Brazen Laver - Christ Our Sanctification, Pt.2

By Charles Feinberg

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All washing of water, by the word. Ephesians 5:26 bears out this type. You see, the priests were bathed all over. We read of that in Leviticus 8 to 10. The priests were bathed all over at their consecration but they were to keep clean practically and daily. Notice this tremendous contrast. Don't miss it. In the Old Testament, the hands and feet were to be washed. That's clearly stated in Exodus. "They shall wash their hands and their feet there at, the labor, hands and feet." In the New Testament, John 13, it was only the feet. Peter wanted his head and his hands, also. No, no, no., only the feet. Hands, as well as feet in the Old Testament for a very valid and good reason because those hands had to be clean to prepare the sacrifices. The feet had to be cleansed because they became defiled with the dust of the desert and the uncleanness of the camp. In the New Testament, on the other hand, mark it, only the feet are to be washed because the hands are not needed to prepare sacrifices. Bless God. The great sacrifice has been sacrificed for us. Christ our Passover has been offered for us.

First Corinthians 5:7, "But the thief, mind you, do contract. They do gain defilement through the sin that we come in contact with in the world." Someone has well said there is much doing under the law whereas under grace all has been done for us. And if the walk is right, the work that we do afterwards will be acceptable. The application of the word to the heart cleanses spiritually and
morally as the spirit of God uses it. Christ is our sanctification. Yes. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord. So walk ye in Him. Now whence did they get the water? If the laver was to be for the purposes of washing where did they get the water? Now there's some who make the mistake, which I made for a long while in my early Christian life, of thinking that when we speak of a desert that we speak of a place that doesn't have a drop of water. That's not true. That's not true. A desert does not mean a place where there is no water. There is water, but it's so minimal that it is in desert conditions. But did the people of Israel get the water for the lavor from the scant rainfall they had in the desert?

No, the source of the water in the laver came from the smitten rock. You remember, Exodus 71, "and all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin. After their journeys according to the command of the Lord and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. Wherefore the people did strive with Moses and said "Give us water, that we may drink," and Moses said unto them, "Why strive you with me? Wherefore do you put the Lord to the test? The people thirsted there for the water. The people murmured against Moses. "Why hast thou brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle athirst." Or how terrifying is thirst that cannot be swayed. Moses cried out to the Lord saying what shall I do unto these people, they are almost ready to stone me! And the Lord said unto Moses, "Go on before all the people. Take with thee of the elders of Israel and thy rod where where thou smotest the river. Take in thine hand and go. Behold I'll stand before thee there upon the rock, and thou shalt smite the rock and there should come water out of it that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. That's Exodus 17:1 through verse 6. Yes, the water came from the smitten rock. The rock is Christ. The rock that
followed him was our Lord Jesus Christ. In first Corinthians the tenth chapter and the fourth verse we read the rock that followed them was Christ. There was an absolute necessity relating to the laver. It wasn't left to man's opinion to a vote of the majority. Have you noticed how many things in the Bible are indicated to be done by vote of the majority? No. God's truth is all, sadly enough, all too often in the minority now. They were to wash, not according to option or choice or predilection. There was an absolute necessity of the laver that they die not. Exodus 30 and verse 20, "when they go into the Tabernacle of the congregation they shall wash with water.

Why? "That they die not." Verse 21 - So they shall wash their hands and their feet that they die not." Yet, my dear friends, it was in plain English, it was a matter of life and death. A life and death matter. We likewise, if we do not keep clean we'll find that our testimony for God and our service for God will die. Yes it will be like the removal of the lampstand that was warned in the letters to the churches in the book of the revelation of the Apostle John. And if you've ever been over in those areas (some of us have traveled in Turkey) in the area of the churches of the revelation and I tell you frankly that testimony there for God as far as those early testimonies were concerned, the testimony for God has died.

Oh, you would scarcely know that they'd ever heard of the Gospel. Filled with paganism and with error. Yes. If we don't keep clean through God's appointed means we'll find that our witness for the Lord, our service for God, will die. And also, may not be a very comforting thought to dwell upon, but it's true. Also, not only will the testimony die. Sometimes physical death even occurs. That may ensue.
First Corinthians 11: 30, "Some of you are weak and sickly and some of you sleep. Some from among your own group have gone on to be with the Lord." Why? Because they were in sin and did not heed God's word, to be cleansed from sin. A Christian must judge self on the basis of the word. That's the beauty, one of the many facets of beauty of the Lord's Supper. We come to that supper and we have an opportunity to cleanse ourselves. We judge ourselves at the communion. I've heard Christians say "Well I don't believe I'm going to go to church because we're going to have the Lord's Supper, the observance of it. And I don't feel as if I'm in the right spiritual condition. I'm going to stay away." That's just the opposite of what God meant for you to do. You should go all the more and just before you partake or even before you go to church get the thing right and then partake in a worthy manner. A Christian has to judge himself on the basis of the word. That's the reason for the bronze that speaks of judgment. There was no other means. No. Oh, the priest may have tried to find other means for cleansing. This is the proper means. God is not interested in any one.

