

# The Red Heifer (Saturday PM mini communions)

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Date: 10 December 2011

Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[ 0 : 00 ] Let's stand and come to God in prayer. How appropriate these words are, O Lord, words with which we come and ask that we may be prepared in mind and heart to remember the Lord's death.

It is because you have searched us and known us, and it is because you know our sitting down and rising up and even all our thoughts that we are so naturally uncomfortable because we are sinners and our sin has separated us from you.

And yet, Lord, because you so loved us and that such love is greater than we can ever understand, you gave your only begotten Son to come into the world as one of us, to be born and to take our nature to himself, to live with us in this world and to suffer all the effects of a broken and a darkened world, death and sadness and sorrow and hunger and thirst and tiredness and all the disappointments that there were in a world that was gone so hopelessly wrong.

We give thanks tonight, O Lord, that he came into that world in order to lay down his life so that by his sacrifice that we could be set free from sin and so that we could be, our hearts would be recreated within us instead of having cold, refusing hearts, hearts that were resistant to your voice, hearts that now long to hear your voice and that want more than anything else to be close to you and to be conscious of your Holy Spirit guiding our thoughts and meeting with us again and opening up our hearts to see Jesus and our eyes to understand what he did for us when he gave himself on the cross.

And so it is our prayer like the psalmist that tonight you will search us and know us and as he said at the end of the psalm, see if there be any wicked way within me and lead me in the way everlasting.

[ 2 : 29 ] Lord, we are not afraid of the scrutinizing of God because we are in Christ. We know, Lord, that tonight, that if we were not in Jesus, then the truth of the all-seeing and the all-knowing God is terrifying because we would be standing tonight in our sins.

But, Lord, we rejoice that we stand in Jesus. We are united to him. His blood has atoned for our sin. His blood has paid the price.

His death on the cross was the once-for-all sacrifice which you accepted on our behalf and as our representative. We pray, Lord, tonight that you will open up our understanding as we seek to immerse ourselves in your word and as we seek to have fellowship with one another, we acknowledge that it is as a church that you have commanded us to remember the Lord's death, but it is a church of brothers and sisters bonded and united in the fellowship that belongs to your people.

And we pray that that fellowship will be evident amongst us. We pray that there will be nothing in our hearts or in our minds that will spoil that fellowship and that unity.

We pray that there will be nothing in us that will stand between us and the Holy Spirit tonight, keep us from grieving the Holy Spirit by unconfessed sin and by a hardness, oh Lord, that can so easily and so quickly develop in our hearts.

[ 4 : 20 ] We all know what that hardness is and we pray that you will enter into our hearts even now and soften them. We pray that your word will have such an impact on us this evening that it will melt and break our hearts.

We pray that as we see afresh what the Saviour did for us, the extent of his love for us and the length to which he went to cleanse us from our sin, giving his life with all the pain and the darkness and the agony that that involved.

Oh Lord God, we pray that nothing will stand between us and you this evening, but we pray that nothing will stand amongst us this evening, separating us from one another.

Oh Lord, we pray that you will keep us from an unforgiving spirit to one another. Oh Lord God, we pray that if there is anything that anyone holds against anyone else in this fellowship, we pray that right now that we will confess that and we pray that you will come and forgive us for that.

Even if we have been wronged, we ask, oh Lord, that you will bind us together and give us a forgiving spirit, just as in Christ we have been forgiven.

[ 5 : 41 ] And just, oh Lord, as we marvel at the way in which you have dealt with us in mercy and in grace, despite our many, many provocations.

When we think of all the times we have backslidden, the times that we have deliberately sinned against you, when we have actually enjoyed doing what your word forbids.

Oh Lord, our God, we pray that as we come confessing these afresh, and we confess that it is only in the light of this moment that we are suddenly brought face to face with ourselves as we really are, we pray that as your spirit searches us and knows us, that your spirit will also reveal to us Jesus so that we come running afresh to our advocate with the Father, who is Jesus Christ the righteous, whose blood cleanses us from all sin.

