

The Sacrifice of the Messiah

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[0 : 00] As we begin this morning, I simply want to reiterate on behalf of my family the thanks that we have towards you all as a church for your support of us as a family.

We have been enjoying the season of good health for my wife, and it's been a great blessing, and we want to give God the thanks and the glory for it. And I just want to, as I have opportunity to take the pulpit again in the morning for what has felt like a long time, I want to say to you how much it has meant to us.

The number of you who have said we're praying, we're caring, the ways you have tangibly showed your support, and for us, it's been truly overwhelming.

So I do just want to say thank you. We are beginning. We are not beginning. We are continuing in our series in the book of Hebrews this morning.

And as I was thinking about the passage this morning, something came to mind. I have on my bookshelf a copy of Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Part 2, by Josh McDowell.

[1 : 16] Now, some of you may have heard of this book. Some of you may not. It was written in the 80s. It was a compilation of some of the archaeological and other evidences to help support why we think the Bible is true, why some of its claims seem to be reasonable or supportable.

And it's a good book. But that's not why it's important. The reason why it's important for us this morning is because every time I look at that book, I feel guilty. Because that book was given to me as a freshman in college in 1987.

It was actually loaned to me. It was not given to me. And that's why I feel guilty. Not only was it loaned to me as a freshman in college by a campus ministry worker, and that I've had it on my shelf, I have worked not only with this man, but with his daughter, who was on staff here at Yale for two years.

I have had multiple opportunities to return this book. And every time I see it, I just feel a little ashamed that I still have this book that's not mine on my bookshelf.

Now, I don't know about you and whether there's evidence that demands a verdict part two on your bookshelf. But my guess is there's one in your heart. I think all of us, if we are honest, could think back and think that there is something in our life, something we've done, something we have said, that we wish we hadn't.

[2 : 51] Something that we feel this surge of guilt in our hearts when we consider it. Though maybe not in the same extreme way, we are like Lady Macbeth, walking around, looking at our hands and thinking, the stain of what we have done is on our hands and on our hearts.

And if you're wondering whether that's a universal truth, fascinatingly, a professor down at something called the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation down in Philadelphia, which is a great biblical counseling program, a guy named Ed Welch, has his classes do an exercise every year where they go out and they just talk to someone.

Anyone, anyone, family members, Christian, non-Christian, church, non-church, do you struggle with feeling guilty in your life? And do you know what he said? 85 percent, 85 percent of the people that his students talk to feel guilty.

There are different kinds of guilt to be sure. Sometimes there are guilt that's true because we know God and we know what he has said and we have disobeyed him.

There is also a guilt that we can sometimes feel when we have been a victim, when we have been the recipient of someone else's sin and yet it makes us feel dirty and we feel guilty about it.

[4 : 23] There's a kind of guilt that we sometimes feel when we have disappointed someone else, whether what we've done is right or wrong.

And there's a kind of guilt that we feel simply because we're human and we haven't been able to save all the problems of global hunger and the threat of nuclear war and sex trafficking and on and on and on.

That we haven't been able to solve all the problems of the world or maybe just in a smaller sense. There are times when we haven't been able to be the human being we ideally would want to be because of our own human limitations.

So there's guilt that we feel and some of it is more legitimate. Some of it is certainly legitimate. Some of it may not be legitimate. But it's a well-worn path in our heart.

I believe. Our consciences are predisposed to guilt. It dogs us.

[5 : 28] We slide quickly into it. And we get out of it slower than molasses. We spend an inordinate amount of our time and energy and life seeking to explain or justify or overcome or atone for those things that we feel guilty about.

If you're still not convinced yet, let me ask you one more question. If you found out today that someone is going to do a thorough background check, they were going to talk to all of your known associates, they were going to talk to your family members, they were going to talk to your high school boyfriends and girlfriends, they were going to talk to your elementary school pals who you ran around the woods with, or whatever it is.

They were going to comb through your life. Would you be afraid of what they would find out? What if not only could they talk to everyone, but they had been spying on you so they know what you were doing in private when no one else was looking?

What if they had spiritual insight to be able to see into your heart and to know that whatever the facade you put forward, they could see into the very depths of how you thought, how you felt.

In every circumstance of your life. Guilt is a reality for many of us.

