

Being A Clean Person

(A Closer Look Into The Spirit Of Our Walk In Christ)

Preface

I have recently read a book by R. T. Nusbaum entitled "The Ashes of The Red Heifer". The Lord has used that book powerfully in my life. The impact of the view of Christ that was presented in that book has deeply affected how I want Jesus to live through me to others. Although this article was not written in any way to comment on that precious booklet, I would strongly suggest that you read it first in order to better define some of the concepts that are being referred to in this booklet.

"And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons who were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at evening" (Num. 19:18-19).

"Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt" (Lev. 4:12).

"Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Is. 52:11).

"As the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord" (Is. 66:20).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17).

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (II Cor. 7:1).

"Husbands, love your wives, even as 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" (Eph. 5:25-26).

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but to be separated unto Him" (I Thess. 4:7).

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13.-14).

Introduction

In Christ, we are a Body and we need each other. Christ's Body is purposed to manifest His Life, therefore all members are meant to work together towards the health and edification of the whole. Because the spirit in which the Body edifies itself is love (Eph. 4:15-16), we care for one another's lack. We do this through the cherishing of washing rather than through condemnation with its debilitating influences. The truth we speak one to another is in love. Pointing out one another's blemishes and examining our outward lack does not heal our need. We need the care and Life of Jesus that can only be found in and administered through His own Body. God's Life must be applied to those members that need the cleansing and edifying influence of the Living Christ. God does this by vessels through which His love can flow. Because these members are motivated by love, they will seek to cover and edify the weaker members rather than expose and condemn them. There are certain scriptures that define such a person as being "clean" (see above references). Most certainly we are clean only through union into Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. This is ours through faith in the operation of God. Yet the particular emphasis of this article specifically relates to the scriptures that define the ministry of Life that flows through those who walk in Christ's attitudes and thereby can administer His Life to others. Their relating to others is clean from the defilement of fleshly resources and responses.

Being a clean person is not related to how many times we have washed our hands in a day or if we have bathed recently. Being a clean person is not someone who strives within himself or herself to attain a status of sinless perfection. Very simply, being a clean person is someone who is filled with the Life of Christ, and through whom His Life can flow forth to others. Jesus Christ is the only "clean person" and He is the fulfillment IN US of walking as a clean person. In essence, our cleanness is not sinlessness, but the Spirit of Christ in us that fulfills all requirements of both God's nature and laws.

A sign of someone who is walking as a clean person as defined above is that they can be around people that are manifesting the defilement of the old nature, and rather than becoming dirty themselves, bring healing and cleansing to all those around. It is clear that a clean person does not contract bad attitudes from those who are infected with fleshly issues that bring death. Rather than being dragged down "into the dirt" they bring the cleansing influence of the Life of Jesus that is able to wash those they come in contact with.

Walking In Life And Peace

As vessels of the Life of Christ we bring healing and cleansing to all those around us. Wherever we walk we are carriers of the influence of God's abiding Life. Only a vessel that is being motivated by the Life of Jesus within (clean person) and unhindered by the flesh (not walking after the flesh) can do this because they in themselves are not touched or entangled with the carnal viewpoint of these things. It is important to understand that the "carnal viewpoint" is not just rank bad attitudes, but the knowledge of good and evil that can appear to be very right at times. If our eyes are "filled with the dirt" of an earthly viewpoint, then we must first go to the water of the Word and wash away that carnal

viewpoint before we can expect to help our brothers. If we cannot judge our brother properly in Christ it may be because there is a blockage in our own eye (Lk. 6:41-42). If we choose to ignore a sense of dirtiness in our view of others and continue to embrace the mind of the flesh, then we will be unclean in our walk and only bring defilement to those we come in contact with. There will be a sense of defilement when we operate outside of the spirit of Christ even though we may be functioning in the things of God. God will give us a good bath and wash away these critical attitudes and cleanse us with His Word, for He is our Husband as defined in Ephesians 5:25-26. By the blood and through the Word we can walk with one another again in light (I Jn. 1:7, Jn. 15:3).

