

## Sermon #3 — *Leviticus*

Title:        **IDENTIFICATION**

Text:        Leviticus 1:1-5

Subject:    *Faith in Christ*

Date:        Tuesday Evening — April 10, 2018

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Mark Henson*

Introduction:

**Nothing is more glorious, more mysterious, more instructive, or more comforting to believing sinners than the identification of God's elect with Christ our Redeemer.** Every saved sinner, every believing soul, is one with Christ. The Scriptures constantly reveal this, but we have a terribly hard time believing it as we should.

- Eternal Union
- Obedience Union
- Redemptive Union
- Experiential Union
- Everlasting Union

**In the Word of God, you and I, believers, all believers, are constantly identified with Christ. And by God given faith we identify ourselves with him.** That is what is pictured and typified in our text

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— Leviticus 1:1-5. The title of my message is **IDENTIFICATION**. — **IDENTIFICATION** (Leviticus 1:1-5). Let's read the text together, asking God the Holy Spirit whose Word we have in our hands to be our Teacher, taking the things of Christ and showing them to us.

(Leviticus 1:1-5) “And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, (2) Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, *even* of the herd, and of the flock. (3) If his offering *be* a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. (4) And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (5) And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests,

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Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that *is by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

## **THE PICTURE**

The picture we have before us is that of a guilty Israelite during the days of the Levitical priesthood. The man was a sinner before God. **Atonement must be made for his sins in the way that God had appointed.**

- The sinner goes out to his fields and selects a lamb or a young calf to be his sacrifice of atonement.
- He brings his sacrifice to the priest and the priest inspects it to be sure that it is a perfect sacrifice, suitable for atonement.
- The guilty man then lays his hands upon the animal's head.
- Then the sacrificial animal is slain, slain by the hands of the man who brings it.

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- The priest takes his blood and sprinkles it upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle.

## **THE MEANING**

What does this all mean? What is the significance of this solemn ceremony? Why was it done? There are many lessons to be gathered from the various sacrifices of the Old Testament. The burnt offering, the meat offering, the peace offering, and the sin offering all have a distinct reference to some aspect of the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ. If in the minds of the priest and the worshipper they did not signify that one great Sacrifice who was to come, the Lord Jesus Christ, then they were mere empty rituals. Indeed, this is what they became during the days of Isaiah (Isaiah 66:3). **All those elaborate ceremonies and sacrifices of the Old Testament were designed by God to point men to Christ, the true atonement and propitiation of sin.**

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In this message **I want to take one part of this ritual and show you its typical meaning. I hope to be simple, clear, and forceful as I preach to you about our identification with Christ by God-given faith in his dear Son.** I am reminded of the prayer of a little boy I read about many years ago. One Saturday night before he went to bed he said in his prayer, “Lord, help the preacher that he may say something tomorrow that I can understand.” May God indeed help me that I may be as plain as a child’s first grade reader in setting forth the way of atonement by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. I tremble at the thought that someone might fail to see Christ because of the preacher’s colorful, eloquent, and high-sounding speech! May God give his servant great plainness of speech.

**There are some things, which are essential and vital, and some things, which are not.** There are some things which may or may not be true, and no great evil will come either way. But there are other things which are vital. They must be or everything is

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wrong. Some things are important for the well-being of our souls. Other things are absolutely essential to eternal life. **I will leave it to others to strive about those things that are non-essential.** Those things that are urgent, essential, and necessary weigh heavily upon me. Those vital things concerning life, salvation, and eternity, those urgent necessities, are the things that I want to press upon you. I have no time to waste upon trifles. I must drive right to the heart of the matter.

## **TWO VITAL THINGS**

Here are the two things, which are of utmost importance. I want to bring them constantly before the hearts of needy sinners. Without these two things you will perish. — **The precious blood of Christ and faith in that blood.** These were the two essential elements in the sacrifices of the ceremonial law. You have them both in our text

- **“He shall put his hand upon the head of the offering.”** — Here is the sinner expressing faith

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in the atoning blood of God's appointed sacrifice.

- **“He shall kill the bullock before the LORD.”** — That is a picture of the death of Christ, God's sacrifice for sin.

**God will never receive or accept any man, except through a Sacrifice.** God Almighty requires blood, either yours or that of a substitutionary sacrifice. Now, here is the marvel of God's wonderful grace. God has provided himself a Sacrifice for human sin! Behold, the Lamb of God! Jesus Christ, God's Own well-beloved Son is the Sacrifice, the only Sacrifice that God will accept.

- Christ is the Sacrifice God appointed and set apart.
- The Lamb of God was inspected by the high priests of Israel and found to be without spot or blemish.
- This Lamb was slain (Slain by men, the very men for whom he died under the wrath of God!)

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and accepted by God himself as a sweet-smelling savor.