[7 : 04] Question is, what do we do with it? And that, friends, brings us to our passage this morning. The writer of Hebrews has been building an argument for a while about the greatness of Christ.

And here in chapter 9, we come to a great piece of news about what Christ has done for us. So if you want to turn in your pew Bibles, let me look it for you.

Pew Bibles, you can look on page 1006, Hebrews chapter 9. We're going to be looking at verses 11 through 14 this morning, but it's really a follow-up to verses 1 through 10 that Greg preached on last week.

So I'm going to read chapter 9, 1 through 14, so we can see where we are going. Now, even the first covenant had regulations for worships and an earthly place of holiness.

For the tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the presence. It is called the holy place. Behind the second curtain was a second section called the most holy place.

[8 : 18] Having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna and Aaron's staff that budded and the tablets of the covenant.

Above it were the cherubim of the glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.

By this, the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet open, as long as the first section still is standing, which is symbolic for the present age.

According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed, until the time of reformation.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

[9 : 55] For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our consciences, our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Please pray with me. God, we thank you this morning. We thank you for your word. You have not left us seeking and grasping to know you in our own finite and limited ways, but you have revealed yourself in your word, and you have taught us and you have shown us who you are.

God, you have given us this word so that we might know the precious truths of who you are, and so that we may know how precious, in fact, you are. God, we pray this morning that you would be with us as we look into your word.

May your Holy Spirit take this word and pierce our hearts with it. Reveal to us if there are wayward ways in us. And Lord, point us, I pray, point us to the one, only, and certain hope that is in Christ.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. As we look at this section in the book of Hebrews, verses 1 through 10 of chapter 9 have set up the antithesis, the old ways of God's revelation, how he had said this is in the old covenant, how it was going to work.

[11 : 42] And then in verse 11 and following, we finally see him come to the new way. And he said, this is Christ's work for you. And in fact, as you look at it, you see that verses 11 and 12 are introductory in some ways to the whole rest of chapter 9.

The richness of the vocabulary pulls the threads from the different sections of actually even looking back to chapter 7 and 8 and looking ahead to chapter 10.

The weave of this book is a beautiful one. And verses 11 and 12 are kind of an introductory launching statement that has all these rich images that he doesn't explain.

He just uses to explain what Christ has done. And then 13 and 14 describe the effect of what Christ has done in a very particular and powerful way for us as we think about the problem of guilt in our lives.

And so, what we're going to do is we're going to look at this. We're going to look first at the context of Christ's work. Then we're going to look at the crux of the center of Christ's work.

[12 : 49] And then we're going to look at the cleansing consequence of Christ's work. So, there are your C's for today. If you like them, you can write them down. So, the context, the center crux, and the cleansing consequence of Christ's work.

So, first, look with me at verses 1 through 10 again. Pastor Greg preached on this last week. He pointed out how the tabernacle was a part of a broader theology about access to God and living in fellowship with God and enjoying life that comes from God that starts all the way back before the earthly tabernacle in the desert.

It starts all the way back in the Garden of Eden and extends all the way to the new heavens and the new earth in Revelation. And what a glorious picture it was. But, just in case you don't remember, verses 1 through 10 are meant to say that the earthly tabernacle that God instructed Moses and the Israelites in the Old Testament to put up was not the end goal.

And it was never able to bring us into that fellowship with God. In fact, its whole point was rather to expose our need and to expose our weakness.

Do you remember how it said, verses 1 through 5? There are these two sections. A first section and a second section. And the reason why there are sections is because God needed to teach the people that you cannot just walk up to the holy God of the universe with impunity.

[14 : 27] That you cannot approach Him. He is like a consuming fire. And if you come to Him with impurity, you will face the fire of His judgment.

And that's the whole point of the tabernacle. That's the whole point of the sacrifices. Sacrifices were offered again and again to remind the people of the severity of their sin.

That they could not blithely walk into the presence of God. But they had to deal with the fact that their sin was an offense to God. And in fact, that offense was so great that the punishment for it was death.

And so blood had to be shed. And so when you go back and you read Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers, you read the regulations of what happened in the tabernacle.

There is so much blood shed. And it's kind of gross to us today. We've sort of become desensitized to blood on one hand, and so we love pulp fiction.

[15 : 35] And yet on the other hand, we think it's gross and has no place in religion. That that's an old idea. But in fact, the seriousness of the offense of sin is the purpose of all that blood.

