and craftier than he is, it would be our duty to wrestle against him. We cannot for a moment hesitate or offer him a truce. Evil in its strongest and proudest form is to be attacked by the soldier of the cross, and nothing must end the war but complete victory. Satan is *the* enemy, the enemy of enemies. That prayer of our Lord's, which we usually render, "Deliver us from evil," has the special significance of "Deliver us from the evil one." He is the chief embodiment of evil, and in him evil is intensified and has come to its highest strength. Anyone who hopes to overcome this enemy of God and man needs to have Omnipotence on his side. Satan would destroy all godly ones if he could. Even though he cannot, he has such an incurable hatred that he is maliciously eager to harass those whom he cannot devour.

In Revelation 12 the devil is called an "enormous red dragon." He is enormous in ability, intelligence, energy, and experience. Whether he was the chief of all angels before he fell, I do not know. Some believe that he was, and that when he heard that a Man was going to sit on God's throne, out of jealousy he rebelled against the Most High. This is conjecture. But we do know that he was and is an enormously powerful spirit compared with us. He is a being great in evil—the prince of darkness, having the power of death. He shows his malice against the saints by accusing them day and night before God. In the prophets we can read of satan standing to accuse Joshua the High Priest. Satan also accused Job of serving God from selfish motives: "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has?"

This ever active enemy desires to tempt as well as accuse: he demands to have us and sift us as wheat. In calling him the dragon, the Holy Spirit seems to hint at his mysterious power and character. To our limited understanding, a spirit such as satan must forever remain a mystery both in his person and his works. Although he is a mysterious being, he is absolutely not a mythical one. We can never doubt his existence once we have come into conflict with him. The fact that he is so mysterious only makes him more real. If he were flesh and blood, it would be far easier to contend with him. But to fight against "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" is a frightening assignment. Like a dragon he is full of cunning and ferocity. In him power is joined with craftiness. If he cannot achieve his purpose quickly with brute force, he is willing to wait patiently. He deludes, and he deceives; in fact, he is said to deceive the whole world. What a power of deception must live inside him, since under his influence one third of the stars of heaven are flung to earth (Revelation 12:4), and millions of men in every age have worshipped demons and idols!

He has saturated the minds of men with deception, so that they cannot see that they should worship no one but God, their Maker. The devil is described as "that ancient serpent," reminding us how experienced he is in every evil skill. He was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. After thousands of years of constant practice in deception, he is much too cunning for us. If we think that we can match his craftiness, we are serious fools. He knows vastly more than the wisest of mortal humans. If we challenge him to a game of strategy, he will wipe us off the board, and sweep our pieces into the bag. He is not only shrewd, he is lightning fast. He is ready to attack at any moment, darting down upon us like a hawk upon its helpless prey. He cannot be everywhere at once, but it is hard to find a place at any given

moment where he isn't. By his incredible power, he oversees his army of fallen demons like a great general. He directs the attack over the whole field of battle and seems present at every point. No door can shut him out. No height of goodness can rise beyond his reach. He meets us in all our weaknesses and attacks us from every point of the compass. He comes upon us unaware and injures us with wounds that are not easily healed.

But yet, dear friends, as powerful as this infernal spirit certainly is, his power is defeated when we resolve never to make peace with him. We must never dream of negotiating a truce with evil. To suppose that we can ignore him and everything will be fine is a deadly mistake. We must fight or die. Evil will kill us if we do not put it to death first. We can only find safety in a single-minded, energetic opposition to sin, whatever shape it takes, whatever it threatens, whatever it promises. The Holy Spirit alone can maintain in us this hatred of sin.

According to Revelation 12, the saints "overcame him." We must never rest until it can be said of us also, "They overcame him." He is an enemy who deserves your opposition. Do you refuse the conflict? Do you think of turning back? You have no armor for your back. To quit fighting is to admit defeat. You have your choice. Either settle it in your mind that you are in for a life-long resistance, or else become Satan's slave forever. I ask God that you wake up, get out of bed, and give battle to the adversary. Resolve once and for all that by the grace of God you will be numbered with those who overcome the archenemy.

