



GLOBAL IMPACT MINISTRIES

A Defense of the Apostolic
Christian Faith

God Purchased The Church with his own Blood, Acts 20:28



The Blood of God

Acts 20:28 actually says, "...the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood..." Although there are some variant readings of Acts 20:28 which say, "the Church of the Lord," the weight of the evidence points to God's own blood as the phrase "Church of God" is used throughout the New Testament, but never the "Church of the Lord."

Ellicott's Commentary says, "The fact that elsewhere St. Paul invariably speaks of 'the Church of God' (e.g., *1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:14, et al.*), and never 'the Church of the Lord'" is very convincing evidence to show that the correct reading should be, "The Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood" rather than "The Church of the Lord."

Since the phrase, "the church of God," appears ten times in Paul's writings whereas "the church of the Lord" does not appear anywhere in New Testament Scripture, the internal evidence strongly supports "the church of God" as the correct rendering of Acts 20:28.

Ignatius is the earliest Christian witness who used the phrase "blood of God" in his Epistle to the Ephesians (AD 107) which appears to be derived from Acts 20:28.

"Being the followers of God, and stirring up yourselves by the blood of God, ye have perfectly accomplished the work which was becoming to you."
(*Ignatius to the Ephesians, chapter 2*)

Since Ignatius' Epistle to the Ephesians was written about AD 107, the belief that God has purchased the Church with His own blood had to have been the earlier Christian belief before later manuscripts were interpolated with "the church of the Lord."

Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian of Carthage provide other early Christian witnesses that the text is about "the blood of God" (*late 2nd Century, Quis dives, c.34*) rather than the blood of "the Lord" (*Ellicott's Commentary, under Acts 20:28*)." Tertullian wrote, "We are not our own, but bought with a price. And what kind of price? The blood of God." (*Tertullian, AD 205, Hendrickson's Ante-Nicene Fathers, To His Wife, Vol. 4, Page 46*)

The Significance of the Blood of God

Author Deborah Bohn wrote, "Most cells in the body contains 46 chromosomes, but Dad's sperm and Mom's egg contain just 23 chromosomes. When egg meets sperm, they join to form the 46 chromosomes of a single cell that will rapidly divide until it becomes the approximately 100 trillion squirming cells that you lovingly diaper, feel and babble all day. Each chromosome carries many genes, which also come in pairs. Sine half of your baby's genes come from mommy and the other half are from daddy, the probability of a baby getting any particular gene is similar to the probability of flipping a coin. Sounds like predicting the possible combinations that make up your baby's looks and personality should be easy, right? No such luck. Only a few traits such as blood type, are controlled by a single gene pair (the pair of genes received from both parents)." (*Deborah Bohn, Babble.com*)

Richard Hallick wrote, "Human blood type is determined by co-dominant alleles. An allele is one of the several different forms of genetic information that is present in our DNA at a specific location on a specific chromosome. There are three different alleles for human blood type, known as IA, IB and i. For simplicity, we can call these alleles A (for IA), B (for IB), and O (for i). Each of us has two ABO blood type alleles, because we each inherit one blood type allele from our biological mother and one from our biological father." (*Richard B. Hallick, University of Arizona, ©1997, http://www.ble.arizona.edu*)

Here we find scientific evidence to show that Christ's blood type had to have been "out of Mary" (Gal. 4:4) his mother and "out of the Holy Spirit" (*Matthew 1:20*) as his Father. So in a certain sense, we can say that the blood of Jesus is the blood of God because God's Spirit miraculously contributed to the blood of the Christ child. Although the blood of Jesus is not ontologically God's blood, we can affirm that Christ's blood belongs to the God who became a man in the incarnation through the virgin because the blood of Jesus belongs to "the Everlasting Father" (*Isaiah 9:6*) whose own Holy Spirit became incarnate as a human son.

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