

Why Christians don't ignore bacon

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[0 : 00] All right, open your Bibles to Leviticus chapter 11. Leviticus chapter 11, we're going to look at chapters 11 through 15, and I'm pretty sure you probably have never heard a sermon on this.

Because I'm pretty sure that I have never heard a sermon on this. I'm pretty sure that I went and looked for sermons on this and couldn't really find very much. But this is the word of the Lord.

And all scripture is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So we should not avoid any of God's word. But we've been in Leviticus for a while, and before we get going here, let me just say, today will be a little bit different, because in covering 15 chapters, it means we just can't read a whole lot.

Not 15 chapters, but chapter 11 through 15. That's four chapters. In covering four chapters, we can't read everything. And so what I want to do is I want this sermon to be something that when we're done, you can go back and read chapters 11 through 15, and you've got a handle on this thing.

[1 : 20] One of the things to remember over and over again is that what we have in the book of Leviticus from the first chapter, where we talked about sacrifices, when we talked about the priests, when we've talked about the idea of how to worship the Lord, and now we're talking about these clean and unclean laws, and even when we get to the Day of Atonement, we're looking at something that is shadow and substance.

Shadow and substance. You've got to remember that what we have in the Old Testament is an object lesson for children, right? The nation of Israel, the world itself, were babes, and they were underneath the tutor of the law until Christ came and set them free.

And so everything that we see here points forward to Christ. And oftentimes, the accusation is made that if we as Christians are going to hold to some part of some sort of law from the Old Testament that says something about the abomination of homosexuality, then why is it that we would eat bacon?

Since bacon is outlawed, right? But the problem is that confuses categories, and that question comes from a mind that has never actually studied Scripture.

Because if you have studied Scripture and you understand how the Word of God works, you would never ask such a ridiculous question. That's like looking at a couple who's married and saying, is the sky blue in your love?

[2 : 54] You know, it's like, what does that even mean? Nobody even understands what you're saying. And so we want to take a look at this, the clean and unclean laws, try to understand what it was that the Israelites were supposed to understand from this, and then see how it applies to our lives.

Now, you're going to be chapter 11 through 15, and you can try to follow me if you can. I hope that you'll be able to keep up with me. But to begin with, I'm going to read two verses.

One is from chapter 10, verse 10, and the other is from chapter 15, verse 31. Now, chapter 10, verse 10, the reason I'm reading this is because it lays out these categories that we begin to see because of what happened with Nadab and Abihu.

And you see that he is told you are to distinguish between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean. And we need to hold those categories and understand them, and we're going to look at those in just a second.

But then when we jump to the very end of this section, chapter 15, verse 31, we hear this, that thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.

[4 : 15] Let's pray together. Father, we need your help this morning. We need your help to understand your word. We need your help in order to understand what it said to them, what it meant to them, and then to be able to bridge that historical gap to us.

What does it mean for us as people who are this side of the cross? What does this mean for us? How are we to live? And we pray, Father, that you would teach us and you would train us. And we pray this in Christ's name. Amen. So we're going to see this in two parts. The first part is I want to talk about three continuums.

Three continuums. And I'm using the word continuum just because I'm going to kind of be back and forth on this. One continuum is going to be right here. Just physically, I'm just going to put this continuum right here so you can see this thing.

The other continuum, the second one, is here. It goes this way. And the third continuum goes this way. Okay? And you're all going like, okay, you're weirding me out now.

[5 : 34] That's okay. It's going to get weirder before we get going. Okay? Anyway, so let's talk about this one first, then second, and then third. We'll put these together. And this will help you understand chapters 11 through 15.

Okay? The categories used to describe God's people and how they had to be for Israel was holy and common.

And then he uses clean and unclean. And my best understanding of this, as you put all this together and you go read in the other places, is that holy and common are two categories, and common is broken into two more categories, clean and unclean.

These are statuses for the children of Israel as they were to worship. You could look at these as ritual states.

Ritual states. You could be in a ritual state of holiness. You could be in a ritual state of cleanness. You could be in a ritual state of uncleanness.

[6 : 49] I think I can say it that way. In order to move from this status, this ritual status, you had to be cleansed to move from unclean to clean.

In order to go from clean to holy, you had to be made holy. But it was a process of cleansing in order to move you this way. But if you had something that made you unclean as you were holy, you could fall all the way back to unclean.