The scriptures raise two very important points for us to consider: *What is the conquering weapon?* What sword did they use against the great red dragon when they overcame him? Listen! "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." *How do we use that weapon?* We must do as they did and overcome "by the word of our testimony" as we refuse to "love our lives so much as to shrink from death."

"They Overcame Him by the Blood of the Lamb"

The blood of the Lamb means *the death of the Son of God*. The sufferings of Jesus might be described in some other way, but His death on the cross requires the mention of blood. Our Lord was not only bruised and beaten, but He was put to death. His heart's blood was made to flow out of His wounds. This Person we are speaking of was God over all, blessed forever. But He stooped low to bring our humanity into union with His divinity in an amazing way. He was born at Bethlehem an infant, He grew as a child, He ripened into manhood, and lived here among us, eating and drinking, suffering and rejoicing, sleeping and laboring as men do. He really died—not figuratively, but in truth—and He was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. That death was the great fact contained in the words "the blood of the Lamb." We are to view Jesus as the Lamb of God's Passover. He was not only separated from others and dedicated as a memorial and consecrated for divine service; He is the Lamb that was *slain*. A Christ who lived but never died would not be a saving Christ. He himself said, "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!" These days some say, "Why not speak more about His life, and less about His death?" I reply, Speak about His life as much as you want, but never apart from His death. It is by His blood that we are redeemed. "We proclaim Christ." Complete the sentence. "We proclaim Christ *crucified*," says the apostle. Yes, there is the point! It is the death of the Son of God that is the conquering weapon. If He had not "humbled Himself and become obedient to death, even death on a cross," if He had not "poured out his life unto death" and been "numbered with the transgressors," we would have had no weapon to use against the dragon prince. By "the blood of the Lamb" we understand the death of the Son of God. Hear it! Because you have sinned, Jesus died that you may be cleared from your sin. "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree" and died that He might "redeem us from all unrighteousness." Paradoxically, this death is the vital point of the gospel. The death of Christ is the death of sin and the defeat of Satan, and so it is the life of our hope and the assurance of our victory. Because He "poured out His life unto death," He "divides the spoils with the strong" (Isaiah 53).

Next, by "the blood of the Lamb" we mean *our Lord's death as a substitutionary sacrifice*. Let's be very clear here. The Spirit did not choose to say that they overcame the archenemy by the blood of Jesus, or the blood of Christ, but by the blood of *the Lamb*. Those words were deliberately chosen because the lamb symbolizes sacrifice. If the blood of Jesus had been shed only because of His courage for the truth, or out of simple compassion, or as an act of self-denial, it would not be especially good news for humanity, and it would have no particular power to it. A death like that might be a worthy example for martyrs, but it is not the way of salvation for guilty men and women. If you proclaim the death of the Son of God but do not show that He died as the "righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God," you

have not proclaimed the blood of the Lamb. You must make it known that “the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him,” and that “the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all,” or you have missed the meaning of the blood of the Lamb. There is no overcoming sin without a substitutionary sacrifice. The lamb under the old law was brought by the offender to make atonement for his sin, and it took his place when it was killed. This was a picture of Christ substituting Himself for the sinner, bearing the sinner’s sin and suffering in the sinner’s place, and in this way satisfying the justice of God and making it possible for Him to justify the one who believes. I understand this to be the conquering weapon—the death of the Son of God as the sacrifice for sin to turn away God’s anger. Sin must be punished. It is punished in Christ’s death. That is our only hope.