So bind us together as a fellowship of your people. We pray for anyone who's not with us this evening, who's not able to be with us, we pray for them where they are, we pray for those who are ill, for those who are in hospital, or those who are sick or confined to their homes, make us always mindful of them, just as many of them were mindful and are mindful of what we do this evening, and give us, as we have been reminded so vividly over the past few days, to see our own mortality and vulnerability and the shortness of our lives.

we pray, Lord, for the families who are connected to this congregation, who are this evening mourning the loss of loved ones, and we're very conscious of who they are.

[ 7 : 25 ] We pray for each one of them, Lord. We ask for them where they are, that you will draw near to them afresh, and that they, as they perhaps think of what we are doing this evening, we pray that you will give that comfort, that only your presence can give, and we pray that you will draw their hearts to take refuge once again in you.

We pray, Lord, that you will work amongst anyone this evening who is hoping to sit at the Lord's table or wishes to sit at the Lord's table for the first time. We pray that you will give them the strength this evening to come and meet with the elders and to be welcomed into the fellowship of your people and to sit where Christ commands them to sit and to remember his death.

Give us to remember how strengthening, that this is a means of grace, it is something that you want us to have for our good and for our benefit. And keep us, Lord, keep us from ever neglecting that great blessing that you have placed upon us in remembering Jesus' death.

And so, Father, all these things we ask. Lord, we pray for those this evening who are having to face situations that they have never faced before, crises in their hearts and in their lives, in their families, in their homes.

Lord, we pray for those who are having to face trouble that they have never faced before. We pray, Lord, for them wherever they are, that you will meet them at their point of need.

[ 8 : 58 ] And we pray that you will give us to bring our brothers and sisters before you in the secret of our hearts so that you as the hearer and the answerer of prayer will do exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or even think for we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're going to sing in Gaelic and our singing is going to be in Psalm 119. I'm going to sing two verses from verse 5 to verse 7.

Psalm 119 and we're going to sing from verse 5 to verse 7. And we're going to sing in Gaelic.

in Gaelic. And we're going to sing in Gaelic. It is going to sing in Gaelic. And we're going to sing in Gaelic. all influence me", in the glory of all the PDFs, and do what it is to do avec me for the following word in Meaglen.

I ■■■■■ so much better in my greetings name Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

[ 11 : 17 ] Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

We're going to sing from the beginning down to the verse mark five. It's the short meter version of the psalm. It's Psalm 110 and it's the sing psalms version, the new version of the psalm. We're going to sing the first five stanzas and we're going to stand to sing.

[ 17 : 33 ] The Lord said to my Lord, we're going to sing these verses.

Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

Satsang with Mooji Let's turn to the psalm.

And then we're going to sing the psalm.

Tonight, I'm going to sing the psalm.

[ 21 : 33 ] And we're going to sing the psalm.

And from the outside.

It's not something that is, it's not something that is gained through education and it's the son of God having come into this world and dying on a cross.

It's everything that is, it's the same.

It's the same.

[ 24 : 03 ] It's the greatest message in the psalm.

And we're going to sing the psalm.

It's the same.

And the psalm.

What they're going to sing the psalm.

[ 26 : 33 ] And it's the psalm.

We're going to sing the psalm.

And they're going to sing the psalm.

We're going to sing the psalm.

In the psalm.

[ 29 : 03 ] It wasn't done regularly.

The psalm.

It was the psalm.

The psalm.

The psalm.

[ 31 : 33 ] First of all, let's go through the psalm.

To the outside.

The psalm.

Why it was going to die.

And then, and then, and the psalm.

[ 34 : 03 ] It was to be made.

And the psalm.

And then, and then, and then they were to be taken. And then, and then they were to be taken.

Whenever anyone in Israel. Came across or came across or came across or came into contact with a dead body. He was going to go to the psalm.

