

Bible Basics Conference 2010: Results of Christ's Death

Part 9

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[00:00:00] Previous speakers have already mentioned that there are a lot of interconnections between the subjects that we've been considering, the results of Christ's death.

And as I was preparing this session, that came across to me very much.

We've thought about sanctification, both positional and practical.

And there are connections between practical sanctification and the matter of cleansing. And Brother Nick also mentioned some of the issues that I hope to cover in this session about our enjoyment of God's things.

And they were also covered to an extent by Brother Jeff. But it's good to reinforce these things to see that what the Lord Jesus has accomplished [00:01:06] for us by his death is something which should have a practical effect on our lives now.

Subject of cleansing.

This little fellow, or maybe a girl, I don't really know, I can't tell very well, perhaps someone might put me right on that, has obviously been cleansed, has been washed. And that's the position of every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. Cleansing is a wide and important subject. A holy and righteous God cannot have fellowship with us if we're unclean, and we ourselves will not be at ease in his presence unless we're clean.

But there are different kinds of cleansing. So the Holy Spirit has used different words in connection with it, such as these in the New Testament. Now I'm not going to try and pronounce that word, but it describes being cleansed from [00:02:07] sin or defilement, and it's the Greek word that's used very often in the New Testament for cleansing.

This word, luo, I think, to bathe or wash all the body.

Just what's happened to that child. And then this word, *nipto*, I think, to wash part of the body.

So instead of being washed all over, bathed, just to wash your hands or maybe your feet. And then the word for sprinkling someone or something, and that's the end of the Greek lesson.

That's the Alpha and Omega as far as the Greek lesson is concerned. So let's start the subject of cleansing. The perfect starting point is the tip of a spear.

John's Gospel records that after the Lord Jesus died on the cross, one of the soldiers [00:03:04] with a spear pierced his side and forthwith came there out blood and water.

John chapter 19 verse 34.

This must be very important because John adds, and he that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

That's the next verse in that Gospel.

Blood and water.

Blood and water are the two agents God uses for cleansing. Blood, and here's a verse which shows us this, the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.

[00:04:01] And that word cleanseth means that's its property, that's its characteristic. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanseth us from all sin.

That's the character of the precious blood of Christ.

Water.

Here's a verse which tells us about water being the cleansing agent God uses.

Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, Ephesians chapter 5 verses 25 to 26.

And that was the first word from the Greek we had up on the previous slide, to cleanse from sin.

It's the main word the Holy Spirit uses in connection with both cleansing by blood, cleansing [00:05:07] by water.

The great cleanser. We've had two cleansing agents, blood and water, but who does the cleansing? Don't worry about this chap here, we'll talk about him in a moment. The Lord Jesus is the great cleanser because in 1 John chapter 5 verse 6 it says this is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ.

Not by water only, but by water and blood.

Later on in that chapter it says these agents are witnesses to him. It says there are three witnesses,

the spirit, but also the water and the blood and these three agree in one, they come to one conclusion about the Lord Jesus as the great cleanser, [00:06:06] the one who makes us thoroughly clean for the presence of God, the Holy Spirit, the water and the blood.

And the two witnesses are conveyed by the fact this chap's looking through binoculars. Let's look at the blood first, John chapter 19 verse 34. In that verse from John's letter we saw he mentions the water first and then the blood.

And it's a theme in John's letters, indeed in his writings generally that he deals with the question of what the water speaks about.

It's something which occurs throughout his writings, particularly in his gospel. You'll find water in very many chapters of John's gospel. [00:07:02] But in that chapter we read, in that verse we read from chapter 19, the blood came first.

And perhaps we shall see the reason why later on. As we've seen, the blood of Jesus Christ, his, that's God's son, cleanseth us from all sin. If there's one matter we want to emphasize here, it's the importance of the blood. We live in a day when people speak about Christian things, they're very reticent to speak about the blood of Christ.