What’s more, I understand by the phrase, “The blood of the Lamb,” that *our Lord’s death was effective for taking away sin*. When John the Baptist first pointed to Jesus, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Our Lord Jesus has actually taken away sin by His death. Beloved, we are sure that He had offered an acceptable and effective sacrifice when He said, “It is finished.” Either He did put away sin, or He didn’t. If He didn’t, how will it ever be put away? If He did, then believers are clear. Completely apart from anything that we do or are, our glorious Substitute took away our sin, just like the scapegoat carried the sin of Israel into the wilderness. If Jesus offered Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice, then God’s justice is fully satisfied. God can bless the redeemed and still be just. Two thousand years ago, Jesus paid the dreadful debt of the human race, and He made a full atonement for the entire burden of sin for anyone who believes in Him. He removes the whole enormous load and throws it with one motion of His pierced hand into the depths of the sea. When Jesus died, He offered atonement, and God accepted it. In the high court of heaven there was a distinct removal of sin from the whole body that has Christ as its head. Each redeemed person individually receives for himself the great atonement by an act of personal faith, but the atonement itself was made long before.

I believe this is one of the sharp edges of the conquering weapon. We are to proclaim that the Son of God has come in the flesh and died for human sin, and that in dying He not only made it possible for God to forgive, but He secured forgiveness for all who are in Him. He did not die to make men savable, but to *save* them. He came not that sin might be put aside at some future time, but to put it away then and there by sacrificing Himself. By His death He “finished transgression, put an end to sin, atoned for wickedness, and brought in everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24). Believers can know that when Jesus died they were delivered from the claims of law, and when He rose again their justification was secured. The blood of the Lamb is a real price, which powerfully ransomed them for God. The blood of the Lamb is a real cleansing, which really did purge away sin. This we believe and declare, and by this sign we conquer. Christ crucified, Christ the sacrifice for sin, Christ the powerful Redeemer of men, we will proclaim everywhere, and so put to rout the powers of darkness.

Overcoming the Enemy in Heavenly Realms

When a man gets a sword, you cannot be quite certain how he will use it. Suppose a gentleman purchases a very expensive sword with a golden hilt and an elaborate scabbard. He hangs it up in his hall and shows it to his friends. Occasionally he draws it out from the sheath and says, “Feel how sharp the edge is!” The precious blood of Jesus is not meant for us merely to admire and exhibit. We must not be content to talk about it and do nothing with it. We are to use it in the great crusade against unholiness and unrighteousness, until it can be said of us, “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.” This precious blood is to be used for overcoming and consequently for holy warfare. We dishonor the blood if we do not use it for that purpose.

Some, I fear, use the precious blood of Christ only to soothe their consciences. They say to themselves, “He atoned for sin, so now I can relax.” This is doing a severe wrong to the great sacrifice. I freely admit that the blood of Jesus does speak better things than the blood of Abel and that it cries, “Peace!” within a troubled conscience, but that is not *all* it does. A person who wants the blood of Jesus for nothing but the ordinary, selfish reason that after having been forgiven, he can say, “Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry. Listen to sermons, look forward to eternal happiness, and do nothing”—such a person blasphemes the precious blood and makes it an unholy thing. We are to use the glorious mystery of atoning blood as a weapon to conquer sin and satan. Its power is for holiness. The scripture puts it, “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.” These saints used the teaching of atonement not as a pillow to rest on, but as a weapon to subdue their sin. Brothers and sisters, to some of us atonement by blood is our battle-axe and weapon of war, and by it we conquer in our struggle for purity and godliness—a struggle we have continued these many years.

By the atoning blood we withstand corruption within and temptation without. We have a weapon that nothing can resist.

Let me show you your battle-field. Our first place of conflict is in the heavenly realm, and the second is down below on earth.

First, you who believe in the blood of Jesus have to do battle with satan *in the heavenly realms*. There you must overcome him “by the blood of the Lamb.” How, you ask? Begin by regarding satan this day as already literally and truly *overcome through the death of the Lord Jesus*. Satan is already a beaten enemy. By faith grasp your Lord’s victory as your own, since He triumphed on your behalf after taking on your nature. The Lord Jesus Christ went up to Calvary and there fought with the prince of darkness. He utterly defeated him and destroyed his power. He led captivity captive. He bruised the serpent’s head. The victory belongs to all who are in Christ. He is the seed of the woman, and you belong to that seed. You are in Christ in reality and in your experience. When Jesus died, you then and there overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb. Can you get a hold of this truth? Do you not know that you were circumcised in His circumcision, crucified on His cross, buried with Him in baptism, and raised with Him in His resurrection? He is your head, and you being members of His body did in Him what He did.