Or depending on what it was, you might just come back to clean. Are you with me? You're kind of like, what? What? Let's just talk about a couple of things, just so you'll understand what I'm saying. If you look at chapter 11, chapter 11 is all about animals you can eat. Okay? Animals you can eat. And we'll talk more about it in just a second. But just for an example, pigs.

Okay, a pig was unclean. And if you were living your life as a clean person, right, and you ate pig, you became unclean.

[7 : 58] That was not a sin. I need you to understand that more than anything else. That was not a sin.

Except that it made you unclean. So that you couldn't go to worship. Okay? Now that's an unclean animal. Let's think about a clean animal for a second.

You're clean. And you've got a clean animal. You've got a lamb. You're headed off to go to the tabernacle to worship. To take your animal. To put your hand on its head and sacrifice this animal. And you're walking up to the tabernacle. And you're going. And all of a sudden, your animal just dies. You're unclean because you touch your animal.

You're like, he starts to fall down. You grab him. He dies in your hands. Because you're all of a sudden unclean. And you can't go to the tabernacle. As a matter of fact, you've got to wait until evening. And then you're going to go the next day.

[8 : 56] But nobody looks at you and says, sinner. Like, that's not what happens. Like, everybody's just going like, oh, yeah, he's unclean. Okay, yeah. That's okay. Now, what I'm saying then is these are ritual states.

They're not moral states. Most. Mostly. Don't you love the exceptions?

Okay. So, let me tell you about the exceptions for just a second. If you read through, chapter 16 is kind of the division of the book of Leviticus.

And once you hit chapter 17 and on, it moves from all of these things that are substance and shadow to a holiness code of laws. And there are some sins listed out in chapters 17 through 27 or so.

That if you commit these sins, they do make you unclean. So, even though these other things are not sins if you do them, there are things that you can commit as sins that will make you unclean like that.

[10:04] For example, you could be walking along, your animal die, and you touch it, it makes you unclean so you can't go worship. But also, if you are sacrificing your children to Molech, if you're committing sexual sin, if you're involved in witchcraft, if you're doing the acts of paganism, that will make you not only a sinner and an abomination before the Lord, but it will also make you unclean and you can't come before the Lord to worship.

Does that make sense? But primarily, when you just look at chapters 11 through 15, the focus is on these ritual states.

If you're unclean, it's totally inappropriate for you to come to worship. Not because there's anything wrong with you, but because God's holy. And this is all foreshadowing and pointing forward and an object lesson teaching them something about the gospel and about Christ and about who God is. That's the first continuum. The second continuum is this way, and we'll start inside the Holy of Holies. You just got to imagine that this is inside the Holy of Holies.

The Holy of Holies was a cube. It was a cube. It was a wooden room overlaid with gold, and it had one piece of furniture in it right here.

[11:28] It was the Ark of the Covenant. Indiana Jones wanted to get it. They found it, and it destroyed the Germans. I don't know if that's really true, but...

Okay. The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box, and we're going to talk more about this box next week when we talk about the Day of Atonement.

But what you need to know is that this box had a lid on it that was solid gold with angels who were looking down with wings like this towards one another, and the wings almost meeting.

And only one person could be in this room. One person of all Israel, only one time a year. And there was this veil right here.

Right? Some people say it was super, super thick and all kinds of things, but the point is that you can't pass this veil. You cannot come across here unless you are holy.

[12:35] If you have a ritual state of clean, don't even bother. You can't come here. You must be holy to pass this barrier. And you also must be the high priest.

And you must only come once a year. So it's so separated from us as worshipers, right? The Israelites, they're outside, and they just can't do this. They're separated from God, and they cannot come to Him.

Well, the next room back out of the tabernacle is the holy place, right? Here. This was a rectangular room with wooden walls overlaid with gold.

And over here is the menorah, the lampstand. It's got seven lamps on it, right? They keep it constantly lit, so you can see how brilliant this room would look with fire bouncing and reflecting off the gold.

Over here is a table that has bread on it, 12 loaves, one that stands for every tribe of Israel. Then right here, right in front of the veil, is an altar.

[13:39] We talked about it last week. Maybe Nadab and Abihu came to this place right here to offer unauthorized and strange fire, and God killed them, right? It's a wooden box overlaid with gold, and you burn incense here.

You don't burn animals or anything like that. You burn the incense here, which is the prayers of God's people going up. But this room had a curtain right here.

And you could not go past this curtain unless you were holy. So both of these, you can't get past unless you're holy.

