

Book of 1 John Series
Message 3
February 18, 2024

Opening Prayer

I thought today we would be examining verses 8-11

But I could not get out of the end of verse 7 – so we camp there today in a deeper study of what that means.

I John ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, **and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all^{bl} sin.**

One quick note here as well: purification also comes as a result of light

John seems to write this so casually, just matter of fact - almost like a throw-in
This is far from an addendum, or a “by the way” claim.

This is foundational to our theology – we have to get this correct

We often refer to and use the blood of Jesus in prayer, but do we know the back story of why it is so powerful and true?

We pray in the name of Jesus and plead the blood of Jesus over situations for cleansing.

Why?

It is only His blood that accomplishes this – the blood with God’s own DNA that Jesus freely gave, it was not taken from Him.

Commentary: Without Christ’s ongoing cleansing, enduring fellowship would be impossible, for the guilt resulting from sin destroys fellowship. The results of that cleansing are forgiveness, restoration and the reestablishment of love. John’s use of the singular “sin” reminds us that the emphasis is not on a specific sinful act, but on the work of God in Christ that deals with the sin principle itself.

I often use multiple scripture references about a topic or subject, why?

To fill time in the message? – To prove some level of research? NO

To establish that the Word of God (both Bible and Jesus) are timeless and seamless and work all thru scripture to bring about a common theme of truth.

The consistency of God

Matthew 26:28 This is my **blood** of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 22:20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my **blood**, which is poured out for you.

Romans 3:25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his **blood**—to be received by faith.

Romans 5:9 Since we have now been justified by his **blood**, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his **blood**, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the **blood** of Christ.

Colossians 1:19-20 ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his **blood**, shed on the cross

Revelation 12:11 They triumphed over him by the **blood** of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Revelation 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in **blood**, and his name is the Word of God.

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How do I explain this to somebody, and how would I explain this in a way that would make any sense to anybody. I was arrested in my heart about how important this really is, not only for the children of Israel at that time, but how important the reality of chapter 17 is for you and I on this side of the finished work of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 17 is all about how people are to deal with blood.

There are five laws that are articulated here.

A low view of Leviticus 17 makes our faith in Jesus make no sense.

In order to truly grasp the reality that you and I are transferred from being against God to being for God and received by God and beloved of God, all of this has to do with the principle that is laid down in Leviticus 17.

God's truth is good, but all of this is because of the reality about how blood functions, both from a health perspective and from a spiritual sacrificial position.

The book of Leviticus, like a lot of the other laws in the Old Testament, was a type of health code for the children of Israel.

They didn't live in a day and age where people washed their hands before they went back to work, or regulations on the temperature in the freezer because they didn't even have freezers.

It was an agrarian society, food was scarce.

Before everyone knew what grew on dead animals, that was food and that may be the only sustenance you found. So there are all these different things going on and God loves his people enough to say there are certain things that you just shouldn't do.

We might say, "Well, come on, everybody knows this." No, not everybody know this. We know it now, but you've got to think that this was 4,000 years ago.

At this point these laws were unique for the children of Israel in the context in which they lived. We're going to see this on multiple levels.

We're going to look at the spiritual, the reality of how blood atones. We're going to see it on a health perspective. We will first see though that there is a jealousy in the heart of God for the tabernacle worship system.

Leviticus 17:1-9. The Lord said to Moses, ²“Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them: ‘This is what the Lord has commanded: ³ Any Israelite who sacrifices an ox,^[a] a lamb or a goat in the camp or outside of it ⁴ instead of bringing it to the entrance to the tent of meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord in front of the tabernacle of the Lord—that person shall be considered guilty of bloodshed; they have shed blood and must be cut off from their people. ⁵ This is so the Israelites will bring to the Lord the sacrifices they are now making in the open fields. They must bring them to the priest, that is, to the Lord, at the entrance to the tent of meeting and sacrifice them as fellowship offerings. ⁶ The priest is to splash the blood against the altar of the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting and burn the fat as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. ⁷ They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols (demons) to whom they prostitute themselves. This is to be a lasting ordinance for them and for the generations to come.’⁸“Say to them: ‘Any Israelite or any foreigner residing among them who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice ⁹ and does not bring it to the entrance to the tent of meeting to sacrifice it to the Lord must be cut off from the people of Israel.