**The Sacrifice was provided. He was slain under the penalty of the law. And God has accepted him.**

**Yet, there is one essential thing remaining, without which you will die. You must lay your hands upon the head of God's sacrifice. This is an act of faith.**

“My faith doth lay her hand  
On that dear head of Thine,  
While like a penitent I stand,  
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see  
The burdens Thou didst bear,  
When hanging on the cursed tree,  
And hopes her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice



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To see the curse remove;  
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,  
And sing His bleeding love.”

— *Isaac Watts*

**Proposition:** Faith in Christ was symbolized in the Old Testament by a man laying his hands on the head of the sacrificial lamb. — This is the one thing we must do. We must lay our hands of faith upon the head of Christ, God’s Sacrifice for sin.

**Divisions:** When a man came and laid his hands upon the head of the sacrifice, it meant four things to him.

1. Confession
2. Repentance
3. Transference
4. Identification

**CONFESSION**

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Picture the man now. He is standing beside the sacrifice, at the door of the tabernacle, before God's priest, and he lays both of his hands upon the head of that innocent animal. What does it mean?

1<sup>st</sup> — **It meant that he was making a solemn, sincere, and public confession.** This is what we do when we come to God, leaning upon Christ. We are making a confession to him.

**Laying my hands upon the head of God's Sacrifice, I am confessing my sins** (1 John 1:9).

(1 John 1:9) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

This was the foremost thing in the mind of the ancient Jew when he brought a sacrifice of any kind before the Lord. He was acknowledging his sin. The only reason I need a sacrifice is because I am a sinner (Leviticus 16:21).

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(Leviticus 16:21) “And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him **all the iniquities** of the children of Israel, and **all their transgressions** in **all their sins**, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.”

This is what I am saying. You must come to God confessing your sin. Those who lay their hands upon Christ must acknowledge their utter sinfulness.

### **Sin must be confessed fully.**

- I am a sinner by birth.
- I am a sinner by choice.
- I am a sinner by practice.

All that I am and all that I do is marred by sin. Like the leper, everything I touch I defile. All is stained by sin.

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And **we must confess our sin sincerely**. Sin with us is more than a theory. We have tasted its bitter poison. We have known and felt the evil of sin. **God's Lamb is given as a Sacrifice for sinners**. The righteous, the innocent, and the good have no need of him, and they cannot have him. The Savior is provided for none but sinners.

**Here is our true place**. We lean heavily upon the Savior's head, because we are sinners. We plead guilty to the dreadful indictment of God's holy law; and we are therefore glad to lay our hands upon the Sacrifice for sin.

**This act is also a confession of impotence**. Not only am I a sinner, I'm a helpless sinner. There is nothing I can do to help myself. **I must have Christ as a sacrifice for my sin**.

- I cannot keep God's law for myself.
- I cannot make atonement for my past sins.
- I cannot hope to gain acceptance with God by my future obedience.

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**Christ is precious to us because we cannot do without him.** If I am not accepted before God upon the merits of Christ's righteousness and shed blood, I am a damned man, utterly without hope!

And **we must have the blood of Christ as an atonement and covering for our sin.** Something must cover us to keep the eye of God from seeing our sin. The blood of Christ so thoroughly covers us that God beholds no blemish in us!

I stand before God laying my hands upon the head of Christ, leaning my entire soul upon him, because I am a dirty, sinful, impotent man.

**Laying my hands upon the head of God's Sacrifice, I confess that I deserve to die.** When a man brought his calf, or goat, or lamb and put his hands upon its head, he knew that the poor creature must die. And by this act, he confessed that he deserved to die. The innocent lamb fell to the ground

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in pain, struggling, bleeding, dying. And the man confessed, “This is what I deserve from the hand of God. Death is my due.” **If ever you come to see this, you will lean hard upon Christ, and acknowledge that the death he died you deserved to die** (Psalm 51:1-4).

(Psalms 51:1-4) “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (2) Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. (3) For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. (4) Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.”

If God had been pleased to send me to hell, it would be no more than I deserve. He would have been both righteous and just in doing it. But, instead, he poured out my hell upon his Son! — *“The chastisement of*

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*our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*” — **Hear what the Triune Jehovah says to Christ our Covenant Surety** (Psalm 89:19-37).

(Psalm 89:19-37) “**Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One**, and saidst, **I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.** (20) I have found David my servant; **with my holy oil have I anointed him**: (21) With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. (22) The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. (23) And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. (24) But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. (25) I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. (26) He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. (27) Also **I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.**

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(28) **My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.** (29) **His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.** (30) **If his children forsake my law,** and walk not in my judgments; (31) If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; (32) **Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.** — (“*The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*”) — (33) **Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.** (34) My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (35) Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. (36) **His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.** (37) It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.”



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Come, lay your hands upon Christ's head in humble, sincere confession, saying, I am a guilty sinner, unable to do anything to help myself, and worthy of eternal damnation. But I trust Christ to save me.