There's a reluctance to say anything about his blood. If you listen to his word being spoken about on the radio, you'll seldom hear the person speaking say anything about the blood.

It's a sad thing that today the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is not mentioned explicitly [00:08:02] in public preaching generally.

And yet, it's the most important thing that we can think of when we consider our salvation, as we're going to see.

And it's very important for cleansing. And the Old Testament symbolized it.

In Hebrews chapter 9 verse 22, almost all things are by the law purged with blood. In the law, when things were to be purged, almost in every case, it was done by blood.

But of course, we know that it was the blood of animals. This point has been made several times. They looked forward to the precious blood of Christ, because it's not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin.

Yes, their blood couldn't purge, as it says in this verse, the writer to the Hebrews, [00:09:03] writing to them says, purge your conscience from dead works. Only the blood of Christ can do that. And we see immediately, we're dealing with this matter of our sense of being guilty, of being wrong with God. We have it on our conscience. And as a result, we can't feel free about approaching God. We can't feel at home in his presence, because we know we've got our sins on us. We need the precious blood to cleanse us in the sense of purging our conscience from dead works.

We need the precious blood of Christ.

As we know, there's the loaf and the cup at the breaking of the bread, the Lord's Supper.

And the cup speaks to us of his precious blood that was shed for us.

[00:10:06] It's not very, I don't know if that's coming out very clearly, but hopefully, the cleansing value of the blood, the cleansing value of the blood lies in the value of the one who sheds it.

That's very important.

The blood of the Lord Jesus is precious because of all that he is in himself. He is God over all, blessed forevermore.

But he became flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of grace and truth.

In him, those disciples saw one and only begotten with a father.

The greatness of his person has given the value to his sacrifice and the precious blood he shed.

And that, of course, is mentioned in 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 19, as we've already seen [00:11:07] in earlier sessions.

Being shed, it's the evidence of his perfect life poured out in death before God and for us. In Leviticus chapter 17, verse 11, we learn that the life of the flesh is in the blood. So when the blood is poured out, it shows that life has been laid down, has been poured out for us.

John chapter 19, verses 33 and 34, we've already seen are the historical record of this happening when the Lord Jesus gave his life on the cross. In Leviticus chapter 16, verse 14, on the day of atonement, the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat and seven times before the mercy seat, showing that God was satisfied and we can be perfectly happy, satisfied as well with the sacrifice he's made for [00:12:05] us. Once for God, seven times for us before the mercy seat. We have acceptance before the presence of God.

And this verse reference from Luke chapter 22 is wrong, it should be verse 20. The Lord Jesus spoke of the cup and said, this is the blood.

This is my blood, which is poured out for you. Poured out for you.

Recently, well, not that recently, you'll remember a film was made of the death of the Lord Jesus, which I haven't seen, but to all accounts and purposes, it dwelt on what happened to the Lord Jesus from men.

And as I understand it, great emphasis was placed on what he suffered at the hands of [00:13:04] men and the blood that was shed that was involved with that, the scourging, even the crucifixion.

But it's interesting to note in the gospel, there's no mention of the blood of the Lord Jesus in connection with any of that. The blood which saves us is the blood that was shed from his side after he died. The evidence of his precious life laid down and it's that which cleanses us from all sin.

And it cleanses us once for all when applied by faith, just like the people in Egypt, they put the blood on the doorpost, the lintels, we've had that already, but in every other occasion where a Passover

was held, that was never done again. It was only done once when they were in Egypt. [00:14:03] And it's so for us. We don't have to keep applying the precious blood of Christ to our lives. Once applied, we are cleansed from sin.

We no longer have an evil conscience before God.

And these other verses emphasize that fact.

So why after all that, that cleansing by blood, why do we need cleansing by water?

Well in Hebrews chapter 22, in Hebrews chapter 10 verse 22, we get the two brought together. Let us draw near.

There's plenty of lettings in Hebrews. I won't try and explain that, but let us draw near.

