

The  
*Touch*  
of *Blood*

visionone  
[grey bar]  
.org.au

## The Touch of Blood

Murray Wylie - Brisbane Christian Fellowship

July 2009

Published by **visionone**

© Vision One inc. 2009

c/- Toowoomba Christian Fellowship

10 Old Goombungee Road

Toowoomba QLD 4350

Phone: +61 1300 885 048

Email: [info @ visionone.org.au](mailto:info@visionone.org.au)

Restoration Fellowships International Inc

For a full catalogue of our Christian music & publications,  
please visit:

**visionone**  
**.org.au**

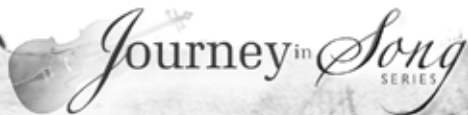
# The Touch of Blood

Choral Anthem &  
Congregational Chorus  
by Murray Wylie

July 2009

Have you heard about the precious, precious blood  
That brings back a mortal sinner from the dead  
By the way that's straight and narrow  
That redeemed disciples hallow  
Come believing to the Saviour for the touch of blood.

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



# Introduction

In the current season, we have been hearing, and reflecting a great deal about 'the testimony of God', or 'the witness of God', referred to by both the apostles Paul and John. 1 Cor 2:1; 1 John 5:9. This witness of God, John said, is by the agencies of water, blood and Spirit which 'bear witness'. 1 John 5:6-8. These are very profound subjects indeed. In our 'Journey in Song', this particular choral piece is one of my favourites. It's not a bold, striking anthem, but it is a most unique reflection, and is perhaps the fruit of a large part of our journey as ones who believe in restoration. It focuses on the blood of Christ, one of the most central elements of the Christian faith. I'd encourage readers to listen to this particular song several times, following the words. Then the meditation that follows should help to unwrap some of the marvellous truths that are captured in just a few words.

## Three elements that bear witness

Water, blood and Spirit are the active elements in the way God witnesses to us. These are the powerful agencies that bring effective grace to our lives.

When we read of the testimony, or witness, of God, we are required to understand that God Himself testifies. When the apostles brought 'the testimony of our Lord', they were not just speaking about the Lord. 2 Tim 1:8. This is important

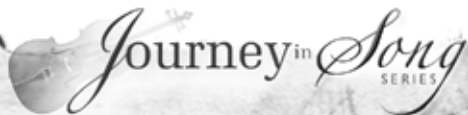
to realise if we are to understand the song, 'The Touch of Blood'. God Himself testifies. There is a witness that God witnesses concerning Himself, and particularly concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:9. For our part, we are required to receive this witness. We receive it by believing, as John emphasised in his Gospel. John 3:32-36.

## The witness of blood

Now to the matter of the blood. The blood is perhaps one of the most intriguing subjects of the Scripture. How does the blood of Christ actually 'touch' us? How indeed does it cleanse the conscience to serve the living God? Heb 9:13. The simplest answer is that His blood has been poured out to grant us His own life as our life. Remember, blood carries life, the particular life of the one whose blood is being shed.

Blood, in the case of the Christian gospel, brings the message that Christ's life can be the very life we live, once we have accepted that we are genuinely dead, without Him. Outside of receiving His eternal life, we are under the curse of the law, with only a fearful prospect of judgement to look forward to. Heb 10:27. So part of our initial response to the gospel is that we are, 'Accepting curse, with conscience, still', as the second verse of the song declares.

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



In spiritual terms, we are only alive when we are receiving the life that is in His blood, just as we live by a biological blood supply in the human realm. There is a great deal of scriptural content on this subject.

## Learn from Abel

Now to this song, written in 2006, and revived recently for the church choir and orchestra. Around the time of its composition, I was beginning to understand the offerings of Cain and Abel. This is the second story in the Bible, and involves the first two children ever born. Like the account of Adam and Eve, this account of Cain and Abel is to be understood as a timeless lesson, an important challenge about our attitude in approaching God. Gen 4:1-9. The lesson, as we know, is mostly to do with the attitude in which they brought their offering. Heb 11:4.

Abel's offering was accepted, and Cain's offering was not accepted. Cain later murdered his younger brother, Abel. Upon reading the story, we realise that the most obvious message is to do with how to be acceptable to God in the way we offer. So it's a message that applies to every aspect of life. What happens in our hearts when we 'do our best' but don't feel accepted, or when someone else appears to be more acceptable than we are?

Cain became offended, but then he was given an opportunity to recover from his offence, and 'do well'. Gen 4:6. He could have been accepted but, instead, he became envious and killed his brother. Abel became the first martyr of human history. When we read about Abel in the New Testament, we find that Abel's faith, and his blood, are said to speak with a voice that is heard right across history.

This is where our song begins.

Verse 1

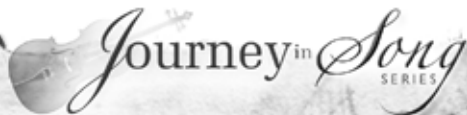
Learn from Abel, the way of blood  
Of life laid down, given not taken.  
Just one small drop, from martyrs' cup  
From ageless fountain, where saints have stood  
Belov'd were they, no reason why  
Redeemed with love, by the touch of blood.