Past this curtain is the courtyard. And in the courtyard, there's a bronze bowl that's got water in it. That water is for washing certain sacrifices, washing the priest, so that the priest can be made holy from being clean.

Past this bronze altar, past this bronze laver, is a bronze altar. The altar is shaped like the one inside, but it's much bigger.

[14:52] It's made of bronze. It's for killing animals and putting animals on and burning them there. And right on the other side of that bronze altar is another veil, another curtain, another barrier.

And to get through this barrier, you had to be clean. If you were unclean, you stay outside. If you're clean, you can come in.

So that's why if you're going to the temple to sacrifice your animal and your animal dies on you and you're touching a dead body, you're unclean until evening, you can't come into that door.

It's not because everybody's going like, oh, you're a sinner. Don't you dare come to church. Right? It's not that. It's just that God's holy. And he's to be treated with the utmost of care and respect and dignity.

We're not to do anything to defile who he is. Because if we allow that to happen, we get the wrong image of who God is. And so we have this continuum as well.

[15:55] All right. I need some water. The third continuum is this one here.

Up this way, I want you to think life, beauty, normal, complete, whole.

Did I say life already? Life. Life and light, both. God, right? Down this direction, you have darkness and chaos, disordered, abnormal, unexpected.

Okay? You got my two things? The clean laws, most of the time when we look at these things, all we normally think about is bacon. We're just kind of glad that, you know, Peter had the dream he had.

And we just like, well, as long as I get to have my bacon, I don't care anything else about these clean laws. You know what I'm saying? But, like, the point is, is that there was a reason for having these clean and unclean laws.

[17:01] And it's not just so that they didn't intermix with the Gentiles. It taught them something.

And we're going to get to that. But you got to understand, why is a pig unclean and a goat clean?

Because I don't hear anybody talking about eating bacon, you know, goat bacon. Anybody ever eat goat bacon? Like, that's just not even, that's not even nice, you know?

That's just, I mean, maybe you like goat bacon. I don't know. I don't mean to be offensive. But, like, I'm just not eating goat bacon. I want pig bacon. That's what I want. Okay. Anyway, sorry. I digress. So, why can't you eat catfish? Why would catfish make you unclean? And here's the point. The things that are clean are the things that move towards light, life, beauty, wholeness, complete, normal, expected.

The things that are unclean are those things that move towards darkness, disorder, abnormal, incomplete, unwhole, unexpected. For the Israelite to think of a fish, they thought of scales and fins, not skin.

[18:12] Therefore, that's not the normal state of the fish. The catfish is unclean. Not because there's anything wrong with catfish, but just because it's not the normal thing. That's chapter 11.

You've got all of these different animals that are talked about there. And some of them, yes, they have the diseases. And it's worse to eat something like that than it is something else. Because, again, it's not wholesome. It's not, it's disordered.

It's not, you understand? You begin to separate these out. And then what happens is you move to chapter 12. And in chapter 12, it speaks of women giving birth to children.

And if a woman gives birth to a child, she's unclean for a season. It doesn't mean, it doesn't mean that she's immoral by giving birth to a child.

Right? There's no morality to giving birth to a child. It means that it would not be appropriate for her to come to worship right after she's had a child. And all the women would say amen. Right?

[19:07] But here's what's happening here. What you have in childbirth is that this is not the normal state of every woman. It lasts for how long? Maybe 24 hours.

Maybe. But the rest of your life is not birthing a child. It's disciplining those child. Can you imagine if the rest of your life was birthing a child? That'd be terrible. Right?

So the point is that the normal state of woman is here. And the abnormal state or the unwhole or the part that's just not expected is here. Giving birth would then be unclean because it's not the normal state of life.

You just track over to chapter 13 and 14. And you get the laws concerning leprosy. Right? You can have leprosy on your skin. You can have leprosy in your hair. You can have leprosy on a piece of cloth.

You can have leprosy on the walls in your house. And oftentimes when we think of leprosy, we think of the official disease. The Old Testament's thinking more than that.

[20:08] Right? There's lots of things that are going on. But if you've got some sort of spot that's visible, you're unclean. Why? Because that's not the normal state. Because it's something that could produce some sort of death for someone else if it's really a bad disease.

Right? And it's leprosy pointed out rather than any other disease because leprosy is visible and serves as an illustration of sin.

So, go to chapter 13, 14. And if you've got leprosy, you're unclean. You're here. You're not here. The last chapter, chapter 15, is about bodily discharges. And that makes me about as uncomfortable to say that as it does for you to listen to it.