And they were to go to the psalm. And then, and then they were to go to the psalm. And the psalm. And the psalm.

[ 36 : 18 ] And then, and then, and they're going to go to the psalm. And then, and then they were to go to the psalm. And that person needs to sprinkle you with the water and the ashes.

Then God says, you will be clean. The question then becomes, what are we to make of all this?

What does all this mean in the light of the New Testament? What has all this got to do with us preparing for a communion service tomorrow? Well, I want to suggest this evening that this chapter answers one of the most perplexing questions that a Christian can ask.

A question which we've all asked and what we're probably coming here tonight asking ourselves. And here it is. You're saying, when I came to Christ at first, I trusted in Jesus so that my sins, my past would be forgiven.

And I believe the moment I trusted in Jesus, my past guilt was taken away. What about now? What about my ongoing failures?

[ 37 : 43 ] My ongoing contact with a world which is full of sin and badness and darkness and poison in this world? You've felt that, haven't you?

I have. We constantly feel it. I don't believe you can be a Christian and not be aware of the difference that there is between what you are and what God has made you and the kind of world that we have to live in.

And I'm not saying that everyone else is worse than ourselves. That's not what I'm saying at all. Because that uncleanness of this world very often comes from within ourselves. But it's true, isn't it?

It's true.

And we kind of sometimes get accustomed to the kind of world we live in. And then we become reminded, because as the Holy Spirit works within us, he does not allow us to become too accustomed to the kind of world we live in.

[ 39 : 09 ] He reminds us continuously, as we read the Bible, of who we are and what God is preparing us for and what God has called us to. And there's a feeling of unease, isn't there?

There's a discomfort. And there's also a feeling of sorrow and sadness about our failure to live up to how God has commanded us to live the Christian life.

Believe me, I'm talking from my own experience. You feel that you've become defiled. Sometimes it's no fault of your own.

You can lock yourself away in your bedroom for the rest of your life. And even if you did, you would still find within your own heart sinfulness that would mark you in the same way.

In fact, God wants us. He doesn't want us to lock ourselves in our bedrooms for the rest of our lives. He wants us to be out there amongst this world, in this world, as the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

[ 40 : 07 ] But when we do that, we're taking a chance. We're taking a risk. Well, that's a risk we absolutely have to take if we're going to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. But it means that we end up with this question, this perplexing question.

Where can I go to find cleansing from the effects of this life? And that was what was illustrated so powerfully in this chapter.

God said to the people of Israel, whenever you come across a dead body, you're unclean. Why did he say that? Well, I'm quite sure that there was a medical or a hygienic purpose towards that, but there's more than that.

God is illustrating that we live in a world of death. And in a world of death, we become affected by that world of death. And the only remedy that there is for that defilement is to be washed in the way that he has provided for us.

This chapter is about the grace of God providing for every eventuality. It tells us once again that God knew the kind of situations as people were getting into.

[ 41 : 27 ] And he was providing for them, making sure that they didn't lack anything as his people. And he's made sure the same for us. In fact, even more so in the person and in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So let me just go back over that whole process again. And let's try and derive from the sacrifice.

Can somebody open the back? Let's try and derive from what we read in this chapter.

The pointers that there are to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world and to the sacrifice of himself on the cross. First of all, I'm sure that we all saw when we were talking about the red heifer being led alive through the camp of Israel to the outside.

Which one of us could not think of what happened at Calvary when Jesus was led from his place of trial all the way through Jerusalem to Calvary, which was outside the city walls to the place of death and the place of punishment, the place of shame and the place where he knew and where everybody else knew that he was going to be nailed to the cross.

[ 42 : 56 ] It was public. It was public. The crowds were watching. Everybody who hated him relishing the moment. This was the moment that they had all waited and that they had all hoped for and longed for.

But here is Jesus. Unbeknown to the crowd of Orthodox Jews who were calling and praying for his blood, he was fulfilling the very sacrifices that they themselves stood for.