The Bride of Christ is called the New Jerusalem in the scriptures. Peaceful Jerusalem has waters to draw from that increase the peace of the city rather than sowing discord. Her waters are sure for they flow out from the inward fountain that is Christ her Life. As we release and wash in these waters, dirty viewpoints fall away and the city of God is made glad. Many times we may want to pray away the attacks of the enemy rather than praying for the peace of the Jerusalem that is His Bride. She can remain in peace under any siege if her waters continue to flow.

A clean person should be able to walk into any situation and bring the influence of Life and peace to the people and environment. This happens not simply by trying to have some kind of a “positive attitude” but through being governed by the indwelling nature of Christ, the Spirit of the Lamb. It is not that we figure out how to act certain ways and then learn to respond “correctly”. We must understand that Life can only be administered through Christ. Rather than seeking to order or change our outward methods, we can choose to bear in our being the Spirit of Christ, Whose attitudes and actions are undefiled for He is the Lamb in nature.

He Came Not To Condemn But To Give Life

"And He came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases. And they that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him; for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all" (Lk. 6:17-19).

Those who were vexed with unclean spirits, defiled and torn with disease and infirmity were drawn to Jesus. Unclean people were drawn to Jesus. They wanted to be in contact with Him, to hear His words and feel His touch. What came out of Jesus was not rejection or repulsion at their wretched state, but the virtue of His Life that reached forth and healed them all. Because Jesus truly was a clean person, people that were dirty received cleansing and healing by Him and not condemnation.

To look at the people in this multitude that were drawn to Jesus, one might assume that they were only seeking Him for a miracle to meet their need. Although that might have been the case for many of them, it is still true that they were drawn to Him and in making contact with Him found that virtue flowed out from Him and into them. I believe this

speaks of more than a supernatural gift of healing but reveals the outflow of virtue and love from the Lamb of God when He comes into contact with those who need Life.

Whether man is motivated by a temporary touch or a desire to receive Christ as Life, virtue will flow out of Jesus regardless. It is true that we can seek Jesus and be drawn to Him for only a touch. If that is the case, then our situation or issue may be temporarily "healed", but the inward nature that produced these problems will still continue. God understood that only when Christ, the only clean person, became sin and bore all disease in His own body would people be able to find true healing through His Cross from the source of all sin, the old nature. This clean Person became sin and was crucified as a criminal so that we could partake of His Life and be made clean. Jesus, the only just man had to be crucified on a tree before the death of all mankind could be permanently healed. Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so that all those who were vexed with serpents and defilement could be healed, even so also the Son of man took on all the uncleanness of mankind. Then He was lifted up on a pole so that all who would look upon and believe in Him would not perish in their own death but have eternal life. God's love gave His spotless Lamb so that defiled people would not perish but have Life through Him. His whole desire in this was not to condemn the unclean and defiled, but to give them Life through His Son (Jn. 3:14-18). Jesus showed us how a clean person truly functions, and Jesus in us will be the only nature that is clean for He alone is the Lamb.

Immediately after demonstrating the way a vessel of Life functions to those without life, Jesus lifted up His eyes upon His disciples and began to speak wonderful words illustrating the way that His Life would be in them (Lk. 6:20-42). He told them to love their enemies, do good to those who violate them, bless those that curse them and pray for those that would spitefully use them. He told them to judge not and condemn not, but forgive and show mercy. These words define the very Spirit of Christ in someone and how that nature responds to those who bring defiling attitudes and actions against us.

The Wife Of The Sacrifice

The Bride of Christ is called the wife of the Lamb in the scriptures (Rev. 21:9). Because the Lamb is God's sacrifice given for all men, you could say that She is married to the Sacrifice. She has not just been touched by His Cross, but brought into union with His sacrificial Life. She has chosen to know Him in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death. She has become united in oneness with His self-giving nature and bears that image. As She walks She brings the healing properties of the Lamb to those who need help. These healing properties are distributed to the "poor and needy" through her attitudes and ways. The Lamb is released in these small things and those around her are touched by the virtues of His Life.

