

WORD FOR THE DAY: Expiation

April 5

“...our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” Titus 2:13b-14

“Out damned spot,” says Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare’s play, “Macbeth.” She has been unable to sleep since committing the murder of King Duncan, but when she does manage to fall asleep she is plagued with a nightmare about the blood she has shed. In the scene, she feverishly rubs her hands, trying to rid herself of the stain of her sin.

The scene illustrates the way our sinful condition fuels one of our greatest fears: being exposed for who we really are. The impurity in our hearts leads us to walk in places of darkness, deception, and guilt. On top of that, we sinners tend to isolate ourselves, either denying our brokenness or laboring to hide it. It’s a grim way to live, knowing we are impure, but trying to prove we are not.

Titus 2:14 states, Jesus Christ *“offered himself to purify a people for himself.”* This phrase is intended to remind us of the old covenant, and in the old covenant there was every type of cleansing, sacrifice, ceremony, offering, and washing, yet these activities were never intended to actually accomplish purification. None of the rituals and sacrifices actually finished the job, and that’s because God had given the ceremonies and offerings of the law to His people, not to make them cleansed, but to show them their need for cleansing.

As the fulfillment of all those practices, Christ’s shed blood fully cleanses all to whom it is now applied by faith. This idea of cleansing our sins is the doctrine of **expiation**—the doctrine that says through the sacrifice of Jesus we have been purified from the defilement of our sin. By Christ giving himself on the cross we are made clean—whiter than snow. Spotless. Blameless. Pure. What the blood of bulls and goats could never do, Jesus did—once and for all.

REFLECTION

- Instead of submitting them to Jesus, what are the ways you try and cover your own impurities?
- Read 1 John 1:7-9. What action does this verse pair with purification?

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus to cleanse me from sins by his blood. Empower me to live in purity and to confess my sins to you and others. Amen.