Well we say, I know a lot of other ways. No no, this is it. The word of God. Only the word will serve as the norm. Where with all so young man plans his way by taking he according to the where. Psalm 119:9, "Ye are cleaned through the word which I've spoken unto you. John 15:3. "And sanctified them through thy truth. Thy Word is truth" said our Lord Jesus in John 17:17. And then in the wonderful passage in Ephesians where we have what Christ has done, what he now is doing, and what he will yet do. You have the three tenses of salvation not just there in the second chapter of Ephesians but in the fifth chapter of Ephesians, in verse 25.
"Husbands love your wives even as Christ also love the church and gave himself for it." That's past. What's he doing now? "That He may sanctify and cleanse it with a washing of water by the word." There it is. That's the laver. And what's the future. "That he might present it in coming day to himself, a glorious church. Not having spot or wrinkle. The laver has done its work. Wrinkle, all the things that are displeasing have been ironed out by the pressures, the ironing out pressures of this world that God has permitted us to go through the trials and the testing’s. Not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

A young man's said to a grey haired friend who was advising him to study the Word of God, if he wanted to learn how to live he said if you want to learn how to live and be pleasing to the Lord, just get your Bible and stay with it. Oh, the young fellow said the Bible is so strict and so old fashioned. There are plenty of books written nowadays that are moral enough in their teaching. They don't bind a person down as the Bible does. The old man, a merchant, turned to his desk, took out two rulers. One of them was slightly bent. With each one of these he ruled the line and he silently handed the ruled paper to his friend. Well, said the lad, whatever do you mean. What's all this about. He says you'll notice one line is not straight and true, is it? When you mark out, young man, when you mark out your path in life, don't take a crooked ruler. That's right. Now what are the truths that are so beautifully evident here in this part of the Tabernacle? The bronze laver. Christ our sanctification through the spirit and the word. First of all, remember we are saved to serve. The laver was there for those who serve God. Israel had a serving priesthood. We are a serving priesthood as believers. We are a royal priesthood. A chosen nation. First Peter 2:5, "That we might serve the Lord our God." We're made priests to do
priestly service, and never forget it. We are not fit to serve unless we do it in the word. That means not just taking the Bible and opening and begin to tell the meaning of some verses. That's not just serving in the word. It means serving as you have applied the word to yourself. To yourself. And are cleansed by it. That is serving in the word. We are not fit to serve unless we do it in the word.

I remember years ago a woman consulted a famous New York physician about her health. She was a woman, you could see it immediately, of nervous temperament, to give the doctor quite a long list of her symptoms and she answered his questions and you can imagine her amazement at the end of their consultation when he gave her just this brief prescription at the end. "My prescription to you, I don't even need to write it out, I'll just tell it to you orally. My dear friend, go home, read your Bible, one hour every day. Then come back to me a month from today."

While at first she thought she might slap his face. She was very much inclined to be angry. Well then she thought her next thought was, well the prescription wasn't an expensive one so she couldn't lose anything and it wouldn't hurt her to try. After all he was a physician. She went home determined to read conscientiously her Bible that had been so neglected. In a month, she went back to that doctor an entirely different woman the minute she stepped into his office. The difference was evident and she knew it too and she asked him, "How did you know just what I needed?" The physician turned around to his desk and their worn and marked lay an open Bible. His answer to her was, "Madam, if I were to omit my daily reading of this book, the Bible, I would lose my greatest source of strength and skill. My emotional balance and poise." He was right. We are saved to serve. And we're not fit to serve unless we do it cleansed through the word. And then the laver tells us another truth. That those who stand before God must be clean.
There must be purity of heart. One little sinful act could make you unfit for service. Oh that which breaks our hearts and surely must break the heart of God, is that so many men are standing in a sacred place and the holy place of service and their lives are just steeped in sin. They're living in sin that is unspeakable. So much of it. And yet Isaiah couldn't be more clear if he tried. Isaiah 52:11, he says "Be ye clean. Cleanse yourselves, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord."