The Bride contains her Bridegroom Who is specifically referred to in the scriptures as the Lamb. She bears in her own body the dying of the Lord Jesus that others might have Life (II Cor. 4:12). God gave us His Life through delivering His Lamb up to death (Is. 53:10). The spotless Lamb was slain so that God could distribute Life to those who were dead. In

this same heart and mind the Lamb's wife distributes His Life to others as she is motivated from within by His self-giving Lamb nature.

The Soul Must Be Denied

In order to walk in union with Christ as a clean person that bears His nature, the soul must be DENIED. Our soul will seek pity and mercy and become hurt by those it was meant to bless. This soulish and self-centered hurt can cause us to self-protect unless we have truly conformed to the sacrificial nature of the Lamb. Pain does not require one to stop washing and administering grace to others. Pain can be part of bearing one another in love during a time of lack and need. We must bring the influence of God's tender mercies into the situation rather than taking personal offence and bringing in those defiling influences. Others cannot be washed by His living waters through us if His Life in us is hindered through personal offense and hurt. Our words and responses will be mixed because these elements will immerge even though the counsel given may be doctrinally correct. To be a vessel of His pure and living words we must first be clean ourselves by allowing His Word to wash away our own defiling attitudes and issues.

Our waters will be bitter and not sweet for others if we do not apply the "wood" of the Cross to our soul life (Ex. 15:23-25). The poisonous influence of the carnal mind must be removed through the application of the Cross internally. We can choose to abide in Christ's attitudes of Life rather than yielding to the pressure of our own soul to become offended. We must realize that it is possible to bring defilement into the very situations that has God purposed to use us in to bring Life.

It takes a clean person to be able to "absorb" someone's defiling attitudes and turn his or her cheek in love rather than becoming bitter. This process involves denying the soul's need to be vindicated. We must choose to forsake its need of proper treatment according to the knowledge of good and evil (carnal mind), and we must also identify in a living way with the Lamb, thereby allowing the mind of Christ to direct our responses.

Even though these situations can try our souls unto death, we must personally deliver our souls up to the death of the Cross rather than the defilement and death of the flesh. Very simply, we must first apply the Cross to our own soul-life before we can help anyone else. It is hard to offend a dead person, and impossible to draw malice out from the Lamb. We must deny our soul life and pick up the nature of the Lamb or we will not walk far on this path. It is a very narrow path and can seem like a foolish road to take in the midst of so much injustice. Our eyes must see only the Lamb, and our hurts must become filled with the light of His Life to truly understand the situation. The way of all flesh is to naturally veer off course and become offended seeking personal justice rather than walking the way of the Cross. If we allow our flesh to lead us in the wrong direction, then we will receive defilement and no longer be able to walk as a clean person in this way or continue to function as a vessel that edifies others.

Dying Is A Part Of Being Clean

We now exist in union with the Sacrifice Himself. As one with the Lamb, our lives are therefore given for God and others. Jesus did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and give Himself as a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28). Some may be motivated to find a life in Christ, but when Christ becomes our Life, the Life we receive is sacrificial. Very simply, we have received the Life that loses itself so that others will gain! This will disappoint the person who seeks God to gain personal stature or increase. Yet this Lamb nature is the Life we bear among the brethren and should also be our viewpoint in the midst of these situations. What once was the sacrifice for us will now become the sacrifice in us. We eat the Lamb and then we begin to act and walk like Him, for He is living through us. What we eat will dictate how we walk. What once was the sacrifice for us will now become the sacrifice IN US for others. The Cross becomes more than the work of our atonement, but the way of our daily walk and relating.

True righteousness is embodied in the Lamb who forgives even the most defiled in attitude and action. We were not “off in sin” but “dead in sin” when Jesus gave Himself for us. We are now ONE with Christ, and He demonstrated His response toward that which was dead wrong before us at Calvary. Our Redeemer is also our example, and our example should now be functioning as our life.

