

Ransomed, Washed, and Anointed

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Preacher: Chad Bennett

[0 : 0 0] please open your Bibles to Exodus chapter 30 Exodus chapter 30 today we're going to finish our study of the chapter but as I say that we are going to we've already looked at the last part of the passage so today we're looking at verses 11 through 33 verses 11 through 33 we're going to read through that and as we do so

I'm going to have the sound booth actually flip through the slides so Exodus 30 you can read it on the screen, you can read it in your Bible but we'll begin in verse 11 the Lord said to Moses when you take the census of the people of Israel then each shall give a ransom for his life to the Lord when you number them that there be no plague among them when you number them each one who is numbered in the census shall give this half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary the shekel is 20 garrus half a shekel as an offering to the Lord everyone who is numbered in the census from 20 years old and upward shall give the Lord's offering the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than the half shekel when you give the Lord's offering to make atonement for your lives you shall take the atonement money from the people of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before the Lord so as to make atonement for your lives the Lord said to Moses you shall also make a basin of bronze with its stand of bronze for washing you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar and you shall put water in it with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister to burn a food offering to the Lord they shall wash with water so that they may not die they shall wash their hands and their feet so that they may not die it shall be a statute forever to them even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations the Lord said to Moses take the finest spices of litwood myrrh 500 shekels and of sweet smelling cinnamon half as much that is 250 and 250 of aromatic cane and 500 of cassia according to the shekel of the sanctuary and a hen of olive oil and you shall make of these the sacred anointing oil blended by the perfumer it shall be a holy anointing oil with it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony and the table and all its utensils and the lamp stand and its utensils and the altar of incense and the altar of burn offering with all its utensils and the basin and its stand you shall consecrate them that they may be most holy whatever touches them will become holy you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them that they may serve me as priest and you shall say to the people of Israel this shall be my holy anointing oil throughout your generations it shall not be poured on the body of an ordinary person and you shall make no other like it in composition it is holy and it shall be holy to you whoever compounds any like it or whoever puts any of it on an outsider shall be cut off from his people let's pray together dear heavenly father we again thank you for your word lord you've been so gracious to us as we look to the book of Exodus to see that these were not just commands to a people thousands of years ago but that even here you're teaching us of Christ you are preparing them for his coming you help us to see in greater detail the work that Christ is done lord do that again today show us Christ that we may turn to you and give you glory amen so the title of the sermon is really the three things I want us to look at today we see in this passage and maybe it seems a little disconnected with the orders that are given we see a few things happening here in the passage a census basically a bronze sink and a recipe for anointing oil but really I want to tie those together with a progression of the fact that God's people are ransomed they are washed and they are anointed so ransomed washed and anointed is what I want us to look at today and we see really the ransom given to us there in verse 12 when you take the census of the people of Israel then each shall give a ransom for his life to the Lord when you number them that there be no plague among them when you number them and we see later on that this is actually given for the sake of the building of the tabernacle and the sustaining of the tabernacle so making sure that they have the supplies they need to build it

remember there's already been a donation of supplies but every year there's an ongoing need that the building get taken care of in some ways we struggle with this even as a church because as you give as much as we like to use it for the work of ministry inevitably there's the cost of taking care of a building and we're blessed at least with the newer building that that's not a major concern but there are many churches that have built large buildings or have older buildings that spend much of the money on maintaining the building but it's a practical concern and they're giving this for the sake of the maintaining of the building and the supplies of the tabernacle and what they gave was a half a shekel of silver and because that probably doesn't make a lot of sense to us it tells us that it's one shekel equals twenty garas so this is only ten garas

I'm kidding that probably doesn't make much more sense to us either there were at least three shekels that were used at the time this was what would normally be called the shekel of the temple or the temple shekel and regardless of how wealthy anyone in this society was they all gave the same amount social standing economic standing didn't matter they all contributed equally to the building of and the maintaining of the tabernacle so really this is a an offering that's for all of God's people but one thing that's really interesting about this census tax was that it says it's for a ransom now as we think of ransom we think of maybe the idea of kidnapping or something like that you pay a ransom to get somebody back very similar concept going on here probably the spiritual term that we would often use today would be atonement they're giving a shekel for their own atonement they're ransoming their selves and it even says so that a plague may not break out among you now that's really confusing for us it's not quite clear why but there's something about taking a census that's dangerous you may remember later on