It's to show us. It's to show us. That our sin is really offensive to God. It's to show us what the Apostle Paul put so clearly in Romans.

That there is no one righteous, not one. That all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And that the wages of sin is death.

And that's the whole point of the tabernacle in some ways. It's simply to say, look, this is how bad it is. And you need a Savior.

You need something outside of yourselves to help you so that you can approach God. Now, the other part that I want you to see is that the tabernacle was given as a gracious teaching tool.

[16 : 55] Because God knows that we wouldn't get this on our own. God knows that we wouldn't just figure it out. And so God gives us this tabernacle to teach us, to show us, to prepare us for how he would then come.

How he would then come and work to address our need. Because we are stained with sin.

And so we do, in fact, stand guilty before God. And whether the particular ways that our guilt works its way through our conscience and into our lives.

Some legitimate, maybe some not legitimate. It wells up so easily in our hearts. Because, in fact, we all stand before God. Guilty before him.

We all know this, right? Well, nobody's perfect. Exactly. And yet the God of the Bible is a perfect, majestic, glorious, beautiful, righteous God.

[18 : 00] Who has never done anything wrong. And who hates evil in all of its forms. And because we are not perfect, we cannot blithely walk up to him and expect to be embraced.

That is the point of verses 1 through 10. And it sets up, then, the glorious three-letter word, but.

Verse 11. Look with me at verse 11 again, right? Do you see what I, do you see it there? But. It's coming right after he says, these things can't accomplish it.

They can't, as long as the two sections of the temple still stand, we don't have access to God. As long as the sacrifices keep needing to be offered, they can't cleanse our conscience.

But. Let's read it again. But when Christ appeared. As a high priest. Remember what we've learned in chapter 7 and 8? About a high priest who would come, who would stand between us and God.

[19 : 19] When Christ appeared as a high priest. Of the good things to come. Remember chapter 8? Remember what Reese preached about the promise of the new covenant? How God would write the law on our hearts.

And give us a new heart and a new law. Remember what we read this morning in Ezekiel. About how this new promises of Christ will come and restore all things. And make things new. And wash our hearts clean.

And give us hearts of flesh instead of hearts of stone. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come. Then through a greater and more perfect tent.

Not made with hands that is not of this creation. Do you remember Nick preached on this way back in chapter 8? How having a heavenly temple is better than having an earthly one?

Because in heaven he can actually do the spiritual work that needs to be done before God. Where on the earth all we were doing was dealing with the outside.

[20 : 14] But now Christ has gone into a heavenly tent. So that he can deal with the eternal and internal realities of the human soul. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come.

Then through the greater and more perfect tent. Not made with hands that is not of this creation. And this is his work. Listen to it carefully. He entered once for all into the holy places.

I'm going to skip for a second. By means of his own blood. Thus securing for us an eternal redemption. This is what Christ has done for us.

He has walked into the throne room of God. And he has faced the perfect and ferocious fire of God's judgment.

And he has taken. He has gone in there by means of his own blood. Thus securing for us. An eternal redemption. What in the world does that mean?

[21 : 19] Those are great spiritual words, aren't they? That we talk about and banding about. What does that mean? Well, the once for all I'm going to leave for the guys who are preaching the next couple of weeks.

Because it's coming up really well. And even the contrast. He said it talks about not by the blood of goats and of bulls.

That's referring to Leviticus 16. And in the Old Testament there was a day of atonement. The one day of the year when the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies. He would bring an offering for himself.

He would bring an offering for the people. Once a year. To cover over their unintentional sins. And he did it over and over again. And as we saw in verses 9 and 10.

It could only bring provisional standing before God. It could only deal with the external ritual impurity. It could never get to our hearts and change it.

[22 : 20] But now Christ comes. And Christ as a greater high priest goes into a greater tabernacle. With a greater offering. By means of his own blood.

Christ offers not bulls and goats. But he offers his very life. He's referring to Jesus' death on the cross.

When he says this. That Jesus came. And he offered. His death. On behalf of ours.

His life. For our life. The great exchange. We who are sinful. Are given Christ's perfectly righteous life. And his perfect obedience.

He who is perfectly. Without sin. And righteous in every way. Takes on. All of our guilt. All of the punishment.