## **REPENTANCE**

2<sup>nd</sup> — **When a man laid his hands upon the head of the sacrifice, he was saying, I accept and bow to God's remedy for sin, I repent.** When a sinner comes to trust Christ, he simply confesses and acknowledges his acceptance of God's salvation. That is the essence of true repentance. **Repentance is, in its essence, taking sides with God.**

Laying my hands of faith upon Christ, I testify to God and to all men that **I believe God and bow to his plan and purpose of salvation by a Substitute** (Romans 3:24-26; 5:12-21).

(Romans 3:24) "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ

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Jesus: (25) Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (26) To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

(Romans 5:12-21) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (15) But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. (16) And not as *it was* by

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one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. (17) For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) (18) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (20) Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: (21) That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

But there is more. Having accepted the gospel of substitution, **I accept, bow to, and receive the**

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**Substitute himself.** Listen to me now. — Salvation is not in a plan. It is in a Person. Salvation is not in the doctrine of substitution. It is in the Divine Substitute. We rest our souls, not upon a doctrine, but upon the Lord Jesus Christ himself. We cast ourselves entirely upon him. Thus, we receive him.

**Only those who receive Christ are saved by Christ.** It is true, our salvation is God accepting and receiving us in Christ. Yet, we must receive the Lord Jesus Christ. We must bow to, embrace, and receive him by faith.

(John 1:11-13) “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

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3<sup>rd</sup> — **When the sinner laid his hands upon the head of the sacrifice, he was expressing his faith in a marvelous transference** (Leviticus 16:21).

(Leviticus 16:21) “And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, **putting them upon the head of the goat**, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.”

In a typical sense, that man’s guilt was transferred from him to the innocent lamb, and that lamb’s innocence was transferred to him. The whole thing was done in anticipation of our Lord’s death at Calvary.

When a sinner comes to Christ by faith, accepting him as Savior, he is saying, “I believe, agree with, and trust the mighty and mysterious transaction that

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took place long ago upon Calvary's brow." This mighty transaction took place and was completed when the Son of God stood in our place at Calvary!

(2 Corinthians 5:21) "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

**God Almighty made his Son sin for us. And he has made us the very righteousness of God in his Son.**

By faith we simply accept the finished work, adding nothing to it. Laying my hands upon the head of my Redeemer, I rest my soul upon this mighty transaction, trusting the complete efficacy of God's Sacrifice.

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4<sup>th</sup> — **Laying my hands of faith upon the head of Christ, identification is made between the sinner and the Substitute.** I think that if the man's heart was right, and he was not a mere ritualist, as he

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watched that lamb struggle, and bleed, and die, his eyes must have swelled with tears. He must have said in his heart, “That death is mine.” **Now, brethren, come lay your hands upon the head of our Substitute, and identify yourselves with him.** His death is our death, and now we cannot die again (2 Corinthians 5:14).

(2 Corinthians 5:14) “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.”

(Galatians 2:20) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

**Illustration:** *The Chief and the Chicken Thief*

Children of God, can you grasp this? **When Christ died you died.** “*I am crucified with Christ,*

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*nevertheless I live.*” — “*Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.*” In the Person of your Substitute you paid your debt to God’s law.

**When Christ arose, being accepted of God, you arose in him. As Christ is now a sweet-smelling savor to God, you are a sweet-smelling savor, “Accepted in the Beloved.”**

Blessed be God, there is a real identification between believers and their Substitute. It is real, and it is eternal. We are one with him, one with Christ, and complete in him.

“Twixt Jesus and the chosen race  
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,  
That hell, with its infernal train,  
Shall ne’er dissolve nor rend in vain

Hail! Sacred union, firm and strong,  
How great the grace, how sweet the song,  
That worms of earth should ever be



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One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when He rose,  
One when He triumphed o'er His foes,  
One when in heaven He took His seat,  
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,  
For all He is or has is theirs;  
With Him, their Head, they stand or fall,  
Their life, their surety, and their all."

— *John Kent*

(Colossians 2:9-10) "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is

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written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

**Application:** I have but one thing now to do. I urge you to come and lay your hands upon the head of Christ, God’s Sacrifice for sin. Lean the weight of your soul upon him.

- In Confession — Confessing Your Sin.
- In Repentance — Accepting the Substitute.
- In Faith — Acknowledging the Transference.
- In Joyful Identification — Rejoicing in the Identification.

His obedience is my obedience! His righteousness is my righteousness. His death is my death! His satisfaction is my satisfaction! His life is my life! His acceptance is my acceptance. This is life! This is grace! This is salvation! This is peace!

I have been reconciled to God,  
(O sweet salvation this!)  
Redeemed and reconciled by blood, —

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This is my joy and peace!

By nature and by Adam's fall,  
By choice far off from God;  
But God stepped in and all is well, —  
I'm reconciled by blood!

I'm near, so very near to God,  
Nearer I cannot be;  
For in the person of His Son  
I am as near as He!

Yes, dear, so very dear to God,  
Dearer I cannot be;  
For as the Father loves the Son,  
So God, my God, loves me!

Why should I fear or anxious be? —  
With God's own Son I'm one,  
Holy, beloved, accepted, and  
Forever with Him one!

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Amen.