



## Functions of the Word of God

September 30th, 2020

### Washing

**Ephesians 5:26** That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word

**Exodus 30:18** You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing. And you shall put it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. **19** And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet with water from it.

**1 Corinthians 6:11** And these things were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

**Titus 3:5** Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

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### The Washing of the Water in the Word

In verse 26 Paul says that Christ sanctifies the church by cleansing her through the washing of the water in the Word. According to the divine concept, water here refers to the flowing life of God typified by flowing water (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 7:38-39; Rev. 21:6; 22:1, 17). The washing of such water is different from the washing

of the redeeming blood of Christ. The redeeming blood washes away our sins (1 John 1:7; Rev. 7:14), whereas the water of life washes away the blemishes of the natural life of our old man, such as “spot or wrinkle or any such things” (v. 27). In sanctifying the church, the Lord firstly washes away our sins with His blood (Heb. 13:12) and then washes away our natural blemishes with His life. We are now in such

a washing process in order that the church may be holy and without blemish.

If we had the nourishing and the cherishing without the cleansing, our problems would remain with us. The Lord's nourishing and cherishing always issue in His cleansing. In the process of spiritual metabolism brought about by the cleansing, the "germs" in our being are killed and the negative things are discharged. Through the nourishing and the cherishing with the cleansing, we become healthy and strong. In the meetings the cleansing takes place within us unconsciously. The more we are nourished and cherished in the meetings of the church, the more we are cleansed metabolically.

### The Laver

In a very real sense, the Word of God is a laver. According to the Old Testament, the priests who served God in the tabernacle had to have their sins dealt with by the blood on the altar, and they had to have their defilement dealt with by washing in the laver. I believe that Paul's concept here is that the church is cleansed by the laver of the water in the Word. Hallelujah, we have the real laver! The priests had only a type, a material laver made of brass. But we have the real laver, the laver in the Word of God.

As the priests in the Old Testament came firstly to the altar and then to the laver, so we come firstly to the cross to be saved, redeemed, and justified, and then we come to the Word to be cleansed. Day by day, morning and evening, we need to come to the Bible and be cleansed by the laver of water in the Word. By coming to the Word in this way, we are cleansed from the defilement we have accumulated in our contact with the world. Whenever you contact the world in the course of your

human living, you need to come to the Word to be cleansed.

### Washing and Renewing

According to verse 5, God's salvation is also through a certain action: the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. In Greek, the word for regeneration in verse 5 is different from that for born again (1 Pet. 1:23). The only other place this word is used is in Matthew 19:28 for the restoration in the millennium. Here it refers to a change from one state of things to another. To be born again is the beginning of this change. The washing of regeneration begins with our being born again and continues with the renewing of the Holy Spirit as the process of God's new creation to make us a new man. It is a kind of reconditioning, remaking, remodeling with life.

Baptism (Rom. 6:3-5), the putting off of the old man, the putting on of the new man (Eph. 4:22, 24; Col. 3:9-11), and transformation by the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2; Eph. 4:23) are all related to this wonderful process. The washing of regeneration purges away all the things of the old nature of our old man, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit imparts something new—the divine essence of the new man—into our being. In this is a passage from the old state we were in into a wholly new one, from the old creation into the status of a new creation. Hence, both the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit are a continual working in us throughout our whole life until the completion of the new creation.