

witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.

Jesus Offering(s) is Far Superior!

- ❖ The Curtain Has Been Torn
- ❖ The Consuming Fire of God Lives in Us

1 Corinthians 6:9–11

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. *But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified* in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

We Belong to Jesus! (Like the Levites... and Priests, and Nazirites...)

2 Timothy 2:19–21 (Cf. Romans 12:1–2)

¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." ²⁰ Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. ²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, *set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house*, ready for every good work.

- ❖ Trust Jesus...
- ❖ With Jesus Put Off & Put On...
- ❖ We Belong to Jesus: Learn to Love the Place God has Given You... (e.g. John the Baptist)

Key Idea:

The best way to prepare to battle idolatry out in the world is to confront the idolatry within. God matters most!

In the Wilderness: The Book of Numbers

Getting Ready to Fight for the Promised Land: Part 2, Who Matters Most?

– Numbers 1:1–10:36

Sermon Outline – April 19, 2015

Children's Sermon/Introduction

- ❖ When is fear a good thing?

1 Corinthians 10:31b

...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- ❖ Why did God make you and all things? (For His own glory)
- ❖ How can you glorify God? (By loving Him and doing what He commands)
- ❖ Why ought you to glorify God? (Because He made me and takes care of me)

We are in love with going our own way...

We are in love with rebellion against God's rule!

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

Follow-up...

BIG PICTURE: THE NEED FOR SEPARATION

PARADISE LOST, CUT OFF FROM THE GARDEN... CURSED BUT MERCY...

HOW CAN SIN CORRUPTED IDOLATERS UNDER GOD'S JUST CURSE DRAW NEAR TO HIM?

Hebrews 12:28–29

...let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for *our God is a consuming fire*.

*Getting Israel Ready to Fight for the Promised Land...
Dealing with the Idolatry Within... Who Matters Most?*

Key Idea:

God matters most... but not to us! This is the problem.

In General: (Consider the Key Picture of Levites Carrying the Ark)

1. God provides Cleansing & Consecration (So that they can draw near)
2. God provides layers of protection (So that they don't get too near)

Levites (A Layer of Protection)

(Numbers 3-4, 8)

Levites not listed Numbers 1:47-53

Levites Numbered and Ordered (3:1-4:49)

❖ The Sons of Aaron: Eleazar & Ithamar (3:1-4)

❖ Levites Set Apart to Serve & Guard (3:5-51)

Numbers 3:5-10

⁵ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ “Bring **the tribe of Levi** near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him. ⁷ They shall keep *guard* over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. ⁸ They shall *guard* all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep *guard* over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. ⁹ And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the people of Israel. ¹⁰ And you shall appoint **Aaron and his sons**, and they shall *guard their priesthood*. But if any outsider comes near, **he shall be put to death.**”

Why did God choose to set apart Levi from the other tribes?

Levites replace the Firstborn (3:11-51; 5 shekels per head for extra Firstborn)

[“Today you [Levites] have been *ordained for the service of the LORD*, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day.” (Ex 32:29)]

Levites Serve & Guard the Tabernacle

✓ Assigned Camp (Sons of Levi One month & up; 22,000)

✓ Assigned Jobs (Sons of Levi 30-50 year olds)

- Kohathites – Most Holy Objects
- Gershonites – The Curtains...
- Sons of Merari – The Frames...

✓ Near but not to Near

- Must not touch the holy things
- Must be directed by the priests
- Must not look on the holy things

Numbers 4:15, 17-20 (Near but not to Near)

¹⁵ And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the sons of **Kohath** shall come to carry these, *but they must not touch the holy things, lest they die.* ...

¹⁷ The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ¹⁸ “Let not the tribe of the

clans of the **Kohathites** be destroyed from among the Levites, ¹⁹ but deal thus with them, *that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things*: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to his task and to his burden, ²⁰ but they shall not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment, **lest they die.**”

Consecration of Israel’s camp (5:1-6:27)

Consecration of the Tabernacle and Priesthood (7:1-8:26)

Even to get this close the Levites were Washed and Made Holy (8:5-22)

Washed:

Sprinkle the water of purification upon them, *Shave* their whole body [new birth?], *Wash their clothes* and cleanse themselves.

Set Apart:

Numbers 8:10-12, 14-19

¹⁰ When you bring the Levites before the Lord, **the people of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites**, ¹¹ and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord as a wave offering from the people of Israel, that they may do the service of the Lord. ¹² **Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls**, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the Lord to make atonement for the Levites.

¹⁴ “**Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the people of Israel, and the Levites shall be mine.** [Instead of the firstborn] ...¹⁸ and I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the people of Israel. ¹⁹ *And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the people of Israel, to do the service for the people of Israel at the tent of meeting and to make atonement for the people of Israel, that there may be no plague among the people of Israel when the people of Israel come near the sanctuary.*”

1. Israel has a terrifying problem with God’s holiness...
2. The Levites are *given* by God in place of Israel as a living sacrifice...
 - To serve/protect God’s place
 - To serve/protect God’s priests
 - To serve/protect God’s people
3. The bulls are given in place of the Levites to...

What Does this Have to Do With Us?

Let’s Start with the Bull...

John 19:33-35 (Jesus, Our Sin Offering & Burnt Offering)

³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out **blood and water.** ³⁵ He who saw it has borne