Something Pastor Joe always said about these laws: **Mandatory unless Modified**

We have two laws in this section. The first law, verses 3-7, is the law against non-sacrificial slaughtering. The second one, in verses 8-9, tells us in effect that you are not allowed to offer sacrifices outside of the tabernacle area. The theme of these two laws is you're not allowed to subvert the work of the tabernacle. There shouldn't be slaughtering of animals going on outside of the tabernacle area, and you should definitely not be sacrificing outside of the tabernacle.

Remember that God's first commandment was, no other gods before him. Then God says, you can only worship me, and then you have to worship me in the right way.

No worshipping idols. The children of Israel, like you and I, were given to idol worship. The nations around them all had all these different worship ceremonies and it was easy to participate in these and bring them into your life.

So God gave an elaborate system, the tabernacle system which gave way to the temple in the time of Solomon with all these sacrifices, to say, "This is my prescription." Then he says, "**Listen, you're not allowed to do it anywhere else.**"

Sacrifices are centered on the communal aspect.

Not "I'm going to do my sacrifices on my own because I like my way of doing it." It was, "This is the way I want you to be together, and I want you to be together.

"Sacrifices are to be done as a community so everybody is there, nobody is excluded.

The focus of the first law is on whoever kills an ox. The Hebrew word literally means to slaughter and to slaughter sacrificially. So the idea is you are not allowed to hold your own sacrifice anywhere in the camp or outside the camp. It has to be done within the tabernacle precept.

It says in verses three and four, ³Any Israelite who sacrifices an ox,^[a] a lamb or a goat in the camp or outside of it ⁴instead of bringing it to the entrance to the tent of meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord in front of the tabernacle of the Lord—that person shall be considered guilty of bloodshed; they have shed blood and must be cut off from their people.

This verse is saying if you slaughter sacrificially an animal outside of the tabernacle that not only are you now guilty of that but you should be separated from the people.

Notice in verse seven, at the end of this first law, there is also part of the reasoning why it couldn't be anywhere else. ⁷They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols (demons) to whom they prostitute themselves. This is to be a lasting ordinance for them and for the generations to come.

Not only is the concern about the necessity of the temple and the tabernacle, but **now it's about idol worship as well.**

No longer shall you sacrifice to demons; idol worship was a big problem.

What did they do with the demons? They played the harlot. Now, that's a pretty profound biblical statement, isn't it?

He's saying, "Look, you played the prostitute with the demons."

Why? Think about the imagery. Everything in the Bible when it relates to God and humanity is relational. It's all relational.

The idea that Jesus is the husband and the church is the bride of Christ, the spouse. So the idea is of a covenant relationship that marriage—the marriage between a man and a woman—is a picture of. So if you are in a covenanted relationship and you stray away, that says a lot about you, doesn't it? So when God says you played the harlot, you cheated on him with these other sacrifices.

*Leviticus 17:10-12*¹⁰ “I will set my face against any Israelite or any foreigner residing among them who eats blood, and I will cut them off from the people.¹¹ For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.^[c]¹² Therefore I say to the Israelites, “None of you may eat blood, nor may any foreigner residing among you eat blood.”

atonement - satisfaction, reparation, or expiation given for an injury or wrong reconciliation of man with God through the life, sufferings, and sacrificial death (Christ) Now, in verses 10-12 you have the third law which is a general blood prohibition, and then the fourth law, verses 13-14, is no blood ingestion.

Look at what it says, "If you eat any blood I will set my face against the person who eats blood and will cut him off from among the people." So God is saying you're not even allowed to play with the blood. You're going to find if you kill an animal you've got to drain the blood. Why?

Verse 11, "**For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for your soul.**" This is speaking to that day as well as looking forward to the blood of Jesus that makes atonement for all sin.

Why is the life of all flesh in the blood? It's a great question.