[00:15:02] It's great to hear the writer to the Hebrews encourage us to take advantage of our Christian privileges and responsibilities.

And we can do that because we've been cleansed. We've been made right for the presence of God. Let us draw near with a true heart, a heart which enters into the things that God wants us to enjoy in full assurance of faith, not doubting God and his word. Having our hearts sprinkled, that refers to the application of the blood. Sprinkling is often to do with blood.

We mentioned that earlier on in another slide.

It's been applied to us, that precious blood. We're under its shelter, we're cleansed by it.

And we no longer have an evil conscience, what I was mentioning just a moment ago. [00:16:01] That conscience has been cleansed. We don't feel any more that we're unfit for the presence of God because we've been cleansed from our sins.

But he adds here, and our bodies washed with pure water, precious blood, pure water, bodies cleansed or washed with pure water.

And often when we think of the body in connection with scripture, it's about what we are, what we are and how that is worked out practically in our lives. And we're going to come on that onto that now.

The precious blood deals with the guilt we feel for the wrong things we've done, sins. And the blood cleanses us judicially, it puts us on a right basis with God and once done, [00:17:03] it's done forever. It doesn't have to be repeated.

But the pure water deals with our nature and circumstances by cleansing us morally.

We've already had this distinction, what we've done and what we are and what comes out practically from what we are.

So we need to be cleansed judicially, that's the blood side of things and we're going to see that's fundamental.

But we also need to be cleansed morally.

And these two things, they result from the death of the Lord Jesus.

Had the Lord Jesus not died on the cross and shed his precious blood, we couldn't be cleansed either way.

So let's look at this moral cleansing in more detail. It takes two forms, new birth once for all.

[00:18:06] There has to be a thorough cleansing in the sense that we are given a new nature. We're going to come on to that in a bit more detail in a moment. But there's a verse which speaks about it from James's letter. But we also need ongoing cleansing, experience throughout our lives. And that we can see from these verses, one of which we've read already. But the other one is in Psalm 119 verse 9.

And I think even the youngest person could quote this one to us. But I'm going to read it out to make sure we get it absolutely correctly right. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed there too according to thy word.

That agrees with Ephesians where we saw the washing was by the water of the word.

[00:19:06] Just a few words about new birth. It's God's work within us by which he imparts a new nature which is incorruptible by the Holy Spirit using the word of God.

We see that in John chapter 3 where the Lord Jesus spoke to Nicodemus. Doesn't refer to baptism. If you think about the words the Lord Jesus uses to describe new birth, you'll see it can't possibly refer to a baptism.

It was something that was spoken about in the Old Testament in Ezekiel chapter 36. And we get it again in this verse in 1 Peter 1 23. Let me read that one out as well. 1 Peter 1 verse 23 being born again new birth born from above as the Lord Jesus speaks about it in John's Gospel chapter 3.

[00:20:01] It's the same work being born again not of corruptible seed.

You immediately get the thought there of that which is clean not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God. There you see the word of God again is the agent by which this happens which liveth and abideth forever through his word in the power of the Holy Spirit. God does a work in us which brings about this new nature this nature which is entirely clean as opposed to our human nature.

What we are naturally which is so spoiled by sin.

It's fundamental moral cleansing and foundational to all else that should follow in our Christian lives in the power of the Holy Spirit including the ongoing moral cleansing which I'm just [00:21:02] about to speak about. Those verses show that God has begun a work in us that starts with this work of new birth.

Ongoing moral cleansing. While we continue to live in a sinful world even though we've been born

again we need ongoing cleansing from the defilement we pick up on a daily basis. We've already had this verse mentioned in John's first letter but in 1 John chapter 1 verse 9.

If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

That's something that we have to do on a regular basis as Christians through our lives. When we fall into sin we have to confess our sin and we experience the cleansing effect.

[00:22:09] God uses the same agent for this but he uses a new birth the word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We've already mentioned a number of these verses already.