Friend, if you are going to engage yourself around the holy things of God, keep yourself clean by God's appointed method. If you don't want to, then in Heaven's name, keep away from the holy things of God and the service of God. Remember with the priest. One little sinful act could unfit for service. One refusal to wash of the laver would unfit that priest for service, and could even mean his death. Sin affects our relationship to God at once, said our Lord Jesus to his disciples, "Ye are clean through the word that I've spoken unto you."

There's no question what the cleansing agency is as the Spirit of God uses it. In Psalm 26:6, says the Psalmist David "I will wash mine hands in innocence. So will I compass thine altar or Lord. Yes, if you're going to be around the altar, if you're going to do this sacred work, then please be sure that you know something about the washing of the hands in innocence. There it is, Psalm 26:6. We must be clean through the word. There is no other way. There's only one way of cleansing. John 17:17, “Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. Only one Laver was provided. Only one was needed. Only one was authorized of the Lord. But this one authorized of the Lord did the job. Why look for any other one. Job realized that in Job 9 verse 31. "If I wash myself with snow and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch and
mine own clothes shall abhor me." You can't wash yourself some other way even with snow. Even with a lie. No, make my hands never so clean.

Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch. Mine own clothes shall abhor me. There's only one way of cleansing. It must be God's provision. Only one laver was provided. Only one was essential. Only one was needed. Now the washing was a matter of necessity and not of option. I repeat. Have you ever noticed how many things are spoken of in the Bible as necessities and how many are allowed as options, as opinions? It was the command of God, wash, that ye die not. Yes, if we say we do not need cleansing, oh there is difficulty, there is trouble. First John 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, the truth is not in us." That's if we say we have no sin nature. We're deceiving ourselves. If we say we have not sinned, in verse 10. "If we say that we have not sinned we don't have sin in action, we are sin both in nature and in practice." If we say we have not seen we make Him a liar. God says we have. God says all of us sin and fall short glory of God. Romans 3:23 we make God a liar. No man shall be guiltless who does that. And His word is not in us.

You don't know a thing about God's commandments, about God's word. Not God's expressed will, it was a command of God. Wash that ye die not. Matter of necessity, life and death, not a matter of opinion. The feet speak of our relationship as Christians to the World. Cleanse thou me, cries the Psalmist, from secret faults. Notice that in the altar, the bronze altar, a burnt offering, we have Christ as our justification, at the altar of Calvary. In the laver we have Christ as our sanctification practically and experientially. Someone may say well you shouldn't speak of
Christ as our sanctification. You should speak of the sanctifier is the Holy Spirit. But we not speaking of Christ as doing the work of sanctification without the accompanying work of the Holy Spirit. Notice how throughout this study we've been talking about Christ our sanctification through the working of the Spirit of God and the word. But to say that Christ isn't our sanctification practically and experientially is to misunderstand or to overlook. First Corinthians 1:30 "but of him of God are ye believers in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us." What is Christ, made by God, for us? Wisdom and righteousness, yes and sanctification and redemption. That according as it is written either he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.

Yes Christ is our sanctification through the washing of water by the word as the Spirit of God uses this marvelous means. The laver speaks of the blessed work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with that word. The spirit and the word of God are seen together in the scriptures as working together. The spirit uses it in his blessed working and uses it also in conjunction with our Lord Jesus. At the altar we see the blood of atonement. At the laver, we see the water of cleansing. Yes, we know it is by washing of water, of the word, and the blood of atonement that we have the wonderful cure of God for our sins.

In John's first epistle, it's in the last chapter of first John, first John 5 verse 6, "This is he that came by water and blood." Notice the picture there from the tabernacle "This is he that came by water and blood. Even Jesus Christ not only but by water and blood, and it is the spirit that beareth witness because the spirit is truth." Verse 8, "and there are three that bear witness in earth. The Spirit and the water and the blood. And these three agree in one." Notice. Water and
blood, water and blood. The word is a mirror. We can see ourselves, but we can also see Him.
Thank God. Yes, in 2 Corinthians 3:18 "we behold with unveiled face, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. We are changed from one degree of glory to another as by the Lord, the spirit."
Someone has well shown that we need clean hands. For what? For acceptance.

In Psalm 24, for instance, you have the mention of cleansing for that wonderful precious truth of acceptance before God. Asking a very vital question there in Psalm 24, it's come up very prominently. Who can approach God? It's very, very much to the fore in Israel. Psalm 24 verse 3 and 4, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place." That's more than being identified as a Jew or not a Jew. It's who can get to God. Where is the access? Verse 4, "He who hath clean hands." We need clean hands for acceptance. "He who hath clean hands and a pure heart who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity neither sworn deceitfully for the first thing he who hath clean hands. We need clean hands for acceptance. We need clean hands for increased strength and oh how weak so many are. Someone had said if you go into a town and it's a small town and there are five churches you'll find four of them dead and the fifth one breathing hard. Oh how we need clean hands for increased strength.