[23 : 21] The right punishment. That God. Has stored up against sin. Christ. Takes it. Upon himself. He stands in our place.

He stands in our place. As a substitute. That only he could do. Because bulls and goats are not human beings. They are not souls. And they cannot sin against God. The way humans can.

Therefore they cannot be a substitute. Only a human being. Could substitute for another human being. But only a sinful substitute.

Only a sinless substitute. Could work. Because human beings all need to die for their own sins. So Christ. Walks in. With his own blood.

As the only person. Ever. Who could make. The offering necessary. To satisfy God's wrath. And to make a way.

[24 : 13] To make a way for us. To go back into the very presence of God. A way into the holy of holies. Christ goes before us.

As a holy. As a high priest. So that we can go in. After him. And draw near to God. This is the work of Christ.

And it secures an eternal redemption. Redemption is when you buy something back. Right? You can redeem your bottles. The people buy it back. You get five cents. Right? Christ.

Pays an unimaginable price. Of his very own life. To purchase us back. From the guilt. And the stain. And the punishment.

Of sin. This. Is the act of Christ for us. This is the crux. Of Christ's work.

[25 : 12] One more observation. On verses 11 and 12. Before we go on to 13. No.

This is an observation from 13 and 14. But one more observation about his work. And that is that. Do you see? Look with me in verse 14. How much more will the blood of Christ.

Who through the eternal spirit. Offered himself without blemish to God. Friends. If you ever wondered. Whether Jesus' sacrifice was unwilling. If you ever wondered.

That Jesus was somehow duped by God. Into doing something. That he didn't think would happen. If you ever thought. That God had not planned this. From all eternity. This passage reminds us.

That it is in fact. The three persons of the Trinity. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Working in concert. From before the beginning of time. To plan this great redemption.

[26 : 11] To plan this great salvation for us. As we've read in the book of Hebrews. If you go back to chapter 2.

Do you remember? How should we survive. If we neglect. Such a great salvation. I'm not expounding on this more.

Because this is exactly. What we'll be preaching on. For the next three or four weeks. More and more of the specifics. Of how the blood of Christ works. How it is that it is an offering. That establishes this eternal redemption.

So I want to move on. And focus again. On the end of verse 14. I want to talk about the consequences. Of Christ's work. The cleansing.

Power. Of his work. For us. Look with me. Verse 14. Let's read 13 and 14.

[27 : 11] Just to get the context. For if the blood. Of goats and bulls. And the sprinkling of defiled persons. With the ashes of a heifer. Sanctify for the purification. Of the flesh. How much more.

Will the blood of Christ. Who through the eternal spirit. Offered himself. Without blemish to God. Purify our conscience. From dead works. To serve. The living God.

First of all. I want you to see the contrast. I've been talking about it already. You. But the blood of bulls and goats. Leviticus 16. And the ashes of the red heifer. If you want to look it up.

It's numbers. Chapter 19. It took a goat outside the camp. They burned it. They took the ashes. The ashes were stored. Whenever someone. Had made themselves. Richly impure.

By touching a corpse. You could go. And the priest. Would take the ashes. And mix it with water. And spread it on you. It's an interesting. Picture. Given that Ash Wednesday. Was just a week ago. And the ashes.

[28 : 08] Would cover over. That ritual impurity. And allow a person. To reenter. Into temple worship. All of it is external.

It can't get to your heart. But the good news is. That the blood of Christ. Purifies our conscience. From dead works.

To serve. The living God. Friends. This is the good news. That the writer of Hebrews. Wants us to shout for joy. About this morning.

That this is the work. That Christ has done. So let's talk about it. For a little bit. First of all. He's purified us. This is a picture of cleansing. A picture of washing.

A picture of. Of wiping away. It's not simply a picture. Of covering over. It's not simply a picture. Of.

[29 : 07] Of somehow. Obscuring. So that we can't see. That it's still there. But somehow. It's. It's not as. As. Prominent. As it used to be. He says.

How much more. Will the blood of Christ. Purify. Our conscience. Purify. Our inner. Being. Our sense.

Of right. And wrong. The place. Where. God has put. In us. To know. What is right. And wrong. It is. In our very. Soul. That we.

That our conscience. Dwells. And Christ. Gets into there. And he purifies. Us. One. By.