I mean, you just can imagine bodily discharges. And you can think of all the various things that that would be. And it's every one of them.

And that's because those moments of those discharges are not the normal of our lives. They are the extra moments, the other moments, the abnormal moments, if you will.

[21 : 11] Does that make sense what I'm saying? And so here's what happens. If as a Israelite, you're coming to worship the Lord, you must be clean to just get in the courtyard.

And what the Israelites needed to learn is that this massive object lesson was meant to teach them three things. So here we go.

Number one, the first thing that they were to learn is that God is not to be trifled with. God is not to be trifled with.

In several places, but one particularly I'll point out, in these clean laws, we get this statement from Leviticus 11, chapter 11, verse 44.

God says, For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourself, therefore, and be holy as I am holy.

[22 : 08] Be holy as I am holy. He is not a God to be trifled with because he declares himself to be holy and demands holiness of us.

Without holiness, no one will see God. Without holiness, no one will see God, the writer of Hebrews tells us. Without holiness, you and I will never see God.

That is what the Israelites needed to learn. In that object lesson, day after day, as they saw clean and unclean, and they were beginning to wonder, am I clean, unclean, and how do I live this out?

They needed to know without holiness, no one will ever see God. And, in the verse we read a while ago, chapter 15, verse 31, this is where you get this threat of death.

That God says, You shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, teach them these things, let them know these things, so they don't walk into my tabernacle just willy-nilly, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.

[23 : 28] You see, if you were coming your way to the tabernacle with your lamb, and your lamb died, and you became unclean, and you thought, well, I'm just going anyway, that rebellious heart that would try to push past where you're supposed to go would have ended in death because you'd be defiling God's tabernacle.

So the Israelites, they should have learned this massive object lesson that God is a holy God, and He is not to be trifled with. And that is the same lesson that you and I need to learn today.

If you're not a Christian, if you know someone who's not a Christian, the thing that we need to understand is that God is a terrifying holy God.

He is a threatening and terrifying holy God. And the only hope we have is that the one who is terrifying is the one who is all grace and has sent His Son into this world to take the punishment that we deserve.

And not only do non-Christians need to understand that they will face this holy God one day and have to give an account of their lives, but you and I as Christians, we need to have a constant understanding that God is a holy God, He is a consuming fire, and our attitude towards Him ought to be that of fearing the Lord.

[24 : 54] We should have a fear of the Lord. The Proverbs tell us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And if you want to know, do you have a fear of the Lord?

Here's how you test yourself. Do you obey what He says? If you don't obey Him, you do not fear Him. If you obey Him, then you fear Him.

It's just like your parents. When you did that thing they told you not to do, and you did it behind their back because you didn't want Dad to catch you because you were afraid of what he might do.

And you didn't respect Him enough to do it, to not do it, when He wasn't looking. That's the point.

We as Christians, because God is holy, ought to live in fear.

And the way we know we're doing that is by obeying Him. Well, that's the first lesson. The second lesson that I think that the Israelites should have learned is that God is in charge of all of your life.

[25 : 59] God is in charge of all of your life. If you think about all the list of things in chapter 11 through 15 that are unclean, think about this.

You get Leviticus 11 that tells us that speak to the people saying that these are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth. God wants to tell you what to eat.

As the Israelites are looking at this, God's telling me what to eat? Yeah. Well, where does He get off telling me what to eat? Well, I'm pretty sure He made you.

I'm pretty sure He's your creator. He can tell you whatever He wants to. Or you get into the whole thing about pregnancy and childbirth, and, you know, if you have a boy, you're unclean for a period of time.

But if you have a girl, you're unclean for longer. Well, why does that have to be that way? Well, because that's what God said. Like, I don't know. I don't understand all of these things. But here's the point. The point is that there's not a single area of your life untouched.

[27 : 05] As the Israelites looked at this, they should have gone, man, the things that we eat, our families, our children, the relationship between husband and wife, all of our illnesses.

When you look at leprosy and you think about all the illnesses that could possibly come up, or you think about all the bodily discharges and the biology of men and women, there is not a single area of life that is untouched.

God's in charge of all of it. And so today, from that illustration, from that shadow, from that type, from that pointing forward, from that object lesson, today you and I ought to learn the same lesson.

God's in charge of all of life. And a person who's not a Christian, this is the central problem in their life. A person who's not a Christian, the central problem in their life is they want autonomy.

That's self-rule. They want to be a law unto themselves. They want to do what they want to do, and they don't want anyone to tell them what to do. We all have a little bit of that in us sometimes, don't we?