Job 17:9. The righteous also shall hold on his way and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. Yes, we need clean hands, not only for acceptance, not only for increased strength, we need clean hands for drawing nigh. In James 4:8, we read, "draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners and purify your hearts ye double minded." Yes, cleansing of the hands for drawing nigh under the Lord so that we do not find ourselves heapian
upon ourselves judgment. And then we need clean hands not only for acceptance, increased strength, and drawing nigh. We need clean hands for worship. We've already brought before you Psalm 26 and verse 6 that it is the one who is cleansed that can worship in the proper way.

I will wash my hands in innocence, so will I compass thine altar, oh Lord. We need this wonderful privilege. This wonderful blessing of God of cleansed hands for worship and then we need the clean hands also for reward. In the historical book of 2 Samuel, it's toward the end of that book in the 22nd chapter, we read in verses 21 and 25 of the need of clean hands for reward. In 2 Samuel 22 and verse 21 the Lord reward me according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. Verse 25 "therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness according to my cleanness."

It is eyesight right. By God's grace, friends, let us believe as believers. This is for believers, I repeat again, let us as believers who have accepted the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross at the altar. Let's be careful that we're being daily cleansed by the word that is the laver. Thank God there is going to come a day when the laver will have served its purpose. It will have accomplished what was in the Mind and Heart of God from all eternity. Where do you find that? Revelation 15: 2 and 3 were shown a sea of glass. First verse reads Revelation 15, this is the preparation for the pouring out of the bowls of God's wrath, and then beginning with the next chapter verse 16,
Chapter 15 verse one says, "I saw another sign in Heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, filled up the wrath of God.

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image and over his mare and over the number of his name standing on the sea of glass having the harps of God. Yes. Where were they standing? They were standing on the sea of glass and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the Song of the lamb saying great and marvelous are thy works. Lord God Almighty just and true are thy ways. Thou king of saints. They're standing on the sea of glass having harps of gold. It's not only a laver now filled with water. It's a sea of glass. No need to be cleansed from defilement there. More often, as we said, that the water of the laver was troubled, the better. But no need to be cleansed from defilement there. The sea of glass reminds us the Laver has finished its work. Sanctification is complete. It's been swallowed up now with complete sanctification which is glorification. It is consummated sanctification which is glorification and glory. The Redeemed will no longer need cleansing from defilement. Not a bit of it. They'll be nothing to hinder praise. Nothing to hinder worship.

The sea of glass will bring to mind how graciously the Lord cleansed us throughout our earthly pilgrimage and sojourn. How he provided for that so needed, a provision for our daily walk in fellowship with Him, cleansing in purity of heart and mind and spirit. Thank God for this provision. Augustus Toplady, doubtless, had the tabernacle service in mind and especially in his hymn on Rock of Ages, that old and well-beloved hymn Rock of Ages. Doubtless, he had there
the whole picture of the tabernacle, the services, Christ our sanctification in the laver. Christ our justification in the altar. The altar and the laver. How do you know? Listen to the words, Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee. Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed. Notice what it is the water and the blood. Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed. We have seen both the altar and the laver had in mind sin at the altar of the sin of the unbeliever. The Laver, the cleansing of sin from the believer, be of sin the double cure. Save from wrath. That's at the altar, and make me pure. That's at the laver.

We repeat. Rock of Ages cleft for me. Oh never sing it again, friend, without realizing the beautiful truths that you have from the tabernacle service. Rock of Ages, cleft for me let me hide myself in thee. Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed be of sin the double cure safe from wrath and make me pure. Our Gracious God and Father in heaven how shall we ever praise thee in time sufficiently for the marvelous provision at Calvary and for the altar of burnt offering. All that it means in time and what it will mean giving us access for eternity. How we thank thee for it and thank thee for him of whom it speaks. And then we thank the now for the bronze laver, Christ our sanctification through operation of the spirit of God in conjunction with the word. Oh to be clean, oh to hear the word. Take time to be holy. Speak oft with thy Lord, that we be found in the place of communion, in the place of cleansing, that the water of the word that we apply to our hearts, not just look for some message for our Sunday School class., or our young people's group or our lady society or the missionary group or pastors, Christian workers for a message at the mission, the rescue mission, or elsewhere or in personal work. But may we apply it to our hearts that we may be clean before the living, holy God granted our father. We pray with thanksgiving, in Jesus precious name, Amen.