## Abel - the first martyr

The anthem begins, 'Learn from Abel, the way of blood'. What are we to learn from Abel? The way of blood! We are to learn the meaning of blood, a central theme of the Scriptures, and one that involves the blood of the Lamb of God.

Abel was a keeper of sheep, and brought 'the firstborn of his flock', a lamb. So we realise that Abel was learning something about the blood of God's own offering for mankind. The Lamb, God's provision for mankind, was 'slain', we learn,

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



# The Touch of Blood

MLC

Murray Wylie

Moderato (♩ = 124)

**A** Chorus

B E A F#m  $\frac{B}{D\#}$  C#

*mf* Have you\_ heard a - bout the prec - ious, prec - ious blood

4 B  $\frac{A}{B}$  E A F#m

That brings back a mor - tal sin - ner from the dead

7 Bsus B  $\frac{A}{B}$  B E

— By the way that's strait and

10 A F#m B  $\frac{A}{C\#}$   $\frac{B}{D\#}$

nar - row That re - deem'd dis - ci - ples hal - low Come be -

13 E  $\frac{E}{G\#}$  A C $\#$ m Bsus B  $\frac{Esus}{B}$

liev - ing to the Sav - iour for the touch of

16 E  $\frac{A}{E}$  E C F **B**

blood Have you — heard a - bout the

19 B $\flat$  Gm  $\frac{C}{E}$   $\frac{D}{C}$  C  $\frac{B\flat}{C}$

prec - ious, prec - ious blood That brings

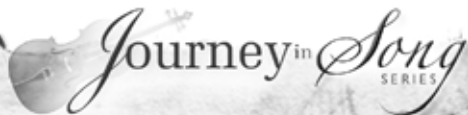
22 F B $\flat$  Gm Csus

back a mor - tal sin - ner from the dead —

25 C  $\frac{B\flat}{C}$  C F B $\flat$

By the way that's strait and nar - row That re -

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
 Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



28 **Gm** **C**  **$\frac{B\flat}{D}$**   **$\frac{C}{E}$**  **F**  **$\frac{F}{A}$**

\_ deem'd dis - ci - ples hal - low Come be - liev - ing to the

31 **B $\flat$**  **Dm** **Csus**  **$\frac{F\text{sus}}{C}$**  **F**  **$\frac{B\flat}{F}$**

Sav - iour for the touch of blood

34 **F** **D** **C** **G** **C** **Am**

Have you\_ heard a - bout the prec - ious, prec - ious

37  **$\frac{D}{F\sharp}$**   **$\frac{E}{D}$**  **D**  **$\frac{C}{D}$**  **G**

blood That brings back a mor - tal

40 **C** **Am** **Dsus** **D**  **$\frac{C}{D}$**  **D**

sin - ner from the dead\_ By the



'before the foundation of the world'. (cf. Rev 13:8; 1 Peter 1:20). What does this have to do with Abel's offering of a lamb? Why did Abel offer a lamb? It was because he understood God's own testimony. He understood the life-blood that God was providing through His own Eternal Covenant. Heb 13:20. God's own witness, to the first family of mankind, provoked Abel to offer a lamb.

This is the principal point, and the one around which the heart of the song is based. When we 'behold the Lamb' that God has provided for us, we are willing to lay down our lives in response. John 1:29. Consider Abel. 'Learn from Abel, the way of blood', as in the words of the song. In slaying a lamb, Abel was giving his own life, through faith.

Let's think carefully about what is noted in the book of Hebrews. 'By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.' Heb 11:4.

## **Becoming our brother's keeper**

Through faith, Abel understood the call and ability to offer his own life. Cain's offering was not accepted. Why not? Later, he was encouraged to 'do well'. So we realise that Cain must have had a wrong attitude in presenting his offering. He was not laying his life down. Had he been so doing, he would

not have become offended. When he was warned about sin, he might well have sought relationship with Abel, with a love for his brother, and a willingness to be his brother's keeper. Gen 4:9. Then Abel could have become his keeper also. They would have kept each other, and found fellowship with God in this matter of offering.

This is what should take place as we offer. Offering is always in fellowship with the Lord and with one another, at the same time. 2 Cor 8:5. We are to be keepers of one another in the way of blood. The second verse of the song takes up this point. 'Each word of cleansing, by friends' embracing ... and when redeemed, the blood can touch another soul'.

## Becoming righteous through faith

When Abel slew a lamb, it was representative of Abel's heart attitude in giving himself as an offering. This is what God accepted. In fact, as the writer of Hebrews records, God testified that Abel was righteous. Obviously, he wasn't righteous just because he did well with his offering. He was righteous because, by faith, he understood the Lamb of God. And by faith, he was joining himself to the blood of the Lamb, the Lamb of God. This was the way of blood; 'of life laid down, given not taken'. Much later, Jesus spoke of 'the power to lay down His life'.