Giving us. This new standing. That we're. This justification. That we'll continue. To explain. This. This place. Where we get. Christ's righteousness. And so we have. This new standing. But it's more than that.

[30 : 02] He purifies. Our conscience. He purifies. Our awareness. Of good and evil. He purifies. Us. By giving us. A new heart. So that we can.

Not only know. Right and wrong. But we can love. Right and wrong. And in fact. We can begin to do. Right. In a way that we were never. Able to.

Before. That conscience. Is burdened. By. Our dead. Works.

What does this mean? Well if you go back. To chapter 6. Verse 1. It'll talk about. How repentance. From dead works. Is a part of. Basic Christianity. We ought not.

To overthink it. It simply means. The works that we do. That lead to death. And that flow. From our spiritual death. It's a synonym. For sin. He's saying.

[31 : 00] That he purifies. Our conscience. From the presence. And the reality. Of sin. In our lives. Now. We know. That's not perfectly true.

Right. For Christians. You can continue to sin. After you've known Christ. It will be one day. One day. Christ will finish this work. And we will be no.

Longer. Able to sin. But even now. Christ has. Purified. Our conscience. From sin.

That is. He has shown us. The things. That we are to repent of. He has shown us. The things. That we are to turn. To Christ's sufficient. Sacrifice.

To cover. He has shown us. Those things. What a wonderful thing. It is. That that.

[31 : 54] Is true. That we are washed. Clean. Wiped away. And the stain. Is removed. Friends. I don't know about you. But I struggle. To believe.

That's actually true. Every once in a while. I do our kids laundry. Not all the time. I'll confess. Every once in a while. I do our kids laundry.

And our kids. Have more stains. On their clothes. Than you would ever believe. Well. Some of your parents. You would believe it. Because you've seen it. It is so hard. To keep a piece.

Of clothing. Clean. From stain. And it's so hard. Once it's been stained. To try to get it out. My wife has magical tips.

That she knows. About how to get rid of stains. And different things. But you know what? I kind of give up. Eli's five.

[32 : 48] He doesn't have to have a stainless shirt. He just needs a shirt. Something to keep him warm. I give up. Because I think it's impossible. To actually maintain the cleanliness.

Of the clothes of a five-year-old. Sometimes I think. That's how I approach. My relationship with God too.

I just give up. I think it's not possible. It can't be true. That that's really. And I just become accustomed to it. I become accustomed. To having stained clothes. And having a stained conscience.

I become accustomed. To my sin. I become accustomed. To guilt. Being a normal part of my life. But friends.

What Christ has done. Is he's washed us clean. Which means that when we sin. We have a high priest. That we can turn to. For cleansing.

[33 : 47] And we have a place. That we can go. Repentance. And faith. And trusting in Christ. Where those sins. Are washed away. And they're no longer ours.

What are the things. That you struggle to believe. That God can actually do that. In your life. With. There are a couple of things. That I thought of. Things that I do.

Recurrently. I know it's wrong. I don't want to do it. But I did it again. Sometimes we give up on that. And we just think. I don't want to do it.

I know it's wrong. But I'm going to do it anyway. So I might as well do it. Right? I mean let's be honest. Sometimes we get there. Can Christ wash away.

Those sins. How about the sins of omission. Rather than the sins of commission. How's your prayer life? Yeah.