If every part of your body worked well and your heart stops beating what happens? You die. Why does that happen? What is the heart's job? To pump blood throughout your body.

Blood brings all different things to the different parts of your body, to your brain, everywhere, so all of it works. Without the blood going to those body parts, they die, they can't work. So everything could be great, but if blood is not getting to different organs your body stops working. So the idea that the life is in the blood is that the continual circulation of blood through your body keeps you alive.

When Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, what died that day?

God says, "When you eat of it you will die." Adam and Eve ultimately died, but it was not an immediate death. But on that day, remember they covered themselves with fig leaves. Because they realized that they were naked and they were ashamed of their nakedness. So all of a sudden they're covering up, they were feeling a little awkward, and they were self-aware.

So what did they do? They grabbed fig leaves, they were trying to self-preserve. That's religion. It's man's attempt to cover their shame.

But then God says, **"No, no, listen, those things aren't going to last. I'm going to provide."** The very first death happened that day when those animals died to make coverings.

But notice, they were coverings given by God to cover shame.

So **the wages of sin is death, and if life is in the blood then the reason blood is given to bring us back to God is because God takes a life for a life**, because that is justice right there. A life for a life.

What is amazing about God's grace is he doesn't ask for our death, he says, **"Look, I am going to provide a temporary system of animal sacrifice until I ultimately bring the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."** That is why this is so important for us.

When we see the importance of blood for atonement, you realize that when John the Baptist said, "This is the Lamb of God," when it talks about the blood of Jesus cleanses a man from all unrighteousness, this has its roots here.

Because the life of God in human flesh was in the blood of Jesus, and that's what atones for our souls.

That's why we, without any reservation, proclaim Jesus Christ and him crucified, and him resurrected. I pray that we are unashamed to say, I am not trying to put on some fig leaves and cover my shame. I'm willing to accept God's provision on my behalf, and that's Jesus.

We should be completely unafraid to say, "I am so thankful for Jesus." We've all tried the fig leaf style with a million different things. Those fig leaves, they wear out; they don't really cover our shame.

So it's important for us to be unashamedly say, "I believe in Jesus, I believe his blood forgives my sins. He died in my place. Because that's exactly what happened."

Don't drink blood

13-14 ¹³“Any Israelite or any foreigner residing among you who hunts any animal or bird that may be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth, ¹⁴because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, “You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off.”

We are told that you are not allowed to drink blood. This is important because that has always been a part of pagan rituals.

The idea is that you become one with something when you drink its blood.

So there was in the day pagan rituals, they would drink blood. For the average American that's probably a repulsive, disgusting thought, but it's important. That stuff was going on back in these times. And in Jesus' time.

They didn't know – God is helping them to be in alignment with Him
How can I know unless I am taught.

Now finally ¹⁵““Anyone, whether native-born or foreigner, who eats anything found dead or torn by wild animals must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be ceremonially unclean till evening; then they will be clean. ¹⁶But if they do not wash their clothes and bathe themselves, they will be held responsible.””

The fifth law is you're not allowed to eat meat you found dead or was torn by beasts. Food was scarce, meat was even scarcer, so if you would have come upon a dead carcass and you touch it, and find it's still a bit warm, you eat it.

If you did that you need to go bathe, you need to change your clothes. And you're not allowed to be around people until evening to make sure that has time to be digested, and if you get deathly ill, everyone else doesn't have to be around it. And that's really the prohibition.

We would say that this was simply good nutritional decisions, but in that culture you have to realize that this was completely novel.

When God says “NO” it is to protect us from what we don't know or can't see

Conclusion

I want to encourage you with this, God cares that you and I are healthy, physically, emotionally, spiritually. Also, when we think about Communion, we consider the bread, the broken body of Jesus, when we think about the cup that's symbolic of the blood of Jesus; remember that the life is in the blood.

No one took his life, he gave it for you, for me, for all who would believe. That's how much God values you. So much that God gave Jesus, who is the most precious to God, so that you and I may come boldly to God, may walk with him, and may respond to Jesus at every turn. The life is in the blood. Find it in the book of Leviticus.

One place of worship before Jesus death – Veil torn – God's spirit now available