And then he was put to death, just like the red heifer was put to death by the people. He was slain. He laid down his life as the sacrifice and his life was offered to God.

Always remember when we read about the burnt offering in the Old Testament, the burnt offering was the complete consecration and the consumption of that sacrifice.

The burnt offering, and this was a burnt offering, it was where the whole of the animal was burnt up. And every time we read that, we're to think of the wrath of God, the fire of God, consuming the sacrifice.

[ 44 : 04 ] And Jesus suffered the wrath of God in its entirety. He suffered all of it. He suffered it for us. You remember also how the Thai priest took some of the blood before it was burnt up and before he sprinkled it towards the place of worship.

Why was that? Why was it so important for him to sprinkle it towards the tabernacle? Well, the tabernacle was where the glory of God was. And when the priest did something towards the tabernacle, this was an act of worship and consecration to God.

When Jesus gave himself up, his blood was sprinkled. It was shed towards God because it was God that demanded the death of his son as the payment for our sin.

So it was towards God that Jesus laid down his life as an offering to God. We must always remember that. There's a direction at Calvary, a direction upwards to where God is.

And God is receiving the death of Jesus as the payment for our sin. Now comes the cedar wood and the hyssop and the scarlet.

[ 45 : 18 ] What were they? And why were they thrown into the fire? Well, I'm going to, at the risk of being possibly oversimple, I don't believe I am.

I believe this is the right answer. The cedar wood and the hyssop and the scarlet were nothing more and nothing less than a brush. Cedar wood was the handle.

The hyssop was the bristles. And the scarlet was the wool that tied the handle to the bristles. I could prove that to you from other parts of the Old Testament.

I don't have time to tonight. If you want to argue with me, then please do so. But let me see your chapters. It was simply the brush. Why was the brush used?

Well, the brush was always used when an application was required of the blood. For example, hyssop was used when a person was a leper.

[ 46 : 28 ] And when you were cleansed of that leprosy, you had to go through a procedure where blood was sprinkled upon you by hyssop. There was very often that application of the brush.

So when we're reading about the cedar wood and the hyssop and the scarlet yarn, we're talking about the way in which God would sprinkle you.

And this time, it was thrown into the fire. It was normally the priest that sprinkled you whenever you were sprinkled. And now it's thrown into the fire.

Why? Because the whole thing is one. The red heifer, the fire, the ashes, the burning up, the brush, the application of the sacrifice.

Everything was found in what was left. And we're to think of this as one great sacrifice in which God is providing for the cleansing of his people, the cleansing of their defilement by sin, and in which he's showing us that in the death of Jesus, there is no more need for a high priest.

[ 47 : 50 ] It was always a high priest that used that brush to apply the blood. And in throwing it in the fire, in being commanded to throw it in the fire, God is saying to his people, the day is going to come when there will be no more need for a high priest.

No more need for a brush. Because everything will be found. All the cleansing that you require, all the forgiveness that you need, will be found in this one singular death at Calvary of the Son of God.

And so, when a person who came into contact with a dead body and became defiled in the eyes of God, when they came to this, when they came to the outskirts of the camp, and when they mixed, when somebody else would mix some of the ashes with water and sprinkle the person with that mixture, God said, you shall be clean.

And tonight, the letter to the Hebrews says, how much more does the blood of Jesus Christ cleanse us from, cleanse our consciences from dead works.

As we examine ourselves this evening, you're examining your conscience, aren't you? Or at least we should be. Every one of us should be examining your conscience. Because our conscience is the faculty that God has placed within us to connect with him and to testify to the kind of life that we live.

[ 49 : 36 ] Sometimes our consciences are damaged and spoiled and defiled by the way we live in this world. And God's remedy is to come to the sacrifice of Christ.

And in the sacrifice of Christ, there is not only forgiveness for the guilt of our sin, but there is cleansing from the defilement of sin.

And the way to restore a good conscience before God, it's always the same. There are no other remedies. It's Christ.