Moses Our Example

Lest we consider ourselves above failing on such a course as being clean for others, let's take a look at Moses in Numbers chapter twenty, verse one. Moses was to stand as a minister on behalf of God for the people of Israel as they journeyed to the Land of Promise. Even as the blood and water flowed out of the side of the Crucified Christ, God asked Moses to strike a rock so that water could flow out of it to wash the congregation. Moses was not just to function as the leader performing his duties, but as a clean person to keep the congregation in life. Yet at this point his spirit became tainted by the rebellion of the people and therefore his administration of the water was defiled. Because Moses was angry with the people he smote the rock twice. Even though the water gushed forth abundantly from the rock, the way it was administered through Moses was unclean. Think about it, a massive amount of living water still needed a clean person to distribute it to others. Our doctrine may be spotless, but our spirit needs to be Christ as well. It's not the outward adornment of proper doctrine that makes the vessel clean, but the indwelling spirit of Christ that sanctifies the vessel for proper service.

It is no small thing to comprehend how millions of defiled and grumbling people would vex anyone's soul. We must understand that it is beyond our personal ability to be clean. ONLY Christ within will produce the attitudes necessary to properly distribute His Life to others. Even the most humble man on the face of the earth needs the Life of Christ within in order to be a clean person!

If our touch is not Christ through us, then we will bring defilement to those we are supposed to bless. God gave Moses a simple lesson to help him learn this. He told Moses to put his hand into his bosom and take it out. When Moses did so, his hand was leprous as snow. Then God asked him to put his hand into his bosom again, and this time his hand was clean. We must think of Moses and learn from his lesson. Rather than putting forth the hand of leprosy that comes from our own bosom, we should extend forth our hand as a vessel of the Life of Christ that is within (Ex. 4:6-7). Rather than becoming discouraged or working on personal improvement we should focus on allowing the Christ that dwells within us to come forth.

An Undeclared Mind

Our enemies are not the people around us, or the situations that arise. Our worst enemy is our own soul and unrenewed mind. When we become at peace in oneness with the Lamb and have received His "slain" mind, then we will be at peace in the midst of death and chaos. The mind of the Lamb is a "slain" mind in the sense that it is always giving itself for others. We "let this mind be in us" through being renewed in the very nature of our thought life. Only the mind of Christ in us has this nature and will turn from itself to the needs of others. As we let His mind function in us then we will become agents of God's resources to others.

We must deeply know that the carnal mind is GOD'S enemy. It wars against God's Seed in us, and can prevent God's Son from functioning through us. It circumvents the Son and uplifts the ways of the flesh (death) because they may "seem right unto a man". We may claim we love Jesus – but do we love him enough to cast out this mind of bondage that wars against the Seed, and cast down every thought that comes from it? Christ as Life is the crown given to those who press in to lay hold of Christ in the midst of such internal and external opposition. It is our calling to not just believe in, but lay hold of eternal life.

We must forsake our own right to meditate on injustice or the sting of those who mistreat us. We must choose to lose our freedom to secretly walk in realms of the death that defiles while professing things of life. In essence, a person may sprinkle clean water, but if it is administered in an unclean attitude, the effect of the cleansing is no longer "good". Not only does the water need to be clean, but the way it is administered by the person needs to be undefiled. Only by Christ as our Life can our handling and administration of His living Word be clean. Truth is like a dead corpse if the Spirit of Life does not fill it. Jesus Himself told us that His words were spirit and life for they were not empty and void of the Life they represented (Jn. 6:63). God's words can only be applied correctly when they are administered in oneness of kind!

The greatest teacher is example and the greatest influence is an out-poured life. We may want to evangelize the world, but are we willing to do it at the cost of pouring out our soul unto the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are we willing to let go of and lose the companionship of a carnal mind? May we wait upon the coming forth of His mind in us, knowing that at all times we never have to let go of our faith embrace in Christ as one.

We can know with all our hearts that hoping will not make us ashamed – but that God’s love will be poured into our hearts and out to others (Rom. 5:5). Though some may yet be living in barrenness or with Ishmael, it is our place to cast out Ishmael and through faith receive strength to bring forth this Seed (Gal. 4:30, Heb. 11:11).