- [34 : 50] That's a terrible question. Isn't it? How's your prayer life? Do you feel guilty about your prayer life? I do. Do you feel guilty about not reading your Bible as much?
- Do you feel guilty about. How little you think of Christ during the day? Maybe some of you. There is a Lady Macbeth part of it.
- You've done something really terrible. And you just think. Christ can forgive all those sins of gossip. And lying. And you know. Just little things. But you don't know what I've done.
- It's so bad. Christ couldn't do it. We carry around the weight of guilt.
- Like. Like. Rodrigo Mendoza. Have you guys seen the mission? It's old now. I'm getting older. My movie illustrations are getting more. Out of date. But if you haven't seen it.
- [35 : 52] It was award winning. Oscar winning. It was a great movie. Robert De Niro plays Rodrigo Mendoza. Who is a. Conquistador.
- Who captures. South American natives. And sells them into slavery. One day he comes home. And he finds. His younger brother in bed with his fiancé.
- And. In a fit of. Passionate anger. Perhaps righteous. But. He kills his brother. And he's overcome with guilt.
- He lies in a prison. In despair. A Catholic priest. Jesuit comes. One who's worked with. The local. Local South Americans. He comes. And he. Gives this man. A. A task of penance. What he does.
- [36 : 54] Is he takes all of. The markings. Of this man's life. As a conquistador. His armor. His sword. He wraps it. In this rope bag.
- And he ties it around Mendoza. And then they go. Into the jungle. To find. The people. That he had once enslaved. This was the punishment.
- Now. This is not a great picture of redemption. In the movie. But it is a great picture of guilt. Because.
- What you see. Is Rodrigo Mendoza. Clawing his way. Through the jungle. Up cliffs. Up a waterfall. With this.
- A hundred pound. Sack. Of armor. On his back. His guilt. He carried with him.
- [37 : 57] Trying to earn forgiveness. On his own. Friends. I think we carry our guilt. Like that. As well. And we don't believe.
- That the blood of Christ. Is able. To purify our conscience. From dead works. But Christ has.
- His offering on the cross. Is sufficient. To God. And through repentance. And faith. We take hold of that. And he cuts the cord.
- And releases the burden. Of our guilt. And we are now free. To go. And serve him. We are now free. To live a new life.
- That is unburdened. From that guilt. What does that look like? Well. Here's one of the most. Amazing things. About knowing that. Christ's blood.
- [38 : 54] Is purified our conscience. Is that we can confess. Our sins. The world. The world often looks at Christians. And think. How can you be so self-righteous.
- And think how great you are. Friends. That's because we haven't done a good job. Of confessing our sin. We are. As Christians. The ones who are most free to say.
- Look at how ugly my sin is. Look at how dirty. My heart is. Apart from Christ. Christ. I am a sinner.
- And I cannot save myself. I am stained. Oh. But Christ. But Christ. Christ has lifted the burden. And Christ has washed away the stain.

And Christ has made me clean. And so I can confess my sin. Because it's taken care of. Because it's been done. Already. And what a great way.

[39 : 52] That that frees our hearts. It frees our hearts. To worship God. Because we don't fear. Coming to him. We don't fear.

Wondering. How is he going to. Will he see my sin. And bring upon me. Disapproval. And judgment. And condemnation. No.

There is no condemnation. For those who are in Christ Jesus. He has washed us clean. From the stain of sin. We are free.

To proclaim this goodness of Christ. To others. Without being afraid. That we will be disqualified. How can you be a Christian? I know what you do.

I know. I saw you lose it. Last week at work. And get really angry. How can you come and tell me about Christ? Oh friend. That's exactly why I can't tell you about Christ.

[40 : 50] Because that's my sin. And I need a great savior. And so do you. So we are free. From the burden of guilt and shame.

We are free to confess our sins. We are free to tell others about Christ. And we are free to love others. Truly. Because we are no longer spending all of our time.

Managing our guiltiness. What do I mean by this? Friends. When Adam sinned in the garden. What happened? God came and said. Where are you?

What did he do? He hid. He blamed. He blamed. He justified.

What do we do on top of that? Well we try to atone for it. We try to make up for it. Let me illustrate this.

[41 : 53] I've been thinking about this. You can think about it in lots of different contexts. But when I say something hurtful to my wife. Which sometimes I do. I confess it. When I say something hurtful to my wife. Or if that doesn't connect with you.

If I lie to my roommate. Or to my boss. Or if I am mean to my sibling. My brother or sister. Or if I look at that website. That I know I shouldn't.

Or if I let biting sarcasm slip through my lips. Or just fill in the gap with whatever it is. When you do something. And you know immediately. I feel terrible.

I feel that guilt rushes up in my heart. What do I do with it? Well often my first response is I justify it. Well she deserved it.

I was right. I know I shouldn't have been angry. But I was right. And it wasn't so bad. I mean I was trying to get to something good. Wasn't I? I needed to be that forceful. Or else she never would have heard me.

[42 : 52] Or you think I'm bad. Look at all the other people. Who completely don't have any patience. I am such a great husband. Can't you give me a break? Anyone would have done this in this circumstance.

So usually I try to deny it. Or justify it. And then if I can't do that. Then or even when I try. Ultimately my conscience wells up.

And I feel awful. I feel ashamed. I want to hide. Sometimes literally I want to just go away. So that. So that I can't be seen.