David takes a census and it's to number the people and there's this undertone that David wants to know how great is his army and Joab warns him to this and God judges him for this this is not something that's to be done but there is a need that they know how many people there are and occasionally this has to be done and so to avoid a plague breaking out among them they're to take this shekel temple tats or tabernacle tats and so this would be given every year they would go before them they would do it for again the sake of atonement it's tied to this idea of the blessing of being in Yahweh's presence you are people who get to enter into the presence of God and so they're giving to that in many ways that's symbolic psalm 49 verse 7 says truly no man can ransom another or give to God the price of his life so it's not as though

[9 : 21] God establishes here there's a set price and if you pay the price every year then atonement is made for you it's symbolic of the fact that God has atoned for them he has already delivered them he has ransomed them from slavery and bondage in Egypt he's bought their freedom and so they acknowledge that by giving this ransom again not to accomplish a purpose but symbolic and we could say and even looking ahead we know that this is also symbolic of the ransom that Christ would pay for them that atonement would be made for them and for whatever reason the census is given it's clear at least that there's probably a military reference to this much as when David counted the people often they would count to know how strong is their military as they're considering going into the or planning to enter into the promised land how strong is the military that could explain why it says that the only people actually pay the tax are males over the age of 20 that would basically be the fighting age the age of the military listen to numbers 1 3 it says from 20 years old and upward all in Israel who are able to go to war you and Aaron shall list them company by company and so this is basically the enlistment age and so they want to know who of the men are capable of fighting should they go to war and even talks about that Aaron shall list them so basically when he takes his census for the military conscription joining up with the military he's to take a ransom for each soldier maybe there's even some connection without it you're putting your life on the line and you pay this ransom even for your life and it talks about

Aaron listing them and this would make sense if we know the ones who are putting the offering in maybe they're taking their names down jotting it down but knowing who they are but there's also this wordplay in Hebrew where the counting of them can also mean the crossing over and it seems to be the state that you are asked you are called to basically the census now that kind of happens in our country too you know every 10 years we have a census and you get the notification in the mail that you have to respond to the census or you're going to be arrested by penalty of all you have to answer the census and if we're on it I don't know about you guys maybe some of you really dig the statistics and you think this is really important but I never look forward to filling out the census papers I'm always hoping my gracious and kind wife will do that on our behalf it's not something I

like just sitting there and filling out all the paperwork they're calling first census every year they're to come forward and there's something about crossing past Aaron and putting in that shekel that you're acknowledging that I'm a part of this people and think of all the implications that would go along with that the idea of ransom the idea of atonement so this really is a spiritual matter not merely a social matter or a national matter or military matter what they're really doing is saying I belong to God's people I am a part of those who have been atoned for I'm a part of the redeemed I'm a part of the ransomed I belong to them so there's almost this commitment they're making to step forward to put that money in and say yes I belong to this people I'm a part of them and again they're acknowledging I'm part of the people that gets to benefit the blessing of being in the presence of Yahweh that's who I am I'm one of those they're identifying as God's covenant people one commentator John Durham said it this way he says thus even so pragmatic and routine a necessity as the financial support of the tabernacle and its ministry of worship is turned into an expression of the central confession of Israel's faith an existing procedure of counting and taxation was apparently turned from a census with an element of fear he says of military service and of divine punishment to a passing into the ranks of those who would be remembered each one equally in the place where Yahweh came by promise so it becomes a spiritual exercise for God's people we're identifying we're not just signing up to fight for Israel we're acknowledging that we're a part of God's people and that we're joining in this blessing and he talks about the remembering there it says later on in our passage that verse 16 you shall take atonement money from the people of Israel and shall give it for service of the tent of meeting that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before the Lord so as to make atonement for your lives and so this money this silver is given and much of it's melted down and even becomes really the foundation upon which the poles that hold the tabernacle together are held and many other parts of the furniture so that as God comes into the presence of his people he sees the silver and he's reminded of them not as though