Cleaning Up Messes

So how can we clean up messy situations? Through Christ we can bear the mess and die. Where is the dirt found that makes these messes? On the earth! Rolling around in and immersing our thoughts with the things of this life and the woes of this world will defile us. Whether things on earth appear good or evil, it is not where we should gather our information. The eyes of “how we understand things” should be opened by the Holy Spirit to see how the Lamb through us can bring the influence of Life into all these things. In His light alone we will have light and be able to walk properly on earth among our brothers and sisters. Our place is heavenly places in Christ. Our reality and realm of motivation is there alone. The earth is the place for Him to live in us and manifest His life-giving nature to and for others. To look not at the temporal but stay focused on the eternal will keep us clean as those that edify the Body of Christ, administering His Life to the members that need Him (II Cor. 4:18).

Ward Off Infection

“Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean” (Jn. 13:10).

Everybody’s feet get dirty just from normal contact with the earth. Jesus told His disciples this would be so. It is important that we do not let our contact with the dirt of our walk in this life bring offense and contamination that can turn into inward infection. Remember the admonition given to us in the Book of Hebrews concerning the effects that a root of bitterness can have on the whole? It will defile many (Heb. 12:15). We must not allow these things to take root in the ground of our heart and mind. We must stay washed with the mind of Christ. If something begins to bother us that we cannot seem to get rid of, then we must SCRUB with the Word of God until it is gone! How can we cleanse people with wounds if we ourselves are wounded?

Am I My Brother’s Keeper?

How can we live as a member that edifies one another if our own righteousness stands independent of the state of our brother? To know that our oneness is not only with Christ the Head but also with His Body (Jn. 17:21), will cause us to look at one another differently. How can greater honor be given to weaker members if we walk in disdain towards them because they have not yet fully matured (I Cor. 12:23-25). As the strong ones care for the weak ones, the “whole body is compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of each part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16). Part of the benefit of being one Body is that nourishment, strength, and vitality can flow from the stronger

members into the weaker ones so that the entire Body may be at health in oneness. To reject offence and criticism will help you remain a member of the Body through whom nourishment can keep flowing through into the other members. A clean person will minister to Christ by washing his brothers and sisters for he has comprehended that the Body is one with the Head (Christ) and treats them as such.

The Cross and Contamination

If you have ever tried to get rid of head lice you would know that if you don't get everything clean you can re-infest yourself and others. Avoiding constant re-infestation requires cleaning everything, however, it also requires not having contact with, using or wearing anything that was contaminated with lice for two weeks. During this time the lice will die off due to lack of sustaining contact. This simple example can show us how important it is to "stay clean" rather than having occasional clean moments towards others that can become defiled later by re-contaminating the contact with fleshly responses. Occasional moments of "cleanness" with someone are quickly forgotten when the defiling influences of the flesh infect them again later. If we allow hurtful and carnal thoughts or hidden grudges to remain alive within us, then we will easily become re-infested with bad attitudes and stop walking as clean towards others. We can cast down that thought before it re-infests us! Don't be in fellowship with those who sow seeds of discord among the brethren! If we demand other's perfection before we can show forth Christ to them, then we have not yet understood they way of the Lamb.

The book of Leviticus has a lot to say about thoroughly dealing with infection, fleshly issues, and other such issues of uncleanness. If you read through these scriptures in Leviticus you might be amazed at how thoroughly this subject of removing all contamination and uncleanness is dealt with (Lev. Chapters 13-15). It is important that we thoroughly deal with these situations that can arise. The Cross did not just crucify the old man, but buried him out of sight. As we deal with these things through the Cross of Christ, we will not only see them as dealt with through the death of Christ, but also buried with Him from our sight and remembrance. We bury things so that they are put away. That which is buried can no longer be touched or looked at so that we will not become re-contaminated by it.

