

**Hebrews 1: 3 and 9; “Christ’s Purging Our Sins”, Sermon # 4 in the series –  
“Holding Fast our Confession”, A Communion Sermon delivered by  
Pastor Paul Rendall on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018,  
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

As I begin this message, each one of us here needs to ask ourselves this question; whether Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, has purged our sins? Has He taken away your sins; even yours? We know from many portions of Scripture that He has made the necessary satisfaction for the punishment due all elect sinners. But has Jesus Christ died for you in particular? Have you come to true and saving faith? Have you received Him and been given the right; the authority, and the power to become a child of God? That is the all-important question which each of us must answer. This is what we want to examine more closely at this time. 1<sup>st</sup> of all – We want to look at the factual reality of our sins being purged. Then 2<sup>nd</sup> – We will look at how Christ continues to build righteousness into our lives by His purging us of our sins. And then 3<sup>rd</sup> – We want to see that it is the gladness of Christ to give you, the believer, gladness. May the Lord help each of us to better understand what it means for our sins to be purged.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Factual Reality of our Sins being Purged.** (verse 3)

It says here in verse 3 - “Christ being the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” These are the facts of what Christ did to procure the blessings of salvation for us. God the Father spoke the Incarnation of the Son, His only-begotten; who was brought forth from all eternity, having agreed to perform this mighty work of our redemption in time and space. “When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” (Galatians 4: 4) In order to purge us of our sins, Christ had to take upon Himself human nature and come into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh as a little baby.

Think about Isaiah 53: 1-3 – “Who has believed our report?” “And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground.” “He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.” “He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” “And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him.” And verse 8 – “He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation?” “For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken.” Jesus grew up as a tender plant from God. We would see nothing special about Him, but He would be the One, and the only One, who could come and be “cut off” for our transgressions. He was not cut off because of His own sins; for He had none. And so God highly exalted Him for this blessed work; declaring Him by His resurrection to be our only Savior and Lord. He is to be worshiped and His name is to be magnified and adored for this greatest of all works!

This, His work of redemption, is a finished and completed work. At the cross, His work was to “finish the transgression”, it says in Daniel 9, verse 24. He would “make an end of sins”. He would “make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness”. He would seal up the vision and prophecy, and anoint the Most Holy place”. He did this by the shedding of His own precious blood. He purged our sins there at the cross. This word for purged is “katharismos” in the Greek. Webster’s Dictionary says that it means: “to atone for; to make satisfaction for; to extinguish the guilt of a crime by subsequent acts of piety or worship, by which the obligation to punish the crime is canceled.” That is what Jesus did in living His life, always loving God with all of His heart. That is what Jesus did at the cross, when He in love,

suffered there for our sakes. He knew that we could not save ourselves, or change our own heart. He knew that each one of us was too weak spiritually to accomplish the changes that were needed. But the Dictionary also goes on to say that it means: "To expiate guilt or a crime, and it is to perform some act which is supposed to purify the person who is guilty." It is some act which is accepted by the offended party (God) as satisfaction for the injury (our sins against Him); that is, by an act by which His wrath is appeased, and His forgiveness procured.

It is this use of the word "purify", in both of these senses, that I would like us to think about now. In the New American Standard this sentence in verse 3 is worded, "When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." So to "purify" in this sense means to expiate, or to atone for. It means to give cleansing of sins. I believe that this includes not only the cleansing of the conscience of the believer in his or her initial conversion, where the believer exercises faith in the finished work of Christ at the cross and is justified. But I believe that it also means that Christ made an atonement (a covering of grace) for the on-going purification of our heart. Christ works in our hearts to bring us to the place where we will consciously and deliberately deal with all the remaining corruptions of our heart. He sees clearly whether we are taking up the good work of mortification of sin. And He and the Father and the Holy Spirit see when we do not take the initiative to put to death the deeds of the body.

God then chastens us for our good, so that we might share in His holiness as it says in Hebrews 12: 10. His atonement for sin is not a covering for sin, that we might continue in it. It is a covering so that we might come to a true and thorough repentance over every sin. It is a covering also for our righteousness, which is as filthy rags in His sight. His atonement covers all the lacks in our obedience; all the ways that we fall short of the glory of what He is doing in our hearts and our lives. This is what Jesus died to purchase for every believer. He meritoriously has purged us from our sins at the cross. He then faithfully applies the merit and the favor of His suffering on our behalf; to us when we are converted to Christ, and also as we walk with Him every day.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 6: 9 – "Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" "Do not be deceived." "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." "And such were some of you." "But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." Not only is there justification mentioned here, but there is also sanctification; the Spirit's washing our heart clean, and our being is set apart to all of God's good purposes in relation to what we will become as Christians; that is, our pursuing holiness and Christ-likeness. This work of the Spirit, based upon Christ's purging of the believer's sins at the cross, really gives them the sufficient and powerful grace to be changing in their heart and life to become a person whom God is pleased with; not just a person whom He accepts. It is a most wonderful thing to be accepted by God; to be justified in the sight of God. But it is also a very great thing to be sanctified; to be being transformed into the image of Christ, by His powerful working.