[28 : 20] But the lost person doesn't want God to tell them what to do. And here's the truth of the matter. If you're unwilling for God to tell you what to do, there's no way you can be a Christian.

If you're not willing for God to be in charge of your life and get all up in your business about all of your life and tell you what you should think or where you should go or how you should live, then there's no way you can be a Christian because he's going to tell you exactly those things.

Because becoming a Christian means giving over control to him, letting him be the boss of your life. And Christians, you know, I was saved when I was 18.

And I tell you, I did not understand myself. I am 53 years old.

I still don't understand myself sometimes. Sometimes I'm surprised at the things that I see and the things that I learn about myself. And frankly, we do change over time as well.

[29 : 26] But when I became a Christian, I gave as much of myself as I understood to the Lord as I possibly could. And over the years, he helps me to see that there's other areas of my life that I didn't give him full control.

Even though he took full control, I didn't even know that I had that area to be able to say, no, Lord, I surrender to you. If you think of it in the analogy of a house, right?

When you became a Christian, you thought that your life consisted of a living room, a kitchen, a bedroom, and a bathroom, and you were happy for Jesus to make himself at home. And that's the way most of us are.

But as we live life, we discover we have more rooms in our life. And we begin to discover we have a couple of different stories. And you might even discover one day that you've got something like a basement, and you can walk down that basement stairs, and you can see a bedroom off to one corner, and you walk into that bedroom, and there's like three closets, and you open up one of those closets' doors, and there's a dresser in that closet, and you open up that top dresser drawer, and then there's a box inside that, and you pull out that box, and you set that box down, and you open that box up, and there's a letter inside that box, and you pull it out, and you said, well, I didn't even know this was there.

And Jesus says, I did. And it's been mine all along. And now that you know about it, you need to also surrender it as well.

[30 : 50] As a Christian, what happens is we grow, we learn, we understand more about ourselves. We have things that happen to us that change us. And what we have to be doing as Christians is what we did when we first got saved.

That yes, Lord, come into my life. You can have the living room, the kitchen, the bedroom, the bathroom, but as you learn more, you say, and Lord, take the rest of it too. Have all of it. Have all of it.

Because if I retain control over one little thing, I'm going to mess it all up. And so you find yourself in those moments of suffering, those moments of suffering, and those moments of grief, those moments of trials and tribulations, and something gets exposed.

And you find yourself fighting to believe that God is in charge of this thing, fighting to believe that he knew he was going to be there all along, fighting to believe what am I going to even do about this? And even our response to it may be despair and troubled. And here's the thing, that's just been exposed that there's a problem. And he's exposed it because he wants to rescue it.

[32 : 05] Out of his great grace. He's taking you through your house and opening up one drawer at a time, making you super uncomfortable because he wants to redeem you.

He wants to thoroughly sanctify you so that you're ready one day to go from this life to the next. We have to learn the lesson that he's in charge of all of life.

And the last lesson that they should have learned, they should have learned this by this, this massive object lesson, is that God provides a way for us to be clean.

He provides a way for us to be clean. I mean, with a food offering or with the food that's clean and unclean, like if you do something that defiles you with one of these animals, you know, you touch it, it runs across your grain or, you know, a dead body falls into the water over ground.

I mean, there's all kinds of things. Go and read it this afternoon. You'll be going like, what? All you had to do was wait until evening. Leviticus 11, 27, 28. You touched a dead animal or you ate bacon, wait till evening.

[33 : 18] The next day, you'll be clean. You'll be fine. Everything's good. If it was childbirth, you had to wait for a period of time, have a sacrifice for purification and cleansing, consecrate yourself back to God, you're good, you're clean.

If you have the disease in the skin, you got a leprosy. You had to wait, you had to sacrifice, and you had to do a few extra sacrifices with this one because this one had lots of object lessons to it that we're not going to get into.

But basically, once you have done the sacrifices, you waited your period of time, you're purified, you're consecrated, you're good, you're clean. What about your business? With the bodily discharges in chapter 5, I mean, you're married, and you have sexual relations, you're unclean, now you can wait a period of time, there's a sacrifice, and you're great, you're good, you're clean, no problem.

The Israelites needed to learn that God Himself provides for His people who have become defiled and unclean again and again and again, that though they cannot worship Him as unclean, He is the one who will cleanse them so that they can come every single time into His presence.

And a person who's not a Christian is someone who is always unclean. A person who's not a Christian is someone who is always unclean.