Next Contact

Clean means the next time we see or talk to someone who just abused or mistreated us, we are not still bitter, angry and offended. Between times we have been sprinkled and washed in the water of the Word and are filled and refreshed with His Life. We are now ready for human contact again that will bring no defilement but the healing flow of His Living waters through us. Rather than allowing a relationship to be torn down more through further defiling contact, we can begin the process of building it back up into Christ through releasing into it the healing properties of the Lamb.

Maintaining For Seven Days

“He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself on the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean” (Num. 16:12).

We have been discussing the importance of remaining clean so that we don't get re-infested. Because Christ is that clean person in us, we must understand that it is a process for His Life to be formed in us. We will “continue” in this process of being cleansed by His Word until the Son within frees us from our old ways (Jn. 8:31,36). The number seven speaks of completion, and shows us the necessity of continuing with the Lord and receiving of His cleansing Words until Christ is formed in us.

As we administer Christ to those who need the washing of His Life, or receive that washing from others, we will experience a refreshing in that relationship because of His healing influence. There will be a time of clean and pure communion after the blood and flowing water mingled with ashes has been applied. Even though such a time can be refreshing, we must remember that if we are not yet governed by the Mind of Christ through His Life being formed within, then the bond of the relationship can still become defiled by the knowledge of good and evil. Therefore a sense of dirtiness may return to the connection and relationship. Until the Eternal Spirit of the Lamb Who is our purity becomes formed in us as our very way of relating, we must assume there will always be frequent trips to the altar and a continual need for forgiveness and cleansing. This process must go on “until it is finished” and Christ is formed. We must maintain a constant cleansing of each other until He comes forth. Remember, God's love in us suffers long, endures all things, and believes all things! We can love each other through the whole process!

Maybe Peter began to realize that this process of forgiving one another during the process could go on for a long time and happen over and over again (Mt. 18:21-22)! So Peter came up to Jesus and asked if he should forgive his brother up to seven times. Jesus told Peter to forgive until seventy times seven. Jesus was not concerning about the amount of forgiveness that would need to happen, but that we remained with each other in love until Christ came forth.

A Clean Person Gets Dirty

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness” (Mat. 23:25-27).

A clean person will get dirty because they will bear with those that are defiled. Through God's love we can bear abusive attitudes without malice and become a vent for anger,

hurt or even boiling hatred. It is not our place to listen to criticism that defiles, but we can absorb these reactions towards us in love and reciprocate with tender mercies. Jesus took on our diseases without sprouting a root of bitterness and carried all of mankind's hatred into death so that life might come in its place. Through Christ we can touch leprosy without becoming contaminated and become a vessel for healing rather than increasing the disease.

The Pharisees would make sure the outside of their cup was so clean, thinking this would maintain holiness. They would avoid contact with "dirty" people for the fear that it might contaminate their "vessel" and mar their "holy status". But Jesus became sin so that we might become righteous in Him, and instead displayed the spirit of true holiness. A holy man is not one who stands alone in his own spotless and sinless perfection; a holy man is one that has so separated unto the spirit of the Lamb that he will become marred that defiled people can be brought back into life.

Those With An Issue In The Flesh And A Clean Person

"And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God" (Lk. 17: 11-15).

Ten people with an issue in their flesh (leprosy) came to a clean person, Jesus Christ. This clean person was surrounded with nothing but leprosy. These lepers had nothing to offer Him but the need involved with their fleshly issues. Jesus did not lecture them, rebuke them, or try to find benefit for Himself or His ministry from what they could offer. They had nothing but defiled flesh to bring to Him, and yet Jesus cleansed them all. Only one of them returned to say "thank you". This man was touched by something deeper than just receiving a healing. Possibly this man was affected by someone who would respond with such grace and love to those so undeserving. This leper was made whole! When someone who is defiled gets touched by the sweet care of Christ through us, they will not only be touched by His healing but influenced by the very Nature of God's Person. Some will then reach past the touch to embrace the Person of Christ.

God's Work In His Son To Make Us Clean

In the beginning of this article we defined how faith in Christ pronounces us clean. It is the outworking of His Life in us that brings forth a walk that allows us to function as a clean person to others. In this little section we will "recap" and expand just a bit on the reality of what Christ has done to make us clean through His Cross.

