

“The Cleansing – Part 2”
Exodus 30:17-21
(Preached at Trinity, February 22, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. I’ve pointed out that **Chapter 30** deals with God’s further instruction concerning the Tabernacle worship.
 - A. In **Verses 1-10** we saw God’s instructions concerning the altar of incense.

The Altar of Incense was placed directly before the Ark of the Covenant; directly before the Mercy Seat, the throne of God. It was placed directly before the Mercy Seat, except the veil separated the Altar of Incense from the Ark.
 - B. The Altar of Incense symbolized the saint coming before the throne of God in prayer. The prayers of the saints rise up as a sweet fragrance before the throne of God.
2. Last week I directed your attention to **Verses 17-21**. Here we read of the Laver of brass which was set up for the cleansing of the priests. Although the Laver is the last piece of furniture ordered by God it was the second that the priest met on his way to the tabernacle. It stood in the courtyard between the brazen-altar and the curtain leading into the holy place.
3. The priests were defiled through the defilement of sin. God demanded that they ceremonially wash themselves before coming to the Altar of Sacrifice or the Altar of Incense.

Exodus 30:20 – “When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD:”
4. The Laver speaks of the need of cleansing if communion with God is to be maintained.
 - A. This is not speaking of cleansing from the *guilt* of sin. That was taken care of at the altar. That must first be taken care of. This is why the altar was the very first thing you saw when you entered the courtyard.
 - B. This cleansing was not from the guilt of sin but from sin’s defilement. Aaron and his sons had come into contact with dust and death. They were defiled. This defilement had to be removed. What they needed was the outward cleansing of holiness.
5. As we saw last time, this has some practical implications for us. The Laver teaches us the need for practical holiness. We are not talking about our positional holiness. We *have* been justified. We have been regenerated. The washing of regeneration can only occur one time. Our new birth can never be undone.

The priests were cleansed with water, not blood.
6. Although we have been cleansed from the *guilt* of sin the practice of sin can hinder us from entering into God’s presence.

- A. As God's people nothing will ever affect our position before God but there are defilements that can affect our communion with God.
1 John 1:6-7 – "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- B. Sin always draws us away from God
1. When we are in sin Christ ceases to be our chief desire, our highest interest.
 2. Sin is poison to our relationship with Christ. It hinders our prayer life. It crushes our confidence. It acts like water on the fires of our fervency. It separates us from fellowship with God.
7. As I pointed out last week, God has provided the Christian a means of dealing with sin. Confession and Repentance
- A. Our first act in dealing with the defilement of sin is confession. We have to own our guilt. We can't deal with our sin until we admit we have sinned
 David said, "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. (**Psalm 51:3**)
- B. Second we must repent of our sin. We must hate it and turn from it because of its assault against God.
8. As believers our highest interest should be our relationship with Christ. Jesus must be our highest desire. Our great motivation for holiness.
 The priests were to cleanse themselves from their defilement
1. Their defilement prevented them from approaching God
 2. Our sins will prevent us from approaching the throne of God in prayer. Our sins hinder our fellowship with Christ. Oh how we need to be holy. The church today must teach on the importance of holiness.
9. Tonight I want to take you through another aspect of this passage. Last week I focused on our great need to cleanse ourselves, our great need for personal holiness. The question I want to set before you tonight is HOW we must cleanse ourselves. The priests of Israel were provided the water of the Laver. What has God provided us for our cleansing.
10. The Bible is not silent on the answer to this question. Over and over the Word of God is described to us as cleansing water.
Psalm 119:9 – "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word."
John 3:5 – "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
John 15:3 – "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."
Ephesians 5:25-27 – "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
11. Tonight I want to set before you three ways God uses His Word in protecting us from sin and increasing us in holiness.