His sacrifice. His complete sacrifice. In which his blood, the life that he laid down for us, cleanses us from all sin. John puts it this way.

He says, These things I write unto you so that you will not sin. But, but, if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

[ 50 : 42 ] And so, what the Lord is telling us is tonight, that just as the people of Israel, when they needed cleansing from the defilement for contact with, when they came into contact with the deadborn, just as they know where to go, they knew what to do, they knew the provision that God made for them, so we tonight, as we seek his cleansing from the defilement of sin, we know where to go.

We go outside the camp to Calvary. We go straight to the Lord Jesus Christ. And we wash ourselves in what he, by faith, in what he has done for us.

When it says the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, do you know that that's a continuous cleansing? It means it continues day by day, hour by hour, continues to cleanse us from all our sin.

So that tonight, we can go to 1 Corinthians and where Paul says you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified, and we can take that by faith to be our own because of Jesus Christ.

And tonight, these three things are true in Jesus. We are washed, completely clean. God says in this chapter, you shall be clean.

[ 52 : 17 ] Now, you're either believing it, we either believe the word of God or not as we come in faith to Jesus. You are sanctified. What that means is that every one of us in the Lord Jesus has been set apart as his people.

That's what sanctified means. you are justified. Every one of the Lord's people has the righteousness of Jesus. We stand tonight in the righteousness of Jesus and that's what qualifies us to come to worship him, to listen to his word, and to stand before him accepted in Jesus Christ.

that's what he says. His words, not ours. We are washed, we are sanctified, and we are justified because we have made use.

Tonight, we want to come to the place where the Lord has provided cleansing for us. We want to be sprinkled, not by the ashes of a heifer, that's not going to do any of us any good, but by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by his death on the cross.

His resurrection on the third day. We want to be, we want to worship him, and we want to give thanks for his inexpressible and amazing love.

[ 53 : 37 ] Let's pray. Go to stand to pray. Our Father in heaven, we give thanks tonight for the provision which has been made for your people.

We give thanks, O Lord, that not only has the guilt of our past sin been dealt with once and for all by Jesus Christ, so the defilement, the marks, the pollution that we all are aware of tonight has been washed away and is washed away as we come afresh to the sacrifice in which Jesus laid down his life for us.

We give thanks that tonight for the ongoing cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and we pray that as we come to that blood afresh tonight that we may rest in it and that truth alone will be what prepares us to remember his death tomorrow.

Forgive our sin in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing together then in Psalm number 51.

and this Psalm, when David wrote these words, of course, you all know the circumstances.

[ 54 : 54 ] He had been made acutely conscious of his own guilt and his own defilement before God, and these are the words he uses as he asks God for forgiveness. The words that relate to the chapter that we've been reading.

Cleanse with hyssop. Verse 7. Cleanse with hyssop. Purify me. I'll be whiter than the snow. Let the bones you crushed be joyful.

May I joy and gladness know. From my failure hide your face. Blot out all my wickedness. And in Christ, we can ask for that very same forgiveness.

Cleanse with hyssop. Purify me. We're going to sing the three verses from 7 to 15. Page 68. Sorry, I should have said the sing-sams version. It's on page 68 and it's Psalm 51.

It's verse 7 to verse 15. Cleanse with hyssop. Purify me. We're going to stand to sing. as it is. Let the bones purify me.

[ 55 : 58 ] I'll be whiter than the snow. Let the bones you crush be joyful.

May I joy and gladness know. not my failure I pure best brought out all my wickedness.

For create a clean heart in me and I'll set past mine preview.

Do not take your spirit from me Cast me not away from you Give me back the joy I have  
Keep my willing spirit glad Then I'll teach your ways to sinners The bones will turn back to  
you Free me from blood guilt my Savior God most merciful and true Then I'll praise your  
righteousness

Teach my lips your name to bless Please be seated. Just one or two intimations The  
session has now thoughts good