In Hebrews Chapter 9, verse 11 it says, "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation." "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." And in Hebrews Chapter 9, verse 22 says – "And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission." (That is; there is no forgiveness and no cleansing of the heart) "Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

You and I who believe in Jesus Christ's sacrifice and offering up of Himself at the cross for our sins; we are the "heavenly things" spoken of here. We are destined for heaven and for eternal glory because of what Christ has done for us in His purging of us from our sins. Because He has done this work at the cross, we are forgiven, we are justified, and we are being sanctified and we are being made "vessels" who are fit to spend eternity in the glory of heaven with Him. Our sanctification, our being made holy, our becoming more holy, without which no one shall see the Lord, is all based upon the sufferings of Jesus at the cross. Will you not glory in these facts of your salvation? Jesus has suffered so that you might be forgiven. Jesus has suffered so that you might be pure and holy and be called one of God's saints.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – I would like us to see how Christ continues on in His good work; to build righteousness into our lives by His purging us of our sins.** (Verse 9)

"You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than Your companions." We who believe in Jesus are called His companions here. It says that Christ has been anointed by the Father with the oil of gladness in relation to what He has done for sinners at the cross, and His ability to apply His great redemption to His people's hearts. It gives Him gladness to be able to purge His people of their sins in an on-going sense, so that they will become branches of His own faithful vine, and learn to bear fruit in righteousness for Him to the glory of God. You can see that this is the sense of the word "purge" or "purify" which is given to us in an illustrative form, in Jesus' teaching in John 15, verse 2. Jesus says there – "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it (kathairo) so that it may bear more fruit." The King James Version says, "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

Now, if you are a true believer in Jesus Christ, then God will not only forgive you of your many sins; but Christ Himself will also purge you, or prune you, of all those sinful things that you might be trying to hold on to, after you are converted to Him. This is done so that you might bear even more fruit for Him. Christ purged us from our sins once for all by the shedding of His precious blood. But the efficacy of that blood continues to be applied to the many areas of the your life that need to change, so that you will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Christ knows those thoughts: those desires of sin that still lurk in your heart, and He knows that it will bring harm to your soul, and to your fruitfulness in His service if the guilt and pollution of sin are not dealt with, as often as necessary.

And so, as we confess our sins, He purges us of them. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light; we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse (katharizo – His blood makes clean, and purges and purifies) from all unrighteousness." Again, this means to purge and to purify us from the polluting effects of our sins in the everyday, most practical sense. And as you examine yourself, you may find that you have many sins of your mind and heart that need to be cleansed. These need to be purged from you in order that you might truly honor and serve Christ with your life.

Remember David's prayer in Psalm 51, verse 7? "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." "Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice." "Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities." You see, there was at least one major time in the life of the "man after God's own heart" when he needed to pray in this way. But I am saying that there are many times in the life of a believer when he should examine himself and when he should pray in this same way. Let me ask you now: Do you pray in this way when you find sins that you are committing in your heart? Christ

has purged the sins of all of His Elect people at the cross. But He died so that you would learn to pray yourself; pray to be cleansed and purged of sins of all sorts.

The way that you know if you are a true Christian is whether Christ's power is at work in you to bring you to repent of every sin, and not to hold on to one of them; no matter how you have treasured it in the past. The apostle Peter in his 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle says in Chapter 1, verse 5, says – “But also for this very reason (that is, because we have been given many precious and magnificent promises and by them we have escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust), we are to give all diligence, to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control perseverance, and to perseverance godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” “For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then he says – “For he who lack these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed (that he was purged) from his old sins.”

Are you cleansed from your old sins? Are you being cleansed and purged from sins as you discover them in your heart? Christ is the One and the only One who can cleanse you from all of your sins. We must ask ourselves these questions because “the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Christ's kingdom”. If Christ has died for your sins, how can you still live in them? If Christ loved righteousness and hated lawlessness while He walked here upon the earth; then shall not we who walk the earth now, do the same? These words describe for us the essence of Christ's holiness. He loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. This is what He would have you to pursue. With these thoughts in our minds, let us come down now to the Lord's Table.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – We want to see that it is the gladness of Christ to give you, the believer, gladness.**

Look at verse 9 once again. Speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, it says, “You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” I want you to see here that there was a reward for Jesus' love of righteousness and hatred of lawlessness. It was that He was anointed with the oil of gladness more than His companions. It was because He loved doing the right things and hated even the thought of doing the wrong; that He lived the sinless life that we celebrate today. It was because He loved doing every particular of the Father's will, in the keeping of His commandments, that God gave Him this greatest of gladness in His heart. It was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross and despised the shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne on high.

The word, “Therefore”, in verse 9 of our text is the word that determines when Christ became the recipient of this gladness. It was after He had finished His work of redemption that He received this reward. It was when He was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven that He became the recipient of the greatest gladness that any man has ever known. This is what the Father bestowed upon Him, and this is what has given the Lord Jesus the greatest gladness of any man. It was His being able to open the door of eternal life to you, and to pour into your heart the blessings of the salvation of your soul from beginning to end. He does this for every one of the multitude of believers whom He, as the One Mediator between God and men, brings to God. God the Father anointed Him with this gladness which He still has, even today, in bringing the reality of these spiritual blessings to us here this morning who are gathered in His name. He has the oil of gladness above any other man. But He chooses to share that gladness with us in His giving the gift of His Holy Spirit to you. We who have believed in Jesus are His companions, and because of His sufferings, death and resurrection, we shall be His friends forever.

Let us rejoice and be glad for all the eternal and everlasting good He does for our souls. And, let us study to love righteousness and hate lawlessness, even as He did. If you love Him you will

keep His commandments,” He says in John 14: 15. “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.” He is the One who lives in Your heart and who can give you continual joy and gladness for what Christ has done, what He is doing, and what He will do for you. For He has anointed you with His Spirit.