Because I feel terrible. What I really want is to pretend it didn't happen. I want to go away. And then come back. And then I want it to be overlooked.

Have you ever thought about this? When you have like. When you've done something wrong to someone. What do you really want them to say? Oh don't worry about it. It's okay. It's okay. But you know what? It's not.

- [43 : 54] It's not okay. When you've done something wrong. It's not okay. It's. It's wrong. And. And we want to somehow deny its wrongness. And so we spend a lot of time trying to get that. Trying to get this like. It's okay. It's okay. You know. Oh. Let's not get all worked up about it. That's my second strategy. My third strategy is that I want to redeem it.
- We were talking about this in our small group on Friday night. How easy it is to try to say I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Like if I say I'm sorry enough. That'll actually make it okay.
- Or. Or. I really do feel terrible about it. So I say I'm sorry. And then the next day I wake up. And I still feel terrible. So I say I'm sorry again. And then I wake up the next day. And I still feel terrible. So I say I'm sorry again.
- Maybe I try to atone for it. By trying to make. Be especially nice to her. Try to sort of get in her good graces again. You know. I buy her some flowers. Or. You know. I get her a little gift.
- [44 : 58] Or. You know. I get up extra early. So that the kids don't wake her. And I make her a nice breakfast. Maybe I make promises.
- I'll never do that again. Friends. All of our attempts to self-atone. Are external washings.
- The only hope for us. Is Christ. Who is able to purify our conscience.
- From dead works. So that we can serve. The living God. Part of the blessing. Of knowing that the blood of Christ.
- Has washed away my sin. Is that. I don't have to spend my time. Doing all this. I can simply go to Brandy. And say. That was wrong. I'm sorry.
- [45 : 54] Will you forgive me? And you know what? When she says yes. It's all done. And then I can spend. All of my energy.
- Loving her. Not because I'm trying to get back. Into her good graces. Or because I'm trying to sort of. Make up for what's happened. But because I want to love her. And because I want her good.
- And friend. How much more is that true. With the Lord. How much more is that true. With the Lord.
- That when we know. That we are truly. Deeply. Completely. Forgiven of our sin. That we are washed. Clean. In the blood.
- Of the lamb. From all of the stain. Of guilt. In our life. Friends. What worship. Would we bring. To this gathering.
- [46 : 51] Every morning. Not. Oh God. I hope you'll. I hope you'll. Bear my presence. This morning. But. Oh God. I am a great sinner. But you are a great savior.
- And I am here. To sing your praises. This morning. What freedom. Does it give us. To love others. Because we're not. Managing. All of our sin. But we're free.
- To confess our sin. And point. To Christ. And make Christ. Great in our lives. As we love others. And serve them. Friends.
- Friends. For all who are in Christ. We are washed. We are washed. The work of Christ.
- Is an anchor. For our soul. Into heaven. It is a perfect sacrifice. By an eternal high priest. In the heavenly tabernacle. That is secured for us.
- [47 : 51] In heaven. An eternal redemption. We are washed. In the blood of Christ. And our guilt. Is taken away.
- I want to close. With the exhortation. That we will see. At the end of chapter 10. You can just listen.

Chapter 10. Verse 19. Therefore. Since we have confidence. To enter the holy places. By the blood of Jesus. By the new. And living way. That he opened for us.

Through the curtain. That is through his flesh. And since we have a great high priest. Over the house of God. Let us draw near. With a true heart. In full assurance of faith.

With our hearts sprinkled clean. From an evil conscience. And our bodies washed. With pure water. Let us hold fast. To the confession of our hope. Without wavering.

[48 : 47] For he who promised. Is faithful. And let us consider. How to stir one another. To love and good works. Not neglecting to meet together. As is the habit of some.

But encouraging one another. And all the more. As you see. The day. Drawing near. Let us draw near. Let us hold fast.

And let us. Stir one another up. Because Christ. Has washed us clean. Let's pray. God we do pray.

That you would. Help us this morning. Lord. Lord. Convict us. Lord. Show us the ways.

That we have neglected. The cleansing. Washing power. Of your blood. The ways that we deny it. The ways that we doubt it. The ways that we.

[49 : 44] Refuse it. Lord. May we take hold of it. This morning. And know the joy. And the freedom. That comes.

From knowing that we are washed. In your blood. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you.