Come, my soul, you have conquered satan by the Lord’s victory. Won’t you be brave enough to fight a beaten opponent? Can’t you trample down the enemy your Lord has already defeated? You have nothing to fear. Instead, say, “Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” We have overcome sin, death and hell in the person and work of our great Lord. We should be greatly encouraged by what He has already done in our name. Already “we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.” If Jesus had not overcome the enemy, certainly we never could have done it. But His personal triumph has secured ours. By faith we rise into the place of a conqueror this day. In the heavenlies we triumph, just like in every other place. We rejoice in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of men. By Him we see satan cast out, and all the powers of evil hurled from their places of power and prominence.

This day I urge you to overcome satan in the heavenlies in another sense: *you must overcome him as the accuser*. At times you hear in your heart a voice that brings up old memories and stings your conscience; a voice which seems in the unseen realm to be a remembrance of your guilt. Listen! It is a deep, insidious voice, promising evil. Satan is repeating before the throne of justice all your former sins. Can you hear him? He begins with your childhood faults and your youthful follies. Truly a dark memory. He does not let one of your wickednesses escape notice. Things which you had forgotten he cunningly revives. He knows your secret sins, for he had a hand in most of them. He knows the resistance which you offered to the gospel, and the way in which you stifled conscience. He knows the sins of darkness, the sins of the bedroom, the crimes you committed in the inner chambers of your imagination. Since you have been a Christian he has taken note of your wickedness, and asked, in fierce sarcastic tones, “Is this a child of God? Is this an heir of heaven?” He hopes we can be found guilty of hypocrisy or apostasy.

The foul fiend points out the wanderings of our hearts, the deadness of our desires in prayer, the filthy thoughts that dropped into our minds when we were trying to worship. We have to confess that we have even tolerated doubts as to eternal truths and suspicions about the love and faithfulness of God. When the accuser is going about his evil business, he does not have to look far to find grounds for accusation and for facts to support it. Do these accusations stagger you? Do you cry, “My God, how can I face You? Because all this is true, and the sins brought to my remembrance just now are ones that I cannot deny. I have violated Your law in a thousand ways, and I cannot justify myself.”

Now is your opportunity for overcoming through the blood of the Lamb. When the accuser has said his say and charged you with all your sins, do not be ashamed to step forward and say, “But I have an Advocate as well as an accuser. O Jesus, my Savior, speak for me!”

When He speaks, what does He plead but His own blood? “For all these sins I have made atonement,” He says. “All these iniquities were laid on me in the day of the Lord’s anger, and I have taken them away.” Brothers and sisters, the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s dear Son, cleanses us from all sin. Jesus has borne the penalty we deserved: He has paid for us upon the cross all our debts to the justice of God, and we are free forever, because our Surety suffered in our place. Where is the accuser now? That dragon voice is silenced by the blood of the Lamb. Nothing else can ever silence the accuser’s cruel voice but the voice of the blood that tells of the infinite God accepting the sacrifice which He himself supplied on our behalf.

Justice decrees that the sinner is forgiven, because the accepted substitute has taken the sin in His own body on the tree. Come, brother or sister, the next time you have to deal with satan as an accuser in heavenly places, be careful to defend yourself with no weapon but the atonement. All comfort drawn from inward feelings or outward works will fall short. But the bleeding wounds of Jesus will plead with a full and overwhelming argument and answer all the charges. “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” Who, then, shall accuse the child of God? Every accuser will be overcome by the invincible argument of the blood of the Lamb.