Something I haven't put on this slide but I want to mention too is that we've talked about new birth being brought about by the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit but sometimes we forget that this is important for the fact that as Christians we're indwelt by the Holy Spirit another consequence of the work of the Lord Jesus upon the cross now that he's gone back to heaven. But how can the Holy Spirit be at home in us except by the fact the Lord Jesus has shed [00:23:03] his precious blood for us cleansed us from our sins judicially but for the Holy Spirit to have that place in our lives he wants to have not to be grieved as we have it in Ephesians chapter 4.

We have to know what it is to have this ongoing moral cleansing too else he will be grieved and won't be able to use us for his service reminds us a bit of the dove that Noah sent out from the ark it couldn't find a place where it could stay on that earth straight away but that earth had to be cleansed before that was so.

We can learn these things too from our Lord's lips the difference between new birth he that is washed and this is the word for bathing all over need is not saved to wash part of [00:24:07] your body his feet so the Lord Jesus is making a distinction there in the upper room John chapter 13 between being washed all over new birth and then the ongoing moral cleansing that happens after that and we can see another aspect of ongoing cleansing from that chapter after that he pours water into a basin and began to wash part of the body his disciples feet if I wash thee not thou has no part with thee we cannot have communion with the Lord Jesus unless we have this ongoing moral cleansing in our lives equally in John chapter 15 now I eat clean the Lord Jesus says through the word which I've spoken unto you they have been made completely clean as the Lord Jesus had spoken to them God had done a work in [00:25:01] their hearts as disciples but every branch that berry fruit he the father purge if it that's that ongoing cleaning process I know often we look at this word as just meaning pruning but it means really washing cleaning the vine or the branch so that it brings forth more fruit now you say to me well how are these things related to the death of Christ simply because we saw that when the spear pierced the side of the Lord Jesus forthwith there came out blood and water so that every action the Lord Jesus does in regard to cleanliness has its righteous foundation in the fact that he died on the cross without his death there could be no new birth as well as no judicial cleansing from sin and there could be no ongoing these things all eventually go back to the death of the Lord Jesus upon the cross God [00:26:03] couldn't act in these wonderful ways of grace towards us in cleansing us in any way at all had the Lord Jesus not suffered and died for our sins upon the cross some pictures to help us take it all in this is the law of the leper book which is available at chapter 2 and now the good book dealers but the cleansing of the leper two birds were used one was killed it's