[34 : 46] They can never worship God truly, which is why a lost person will never enter into heaven because they can never be, because they're unclean and they've never been cleansed by the blood.

And the thing is that today, you can be. Today, you can turn from your own sin, you can turn from your own self-righteousness, you can turn from your own self-reliance, and you can turn to Christ and be made clean.

And being made clean, you can approach God face to face. And He's done this by sending His one and only Son into this life to live the perfect life like He perfectly obeyed all the law.

He died as a burnt offering, a sin offering, and a guilt offering as our substitute. And God raised Him from the dead to prove that He was pleased by His Son's sacrifice.

And I would just say to you, if you find yourself convicted that perhaps maybe you're not a Christian, I would love to talk to you about that. And when we're done here, I'd be glad to talk with you.

[35 : 55] We can go sit down in my office and we can open up the Word unhurried, unrushed. I'd be glad to show you how you can become a Christian. What does it mean to be a Christian? I'd love to show that to you.

But Christians, there is meat in this for us as well. You know who I'm talking to you because you know that if you were to die right now, you would go on to be with the Lord.

You know you'd be in the presence of the Lord forever because you've trusted Him. You've repented of your sin and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ. The message of God's cleansing is there for you as well.

I mean, your normal life is that you live in the camp. You can go into where God is to worship Him. As a matter of fact, as a Christian, here's the good news.

Let me give you Matthew 27, 50 and 51. And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit. That means He died. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

[37 : 03] And the earth shook and the rocks were split. As a Christian, you get to walk all the way into the Holy of Holies anytime you want. Anytime you want.

Because you're covered in the blood of Christ. You can go into the Holy of Holies anytime and every time you want to. That's why the author of Hebrews says that we can approach the throne of grace with boldness.

Because we're covered in the blood of Christ. We're cleansed from our sins. But we do have one little problem. We keep sinning.

We get angry. We have greed. We have lust. We have idols of the heart. We don't respect our parents as we ought to. We don't love God above all things.

We don't honor the Sabbath day. We don't tell the truth. We covet and want things that God hasn't given to us. We don't love the church as we should. We don't bear one another's burdens. We don't forgive as we have been forgiven.

[38 : 14] And so we sin. So on one hand, I've been covered in the blood of Christ. I have free access into the Holy of Holies and killing all the way in without being stopped by anything.

yet, I have sinned. What am I supposed to do? Well, you know, what did the Israelites do?

I mean, if you came on Monday and you brought your lamb because you had sinned and you sacrificed that lamb and God gives you forgiveness because you sacrificed the lamb, what happens on Tuesday if you sin again?

You got to take another lamb. In other words, for the Israelites to be forgiven of their sin, they have to repeatedly go back to the sacrifice for cleansing.

That's exactly what we do. I mean, that's why John wrote 1 John 1.9. We read it last week or the week before.

[39 : 19] I can't remember which. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse.

Cleanse us. Cleanse us. You and I as Christians, when we have sin, we do exactly what the Israelites did. Go back to the sacrifice.

And what's our sacrifice? Jesus. Go back to the cross. Look at the cross. Your sin was already forgiven before you committed it.

He paid for all of our sin on that cross in a moment. And so what we do is we go remind ourselves it's covered in the blood.

And because it's covered in the blood and we know that we have, we don't have to do anything else because he's already done it all, then it should inspire us then to, secondly, fight against our sin.

[40 : 22] And we fight our sin in two ways. Number one, Colossians 3, 5, put to death, therefore, what's earthly in you. Put to death what's earthly in you.

There's still earthly things in us as Christians and they need to be sacrificed. They need to be dealt with. The flesh needs to be killed.

Part of that is reckoning that it is and part of that is asking for the power of the Holy Spirit to help you to say no. But the second thing that we have to do is we have to confess our sins to one another.

James 5, verse 16, therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed and the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. In other words, we're supposed to fight our sin by confessing to one another.

And I know that in a small community like this, the idea of confessing your sin to another person is the last thing on anybody's mind because everybody's thinking, well, that's going to get around.

[41 : 27] Yeah, it is. The question is, do you care about what people say about you behind your back or do you care what God thinks? Because I'm going to tell you the truth.

It's a really uncomfortable truth. As bad as what anybody out there might think about you, you're far worse than they ever know. And yet Christ gave his life up for you and said, that one's mine. That one's mine. God provides the healing. He provides the cleansing that we need. Let's pray.