What’s more, the believer needs to overcome the enemy in the heavenly places when it comes to *access to God*. It may happen that when we are most focused on spending special time with God, the adversary hinders us. Our heart and our flesh cry out for God, the living God. But for one reason or another we are unable to draw near to the throne. Our heart is heavy, our sin is discouraging, our troubles are harassing us, and satanic insinuation is busy. You seem shut out from God, and the enemy triumphs over you. The world, the flesh, and the devil are nipping at your heels, but you mourn your miserable distance from God. You are like a child who cannot reach his father because a black dog barks at him from the door. What is the way to Father? If the ugly beast will not move out of the way, can we force our way in? By what weapon can we drive away the adversary so as to come to God? Isn’t it written that we are “brought near by the blood”? Isn’t there a “new and living way” established for us? Don’t we have “confidence to enter into the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus”? We are sure of God’s love when we see that Christ died for us. We are sure of God’s favor when we see how that atonement has removed our transgressions far from us. We grasp our freedom to come to the Father, and therefore we can each say,

“I will approach You—I will force
My way through obstacles to You;
I will turn to You for strength,
Flee for consolation to You!”

Pleading the satisfaction made by the blood of the Lamb, we dare draw near to God. Watch the evil spirit make way for us! The sacred name of Jesus is one before which he flees. This name will drive away his blasphemous suggestions and foul insinuations better than anything that you can invent. The dog of hell knows the dreaded Name that makes him lie down. We must confront him with the authority and especially with the atonement of the Lamb of God. He will rage and rave all the more if we send Moses the lawgiver to silence him, for he derives his power from our violations of the law. We cannot silence him unless we bring to him the great Lord who has kept the law and made it honorable.

We next must *overcome the enemy in prayer*. We cannot always pray as we want. Do you never feel when you are in prayer as if something choked your words—and, what is worse, deadened your heart? Instead of having wings like an eagle to mount to heaven, an invisible hand clips your wings, and you cannot rise. You say within yourself, “I have no faith, and I cannot expect to succeed with God without faith. I seem to have no love. Or, if I have any, my heart lies asleep, and I cannot stir myself to plead with God. Oh, that I could come out of my prayer closet, saying, ‘I have overcome, I have overcome!’ But instead I groan in vain and come away unrelieved. I have been half dead, cold, and emotionless, and I cannot hope that I have prevailed with God in prayer.” Whenever you are in this condition, fly to the blood of the Lamb as your most important remedy. When you make this powerful argument you will shake yourself awake, and you will prevail with God. You will feel rest in pleading it, and a sweet assurance of success at the mercy-seat. Don’t hesitate for a moment. This is the way in which you should use this plea. Say, “My God, I am utterly unworthy, and I own it. But I am asking You to hear me for the honor of Your dear Son. By His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross and passion, by His precious death and burial, I implore You to hear me! O Lord, let the blood of Your Only-begotten prevail with You! Can you ignore His groans, His tears, His death, when they speak on my behalf?” If you can in this way come to terms with God, pleading on this ground, you must and will prevail. Jesus must be heard in heaven. The voice of His blood is eloquent with God. If you plead the atoning sacrifice, you must overcome through the blood of the Lamb.

Overcoming the Enemy on Earth

We have spoken of overcoming in the heavenlies, but you must also contend against the evil one in a lower sphere—ON THIS EARTH. You must first overcome in the heavenly places before the throne. When you have been triumphant with God in prayer, you will have grace to go out to serve and to defeat evil among your fellow men. How often have I personally found that the battle must first be fought above! We must overcome *in order to serve*. Those who know the burden of the Lord are often bowed down and would not be able to bear up at all were it not for having in secret battled with their enemy and won the day. I have been bowed down before the Lord, and in his presence I have pleaded the precious blood as the reason for obtaining help, and the help has been given. Faith, having once made sure that Jesus is hers, helps herself out of the treasury of God to all that she needs. Satan would deny her, but in the power of the blood she takes possession of covenant blessings.

You say to yourself, “I am weak, but in the Lord, my God, there is power: I take it to myself. I am hard and cold, but here is tenderness and warmth, and I appropriate it. It pleased the Father that in Jesus ‘all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,’ and by virtue of His precious blood, I take out of that fullness what I need, and then with that help I meet the enemy and overcome him.”

Satan would hinder us from getting supplies of grace with which to overcome him. But with the blood-mark on our foot we can go anywhere; with the blood-mark on our hand we dare take anything. Having access to God with confidence, we can receive with freedom whatever we need, and so we are provided against all necessities, and armed against all assaults through the atoning sacrifice. This is the fountain of supply, and the shield of security: this, indeed, is the channel through which we receive strength for victory.