blood sprinkled on the leper to cleanse him the other was set free flew up into the air in fact you can see it just to the left of the title the law of the leper it's not a smudge it's a little bird flying in the sky and they're all looking at it this is a dual type of the Lord Jesus who died and rose again delivered for our offenses raised again for our justification when the leper was [00:27:07] then brought into the camp of Israel where he had to shave and wash himself and his clothes self-judgment on the eighth day there were more ceremonies including the application of blood and oil to his right ear right hand and right foot judicial cleansing and the gift of the Holy Spirit affecting the whole course of a person's life so in picture form we have these things being brought before us in the cleansing of the leper who is a voice obviously a picture of the sinner keep looking at the Old Testament the red heifer the ordinance of the red heifer now what was this about numbers 19 perhaps a young one's thinking I've never seen anything about this well the red heifer provided a water of separation for purifying any one of the people of Israel who got defiled in the wilderness they were going through the wilderness they might come across a [00:28:03] dead body they might then be defiled by touching it that's a matter of ongoing cleansing but the heifer had to be killed its blood sprinkled and the rest of the body burned before its ashes could be used mixed with the water to produce this water of separation that speaks about the death of Christ so the death of Christ is the foundation which then allows there to be a water of purification for ongoing cleansing for the people of God as they go through this world another case to look at the consecration of the priests Aaron and his sons were bathed all over new birth and had the blood of the sacrifice judicial cleansing and the oil the gift of the Holy Spirit applied to them but whenever they served God in the tabernacle after their consecration [00:29:01] they had to wash their hands and feet in the labor ongoing cleansing in order to serve God and that's what the Lord Jesus was speaking about the importance of washing the feet not literally of course but washing the feet now in a spiritual way in order that we can have part with him individually and when we're together as his people gathered to his name so ongoing cleansing does find its basis in the work the Lord Jesus did upon the cross and once again I emphasize this point that's been emphasized already keep short and thorough accounts with God and each other we were talking a couple of us earlier on we often think about keeping short accounts with God and that's fundamental [00:30:04] 1 John 1 9 comes to mind but we need to confess our faults to one another when we go against one another and there is a problem which can cause a root of bitterness which can defile many so we need to know ongoing cleansing as something not only relating to God himself but relating to one another and in the ordinance of the red heifer the water of separation I spoke about was applied on the third and the seventh days it wasn't just he didn't quickly run over and quickly douse himself and then go back into the camp and say I'm okay now folks it had to happen on the third day and the seventh day and cedar and hyssop and scarlet were used in the burning of that red heifer the cedar speaking of the greatness of man the hyssop his smallness in contrast with the greatness of God [00:31:06] the scarlet all that distinguishes him as a particularly in relation to kings it brings before us the fact that we have to have judgment as to what man is in the presence of God and self-judgment as to ourselves there has to be a thorough work a real confession if we're to know cleansing in its fullness and the same applied in the cleansing of the leper it just wasn't something you did routinely or carelessly or quickly or briefly it had to be a thorough matter it had to be a matter of thorough self-judgment and confession in order to know fellowship with God and with one another being restored Peter's case is an example of this when Peter denied the Lord Jesus the Lord Jesus looked at him [00:32:02] the way between the Lord Jesus and his disciples suddenly opened up God arranged it of course the Lord Jesus was being abused by the leaders of the people while Peter just a few yards away was denying him cock crew Peter saw the face of the Lord Jesus he knew what he had done he went bitterly and went out into the night that was the start of the work of cleansing moral cleansing that had to happen to Peter but he didn't stop there there had to be that personal interview we don't know anything about with the Lord Jesus on the day of his resurrection and then still there had to be another work publicly

before the other disciples the Lord Jesus spoke to him Simon son of Jonas love is thou me three times it was a thorough work [00:33:02] if Peter was to be restored not simply to communion with his Lord but service for him yes it's very important to see that cleansing not only gives us a good conscience as believers to be in God's presence and to be together but to serve him too so the Holy Spirit can empower and direct us in our lives for him perhaps we lack power in our Christian lives because we don't attend to this matter of ongoing cleansing you can look at those verses later on I'm sorry that's a bit of a shortcut but we've run out of time unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood the foundation for all of this is the shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus that has cleansed us judicially before God [00:34:03] has dealt with our sins which offended God without that being done we couldn't know any of the other blessings that we've been thinking about today and this should cause us to respond to God in worship unto him that loved us loved us so much he washed us from our sins in his own blood I know some people say this isn't the word wash they say it's the word freed loosed us from our sins I can't comment on that but I'm just going to take it as it is in our Bibles washed us from our sins his love was so great it caused him to be willing to shed his precious blood to wash us from our sins shouldn't that cause us to respond to him in our lives to keep to keep to keep ourselves [00:35:02] to keep ourselves clean so often it's difficult in this world at the moment well it's going to be until the Lord Jesus comes you know because the world has been designed by Satan this world system to make us really dirty that's what the devil wants to do to each young person he wants to trip them into into the mire into the dirt of this world because he knows that if they're in that even though they're saved even though they're going to heaven they will be seriously compromised in their lives for him until he comes let's let's let's realize the importance of cleansing both that judicial cleansing once for all that foundational moral cleansing of new birth but also very importantly that ongoing cleansing which we should allow the Lord to practice in our lives and use others [00:36:08] to help us in our lives and be willing to be used by him to help others in their lives so that they might be for his glory