

THE WORD OF GOD – OUR BASELINE FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Part 2: The word of God cleanses us

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“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations” Exodus 30:17-21

A way into the tabernacle passes through the gate of the court. The priests would go through the gate to minister to the Lord. The first article they would find in the court was the brazen altar or the altar of burnt offerings. After slaughtering the animals for offerings the priests would bring on the brazen altar all the items to be burned on the altar as Moses the servant of God had commanded. This was their daily duty. Aaron and his sons were dedicated to this priestly ministry. They would burn the items on the altar and the smoke would ascend to heaven. This would offer a sweet fragrant to God in heaven.

The next step was to bring the blood of the slaughtered animal before the Lord in the tabernacle. You will imagine that slaughtering animals, cutting pieces necessary for the burnt offering and waving those that needed to be waved before the Lord would by no means leave the workers thereof dirty with blood. I can picture them standing with their feet sunk in blood mud, slaughtering and skinning those animals as they walked about doing their priestly business.

From the altar of burned offerings they must proceed to the tabernacle to continue ministering to the Lord. They have just been walking around in the blood-soaked soil and must now enter into the presence of God to present the blood for atonement. Between the altar of burned offerings and the tabernacle of meeting there was a bronze laver filled with clean water. Before the priest could enter into the tabernacle he would have to wash himself of all the soil and dirt he picked up in the process of his business. The bronze laver was for that purpose; to wash and make one clean before he ministers to the Lord.

The water in the bronze laver stands for the word of God. What a perfect illustration for us to comprehend that before we could approach God we need to be cleansed. God is holy and those who come to Him must be holy as He commanded the children of Israel in Leviticus 11:44; “...*you shall be holy; for I am holy.*” The same command is reiterated in Leviticus 19: 2 and many other places throughout the Scriptures. “*And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.’*” God demands that those who would walk with Him be holy.

Holiness cannot be attained by any other means but by the word of God. Every time we engage in the word; be it in reading, studying or sitting under the teaching of the word, we are figuratively taking a bath. We are washing ourselves from the soil of the world. We all know that, in the natural; we cannot be clean until we take the water and wash ourselves. The body needs the water to be clean. Our spirits too need the word of God to be clean. We cannot walk with God unless we keep ourselves clean. We cannot serve God unless we wash ourselves by the water of the word. To the Old Testament priests, God said if they try that; they would die.

Where do we get cleansed? Is it in the body? No, it cannot be in the body for water can only clean the body and not the spirit and the soul. That is why when we get baptized our sins are not carried away by the water. It is the blood of Jesus that paid the price for our sins. Only the blood of Jesus can remove our sins. Water cannot remove one’s sins. Baptism is necessary but does not take away our sins. It is a symbol of something more than just washing. It is our identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We identify with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is subsequent to new birth.

Then, where do we get soiled and where should the washing take place? In the spirit? No, it cannot be in the spirit for Jesus said; “*you are already cleansed because of the word which I have spoken to you*” When we come to Jesus and receive Him as Lord and Savior, our spirits are cleansed. Jesus cleansed our spirits when we got born again. This is what He meant when He said you are already cleansed because of the word which I have spoken to you. Point taken, alright – but where do we get soiled, where are we suppose to wash and with what?

We get soiled in the mind and that’s where the washing must take place. The mind can be soiled by what we hear and what we see. Every time we are awake we are confronted with many things we hear with our ears or see with

our eyes. Impure things enter our minds through these sensory systems. The eye and the ear are gates into our minds. What we hear and what we see influence how we think. Sometimes we see or hear good things but many times we see and hear things that cause us to panic and be fearful. We hear things that condemn us; telling us that we cannot amount to anything in life. We see nothing but obstacles in our way. Did you know that what we see and what we hear resulted in where we are in life today? What we see represents the environment within which we live. What we hear represents what is happening in that environment. Hence it is said; a fish cannot grow bigger than its pond. You too cannot grow bigger than your environment. The problem is the type of the environment and what happens in that environment. A filthy environment will not only make you filthy but it will keep you filthy too.

How do we change our environment? Do we have to leave the place we live in and go some other places? Do we have to resign our jobs and look for a new job? How long have you been thinking about this? Quit thinking like that! The world around us makes us dirty but we don't leave to remain clean for there is no geographical place on earth we can go to, to remain clean. We reach for the cleansing agent and apply it. The cleansing agent in this case is the water. We apply water and become clean.

Like water, the word of God is a cleansing agent. Instead of cleansing our bodies it cleanses our minds. When we apply the word of God in our lives it transforms us – it changes us; first in the mind and later in every area of our lives. The bible says in Romans 12:2; *“be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* The word of God washes our minds. James says; *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”* James 1:21. The word of God is able to save our souls.

The word of God cleanses us and keeps us clean. There was a disciple in Jesus' team who refused to be washed by Jesus. (Remember that Jesus is the Word and water stands for the word) The name of this disciple was Peter. When he refused to be washed by Jesus; Jesus said to him; *“if I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”*

Friend; without the washing of the water by the word, we have no part with Jesus. We will remain poor, sick and frustrated until we are utterly destroyed. Let us come to the bronze laver and there we will find water to wash our minds. May we daily come to the word of God and wash our filthy and remain clean. Nothing in the whole universe is capable of cleansing our minds and

aligning it with the will of God except the word of God. All other things may try but they are not able to keep one in line with the purpose of God for one's life.