The scriptures talk about the "body of sin" that was crucified through the death of Christ on the Cross. Isaiah 1:5-6 describes this body of sin as, "The whole head is sick, and the whole the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." In Romans chapter seven Paul is found crying out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" And in Romans 6:6 the scriptures declare, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin is destroyed, because of this we shall not serve sin.." From these scriptures it becomes obvious that the sinful body of the old man is the source of all uncleanness. It is when we touch him through identification and partaking that we become defiled. In the same sense, we can only become clean by identifying with Christ in the Body of His Resurrection.

The issue of clean or unclean is completely dealt with and settled through the Cross of Christ. We become confused as to our own status because we do not know what manner of man we are in the Resurrection and therefore continue to know ourselves and others after the flesh.

When Christ became the sinful man at Calvary, He crucified and terminated the old man's outbreak of contamination into those who would be made new in Christ. We are made clean because we are united with Christ in the Body of His resurrection. By God accepting us in His Beloved Son, He has now called us clean. This was hard for Peter to understand in Acts chapter 10 because clean and unclean were always related to some tangible thing in the earth rather a spiritual work in Christ. It took God's divine intervention to help Peter begin to understand how all men who have faith and identify into Christ are now made clean through union. First the heavens had to be opened to Peter and then he had to watch the Spirit accept the sacrifice of Cornelius' prayer. What Cornelius offered was not unclean because he was a gentile, but accepted by God because of His faith in Christ.

In a similar manner, we may likewise feel alienated from God and unclean by the sin that yet remains in our lives. But, even as the gentiles did, it is our faith in the Son that brings us into Life and therefore makes us clean. It is the Lamb of God that is accepted and not our own righteousness. We are clean because of our approach to God through faith in Christ. As Christ is formed in us He will begin to order our walk after the nature of His indwelling Life. At this time not only our status in Christ is clean but our walk in Christ is clean also!

We will not be able to walk as a clean person if we choose to know our brother's and sister's in Christ after the flesh. We must see them as clean because they are one with

Jesus. When they forget “who they are in Christ” we must lead them to again embrace their identity in Him, and therefore put off the old man and his deeds. A clean person will wash them with the water of the Word that declares their oneness with Jesus. By applying His word in this way, we wash away the dirt of a false identity. We are applying to one another’s heart and conscience the reality of who we really are. This purifies the faith that had become defiled and weakened by identifying with the dead corpse of the body of sin rather than the risen Christ (Acts 15:9).

Our power is not in overcoming sin but in identifying in Christ. God does not tell us to die the death of Christ that put away the body of sin so that we might be clean. He asks us to know, reckon on and believe that we are dead with Him and now alive through Christ (Rom. 6). Faith is our part for he has dealt with the body of sin for us. Our activity now is to walk in the Spirit allowing His Life to come forth as we wash each other with the reality of this living union.

All of this is to say that as we wash each other in the spirit of Christ with His words of union and life, we are not "helping out defiled sinners" but nurturing and caring for Christ's own body. Our ministry is then one of love rather than condemnation. We are functioning as members one of another washing each other's feet in Christ’s words of acceptance and union. The more we separate our heart and mind to God's view and nature, the more we can effectively care for one another in His love until we “all come” (Eph. 4:13). Remember, clean people are not critical of others, but found cleaning others. Clean people humble themselves, stoop down, go right to the dirt, and begin washing (Jn 13:4-5). Clean people are motivated by God’s love!

In Conclusion

In conclusion let's remember that the clean person in Numbers 19 applied blood, water, and ashes. As we allow Christ to form in us, an ever greater expression of His nature will come through us towards those who need Life. Oh what fellowship to conform to the image of Christ so fully that we could bring and apply the spirit of His death to others in such measures. Only the Lamb in us will fulfill these requirements for He Himself is all of these things. May we bear Him to our brothers, and carry in our being the Eternal Spirit that ever brings life to those who have gone outside of this way (Heb. 5:2). May the grace of God be with our spirits.***