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



'I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.' John 10:17,18.

## Laying down our lives

These are amazing verses. When we are touched by the blood of Christ, the life we live is no longer our own. Our lives are offered to Him, so that His life becomes ours. We accept, as did Abel, that there is no life apart from His. All we can offer is to commit ourselves completely to His death, and His life.

We are told that God testified to Abel's gift, and that Abel obtained a righteous testimony. There is only one way to obtain a righteous testimony. We are to join the way of blood, the way of life laid down. This is the message that the death of Abel continues to proclaim. Indeed, the blood of Abel, the first martyr, and of all the martyrs including Christ, declares the same message. All the blood of those who have laid down their own lives, whether as martyrs or not, is united with the blood of Christ.

This is why the song refers to the martyrs' cup, and to an ageless fountain. Abel did not expect to be a martyr. However, in slaying a lamb, Abel's righteous attitude was that he was willing to be a martyr, just as Christ was. We learn from Abel that the only acceptable response in presenting ourselves, is

that of 'a living sacrifice'. Rom 12:1. Our faith must be such that we are giving our lives. Our lives can never be taken from us, even if we are martyrs, because our life and death are given into God's hands. If our death is in His hands, then so is our life, and vice versa. This means that for the whole of our lives, our death is committed into His hands, and into the hands of others. Others may take our lives but, in faith, we see our lives as given, not taken. Jesus said, 'No one takes [my life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself'. John 10:18. This is the lesson of the first event in the first family in the whole of history.

## Brought near by the blood

Of course, the blood of Abel's lamb was not the blood of Christ, any more than was Abel's own blood which was shed by his murderous brother. However, in the way that Abel laid his own life down, through faith in Christ's offering, it brought him near, and joined him, to that one and only righteous offering. Eph 2:13. So too for us. We are not able to make a righteous offering. But we read that Abel obtained righteousness. And God testified to Abel's gift. Why? Because his action in offering was one of faith. He believed in the blood of the Lamb that was given on the altar, within the Eternal Covenant before the foundation of the world. This is what Abel understood.

This is why the book of Hebrews recounts that the blood of Christ 'speaks better things than that of blood of Abel'.

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



Heb 12:24. Abel's blood joined what was better: the blood of Christ. And so Christ's blood is the prior message, speaking louder than Abel's blood.

Because God made a breach within Himself and opened His own holiness to us by blood, it is the blood of Christ that can bring us near. The blood indicates the rending of the veil, the veil of His flesh, and that He has opened the way to the 'holiest', to the most holy place in the presence of God. Heb 10:19.

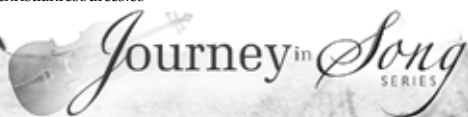
This is the central meaning of the blood. As believers, we have been apprehended by God's own testimony. One has died, therefore all are dead. Our life and death are in His hands. As Paul said, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live'. Gal 2:20. My life consists in the capacity to bear and show forth His dying, as well as His living. The cup of salvation that I receive and drink, is indeed a 'martyrs' cup', because the shedding of their blood, the offering of their lives, was through the power of Christ's life; the blood of the Lamb.

## The oil upon the blood

Now fresh anointing upon the blood.' The third verse of the song introduces the Holy Spirit, symbolised by the oil. In a particular instance in the Old Testament, the blood of a trespass offering was then further sprinkled with oil. Lev 14:28. This illustration of oil being applied on top of blood

has a very specific meaning for us. Simply, the application of blood makes way for us to be anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit. Now we can 'take up the new song' and 'sing to the heavens'. Oh the wonder of His life, revealed in us. 'When touched by blood, love cannot cease', for we are able to lay our lives down for one another in love, just as Christ did for us. 1 John 3:16. Let us come, believing, to the Saviour, for the touch of blood.

Author: Murray Wylie | Brisbane Christian Fellowship BCF  
Published by Vision One at Toowoomba Christian Fellowship TCF  
[www.christianresources.co](http://www.christianresources.co)



# The Touch of Blood

By Murray Wylie

1. Learn from Abel, the way of blood  
Of life laid down, given not taken  
Just one small drop, from martyrs' cup  
From ageless fountain, where saints have stood  
Belov'd were they, no reason why  
Redeemed with love, by the touch of blood.

2. Receive, believing, the touch of blood  
Each word of cleansing, by friends' embracing  
Accepting curse, with conscience, still,  
And when redeemed, the blood can touch another soul  
Belov'd are they, no reason why  
Restore them too, with the touch of blood.

3. Now fresh anointing, upon the blood  
Take up the new song, sing to the heavens  
When touched by blood, love cannot cease  
Its way is pure and true, and always 'peace'  
Belov'd am I, no reason why  
Redeem my soul, with the touch of blood.

## Congregational Chorus

Have you heard about the precious, precious blood  
That brings back a mortal sinner from the dead  
By the way that's straight and narrow  
That redeemed disciples hallow  
Come believing to the Saviour for the touch of blood.