We overcome the great enemy by *laying hold upon the all-sufficiency of God*, when we really grasp the power of the precious blood of Christ. So when we are victorious in the heavenlies, we come down to our homes, neighborhoods, and places of employment made “strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” Having overcome satan at the throne of grace, we see him fall from heaven like lightning, despite our feeble abilities. We speak, and God speaks with us; we long for souls, and God’s great heart is yearning with us. We invite men to come, and the Lord also pleads with them to come. Spiritual power of a holy kind rests upon us to overcome the spiritual power of an evil kind which is exerted by satan, the world, and the flesh. The Lord scatters the power of the enemy, and breaks the spell which holds men captive. Through the blood of the Lamb, the weakest among us is able to “bear thirtyfold.” Coming forth to serve God in the power of our victory in heaven gained by pleading the blood of the Lamb, we march together to conquer, and no power of the enemy is able to prevail against us.

On earth, among men in these lower places of conflict, saints overcome through the blood of the Lamb *by their testimony to that blood*. “They overcame by the word of their testimony.” Every believer is to bear witness to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus and His power to save. He is to proclaim that truth; he is to emphasize it by earnestly believing in it himself; and he is to support it and prove it by his own experience of its power. You may not all have the gift of teacher, but you can all speak for Jesus as opportunity is given you. Our main business is to bear witness with the blood in the power of the Spirit. To this point we can all testify. You can tell all those around you, “There is life in a look at the Crucified One.” You can bear witness to the power of the blood of Jesus in your own soul. If you do this, you will overcome men in many ways.

First, you will *arouse them out of apathy*. This age is more indifferent to true religion than almost any other. It is alive enough to error, but to the “faith entrusted to the saints,” it turns a deaf ear. Yet I have noticed people captivated by the message of the cross who would not listen to anything else. If any truth can capture men’s attention, it is the story of divine love, incarnate in the person of Jesus, bleeding and dying for guilty men. It has a fascination about it. The marvelous history of the Son of God, who loved His enemies and died for them—this will arrest our hearts. The history of the Holy One who stood in the sinners’ place and so was put to shame, agony, and death—this will touch them. The sight of the bleeding Savior overcomes stubbornness and carelessness.

The truth of the blood of the Lamb prevents or *corrects error*. I do not think that by mere logic we often disprove false beliefs to any practical purpose. We may refute error rhetorically and doctrinally, but men still stick to it. But the proclamation of the precious blood, if it ever gets into the heart, drives error out of it, and sets up the throne of truth. You cannot cling to an atoning sacrifice and still delight in modern heresies. Those who deny the inspiration of

scripture are sure to get rid of the cross, because it will not allow their errors. Let us go on proclaiming the truth of the great sacrifice, and it will kill the vipers of heresy. Let us lift up the cross—never mind what other people say. Maybe we have paid too much attention to them already. Let the dogs bark; it is their nature. Go on proclaiming Christ crucified. “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

We also overcome men in this way, by *softening rebellious hearts*. Men stand out against the law of God and defy the vengeance of God; but the love of God in Christ Jesus disarms them. The Holy Spirit causes men to yield through the softening influence of the cross. A bleeding Savior can make men throw down their weapons of rebellion. “If He loves me so,” they say, “I cannot do other than love Him in return.” We overcome men’s obstinacy by the blood, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

How wonderfully this same blood of the Lamb *overcomes despair*. Have you never seen a man shut up in the iron cage of despair? It has been my painful duty to talk with several such prisoners. I have seen the captive shake the iron bars, but he could not break them. He has begged us to set him free somehow, but we have been powerless. Glory to God, the blood is a universal solvent! It has dissolved the iron bars of despair, until the poor captive conscience has been able to escape. How sweet for the desponding to sing: “I believe that Jesus died for me”!

Believing *that*, all doubts and fears and despairs fly away, and the man is at peace.