- I. The Word of God is our source of instruction
- A. All that we know about Christ is what He has revealed in His Word
1. God has revealed Himself in creation and providence to the extent that all men are without excuse
Romans 1:19-20 – “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. ²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”
 2. Jesus can only be known through His Word
 Salvation can only come as the Word of God is applied to our hearts
Romans 10:17 – “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
 3. The Holy Spirit teaches us of Christ from His Word
John 14:26 – “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”
 4. As we increase in our knowledge of Christ we are strengthened in our relationship with Him.
 Peter drew a correlation between our spiritual growth and our knowledge of Christ.
2 Peter 3:18 – “But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
 5. For the unbeliever, increasing in a knowledge of God only increases rebellious thoughts. For the believer, increasing in a knowledge of Christ makes Him sweeter to us.
 6. Our delight in Him is increased as we ponder the richness of His attributes. In SOL the lover meditates upon the details of his lover –
Song of Solomon 7:1-6
- B. The Word of God is also our source of instruction of God’s demands upon us
2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
1. “Doctrine” - *διδασκαλία* – teaching or instruction
 2. The Bible provides us the parameters for how to live. It is the only rule of life.
Psalm 119:11 – “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
 3. Biblical Theology effects the way we live, the way we look at the world
 It provides the rule or parameter for our life

4. The Godless cannot endure sound doctrine
2 Timothy 4:2-3 – “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears”
5. The absence of Biblical knowledge creates spiritual weakness
Hosea 4:6 – "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."
6. In listing the Christian spiritual armor Paul says,
Ephesians 6:14 – "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth"
7. When Israel arrived at Canaan God had a single rule for their success - Obey His Word
Joshua 1:7 – “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to the right hand* or *to the left*, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.”

II. The Word of God is our source of correction

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

A. "For Reproof" – evidence, that by which a thing is proved or tested.

The Bible is the standard by which we measure our lives. As we measure our lives alongside the Bible we are convicted and reprovved.

1. The Bible exposes our sin
Hebrews 4:12 – "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
2. The temptation is to judge ourselves according to our own understanding
Prov. 3:5 warns us
Proverbs 3:5 – "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."
3. This is of great danger to all men
Judges 17:6 – "In those days *there was* no king in Israel, *but* every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes."
4. The Bible is the perfect plumb line – to every degree we ignore it the more we become corrupt

B. "For Correction" – "restoration to an upright or right state." When something is corrected it is restored to a proper condition or state.

Where reproof is the negative, Correction is the positive

1. The Bible corrects us – unless we kick against it
Acts 20:32 – "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

2. God is in a constant state of pruning us by His Word
3. The Bible is the means of God growing us unto holiness
"For instruction in righteousness" –
 It means to discipline or train for the purpose of holiness.

- III. The Word of God is our weapon of warfare against Satan's attacks
Ephesians 6:17 – "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"
- A. Satan comes at us with lies and deceptions
 1. He is the father of lies
 2. He calls into question God's authority, His sufficiency.
He perverts God's Word that we might justify our sins
 3. He seeks to condemn us and discourage us
 - B. We use the Word of God as our defense
 1. We look to it as our authority
This is why we must be students of the Word
2 Timothy 2:15 – "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
NAS – "handling accurately the word of truth."
 2. Satan cannot resist the one wielding the Sword of Truth
James 4:7 – "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (submit yourselves to God's Word)
 3. Look to the model of Christ in the wilderness
The defense of our Lord: "It is written"

Conclusion:

1. As the priest washed himself before passing through the curtain into God's presence, we must come before God in the beauty of holiness. Sin will always hinder us as we seek to enter into God's presence.
2. The Bible is our source of edification. It is our means of sanctification. It is our water of cleansing.
Psalm 119:9 – "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word."
Acts 20:32 – "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
3. We must place a high priority upon our intake of Scripture through reading, studying, meditation, sitting under the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.
It is the means that God uses to sanctify us
John 17:17 – "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
1 Peter 2:2 – "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"
 Louis Berkhoff – "The principle means used by the Holy Spirit (in sanctification) is the Word of God. Scripture presents all the objective conditions for holy exercises and acts. It serves to excite spiritual activity by presenting motives and inducements, and gives direction to it by prohibitions, exhortations, and examples.