There is nothing, indeed, dear friends, which the blood of the Lamb will not overcome. It *overcomes vice* and every form of sin. The world stinks with evil, like a cave which has long been the lair of filthy creatures. What can cleanse it? What but the matchless stream of the blood? Satan makes sin seem pleasurable, but the cross reveals its bitterness. If Jesus died because of sin, men begin to see that sin must be a murderous thing. Even when sin was only laid on the Savior, it made Him pour out his soul to death. It must, then, be a hideous evil to those who are actually and personally guilty of it. If God’s rod made Christ sweat great drops of blood, what will His axe do when He executes the death penalty on impenitent men? Yes, we overcome the deadly sweetness and destructive pleasantness of sin by the blood of the Lamb.

This blood overcomes *the natural slowness of men to obey*; it stimulates them to holiness. If anything can make a man holy, it is a firm faith in the atoning sacrifice. When a man knows that Jesus died for him, he feels that he is not his own, but bought with a price. Jesus died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again. In the atonement I see a motive equal to the greatest heroism, a motivation that will stimulate to perfect holiness. What kind of persons ought we to be, if that kind of sacrifice was offered for us? Now we are inspired into intensity of zeal and devotion. See, dear brothers, how to use the blood of the Lamb in this lower sphere while contending with evil among men.

“They Did Not Love Their Lives”

But I must close with this. It is not merely by our testimony that we use this potent truth. *We must support that testimony by our zeal and energy*. We need concentrated, consecrated energy. For the passage also says, “They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” We will not overcome satan if we are “nice” people who have to have an easy life and a good reputation. As long as a so-called Christian feels he must enjoy the world, the devil will have nothing to fear. Those who overcame the world in the old days were humble men and women, often poor and always despised, who were never ashamed of Christ, who only lived to tell of His love, and who died by tens of thousands rather than cease to bear testimony to the blood of the Lamb. They overcame by their heroism; their intense devotion to the cause secured the victory. Their lives to them meant nothing compared to the honor of their Lord.

If we are to win great victories we must have greater courage. Some of you hardly dare to speak about the blood of Christ anywhere but in religious company—and hardly even there. You blend right in. You love yourselves too much to get into trouble through your religion. Surely you cannot belong to that noble band that did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death! Many dare not proclaim the truth of God these days because they would be thought narrow and bigoted, and this would be too upsetting. They call us fools. It is very likely we are. But we are not ashamed to be fools for Christ and His truth. We believe in the blood of the Lamb, despite any so-called “discovery of science.” We will never give up the truth of Christ’s atoning sacrifice to please modern culture. What little reputation we have

is as dear to us as another man's character is to him; but we will cheerfully let it go in this struggle for the central truth of revelation. It will be sweet to be forgotten and lost sight of, or to be vilified and abused, if the faith in Christ and Him crucified can not only survive but thrive. This much we are resolved on, we will be true to our convictions about the sacrifice of Jesus. If we give this up, what is left?

God will not do anything by us if we are false to the cross. He uses people who do not spare their reputations when they are called for in defense of truth. Oh, to be at a white heat! Oh, to flame with zeal for Jesus! Brothers and sisters, hold to the true faith, and say, "As for the respect of men, I can readily forfeit it; but as for the truth of God, that I can never give up." This is the day for men to be men, because sadly, most are soft, mollusk-like creatures. Now we need backbones as well as heads. To believe the truth concerning the Lamb of God, and truly to believe it, is essential to an overcoming life. Oh, for courage, faithfulness, determination, self-denial, willingness to be made nothing for Christ! May God give us the grace to be faithful witnesses to the blood of the Lamb in the midst of this ungodly world!

As for those of you who are not saved, your hope lies in the blood of the Lamb.

"Come, guilty souls, and flee away,
Like doves, to Jesus' wounds."

The atoning sacrifice, which is our glory, is your salvation. Trust in him whom God has set forth to be the sacrifice for sin. Begin with this, and you are saved. Every good and holy thing which goes with salvation will follow after; but now, this day, I pray you receive a current salvation through the blood of the Lamb. "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life."