God forgets but it's in remembrance of them think about this also would have been in remembrance for God's people as you enter in you see the silver and you're reminded that's part of my contribution to the worship of God for God's presence for God's house that God would meet with us maybe a modern day equivalent of that might be when we think of church membership we have at least two parts that go along with church membership in our church when you become a member of the church you come forward and you share a public testimony you testify that you have become a part of God's people you testify the work that God has done in your heart and life and then with that if you're a new believer you're baptized into Christ and in many ways into the body of Christ's church and so they're making a public statement that I belong to God's people in much the same way that we would with church membership you come forward you testify before the people I'm a part of the people of God and in baptism symbolically you represent what Christ has done for you that in Christ you've been buried with him and you've been raised to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus and so maybe that's a similar way in which we could think of that today now I think if we're going to talk about this we have to address the fact that this does come up in the New Testament this tax Jesus actually encounters this Matthew 17 you guys may remember the passage but I'm going to have it up for you we'll look at it Matthew 17 when they came to Capernaum the collectors of the two drachma tats went up to Peter and said does your teacher not pay the tax he said yes and when he came into the house Jesus spoke to him first saying what do you think Simon from whom do the kings of the earth take toll or tax from their sons or from others and when he said from others

[17:12] Jesus said to him then the sons are free however not to give offense to them go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up and when you open its mouth you shall find a shekel take that and give it to them for me and for yourself so this is the same tax that Jesus is encountering here and they first asked Simon Peter if Jesus would give the tax and Simon probably rashly as Simon often does or Peter often does he says yeah of course he would do that and then he comes to the house and maybe I kind of picture him ready to go up to Jesus and say you are going to pay that taxes aren't you don't forget to pay your taxes and Jesus says to him ask him the question who does he tax he taxes others and so

Jesus points out that the son is free and what he's getting at is this that this tax ultimately this giving that the people were giving was not ultimately about the tabernacle or the temple or even the support of the Levites and the priests and the temple it ultimately was a giving to God and if that's

the case and Jesus is here as the son of God is Jesus obligated to pay a tax and if we go even further with that which Jesus doesn't especially here but remember that this is a tax of atonement it's a tax for ransom Jesus is sinless he's the son he's not obligated to give to the father because all that is his is the father's and all that is the father's is his but also he's one who's sinless he doesn't need to make atonement for himself in fact we know that

Jesus is the one who will ultimately pay that tax he will be the one who pays for the atonement of others not for himself his life will give for their life but it's really interesting as well in this passage that he provides he gives the full tax why would he do that if he's not obligated to do so if he doesn't ransom himself and if he's not obligated as son to give to God why does he give here well before I even get there let me say you see how he does it as well who provides that the tax be paid God does look I've been fishing many times I really enjoy going fishing I've never opened a fish up and found money inside never happened it's also never corresponded with the exact amount I owe in taxes that would be nice or in this instance there's one whole shekel and remember the tax is half a shekel so it pays for

Jesus and for Peter we're going to take care of both of us so look if any of you guys do end up going fishing and finding enough money to pay your taxes and someone else's I would take one for the team okay but that's just that's not normal is it I found many things inside of a I haven't found money Eric ever found any money inside a fish Eric probably has fished more than me this isn't normal so what's happening here God is somehow supernaturally supplying for Jesus to be able to give this tax don't know what exactly happened God called someone to drop it I'm assuming God didn't bring the matter back together in a creation type way to create a shekel of his own of course that would mess up if you started just printing random money right that would mess up with inflation but we're not going there but somehow perhaps someone slips they drop it off a boat a fish swallows it according to

God's providential hand and then Peter catches the exact fish and opens it up and it's the exact amount for him okay you see the point God is providing that he be able to do that why would he even do it at all though Jesus here is demonstrating his active obedience God has called his people to participate in this to give for the sake of the temple or back here the tabernacle and Jesus does it even though he doesn't have to be atoned for even though he's his son why because he's performing the righteous acts that we fail to do fall short of Jesus isn't just going to pay for our sins he's going to provide for us the positive righteousness that we all need this is the act of obedience of Jesus Christ that we see here so I bring that up obviously there's a connection with atonement we're going to talk a little bit about more of that in application but

[22 : 38] Jesus is our atonement he ransoms the price actually participates in the sides to be for us our righteousness secondly I want us to look at the washing now the washing is really just the fact that we have this bowl that's given to make another piece of furniture that wasn't addressed earlier and this is really just a basin or a bowl stood on some type of pedestal there's a stand for it this is the one item that we've had almost no detail given make a bowl put a stand under it that you can wash your hands and wash your feet not a lot of instruction given I imagine many of us have different types of seats in our bathroom I've seen some that have been made out of wood that has been turned or glass bowls probably many of us have ceramic or

God's not concerned with how this is made and it's interesting in the temple it ends up being absolutely huge but no measurements are given the location is important the material is important but no real detail about the size of it it's to be made of bronze and we actually will later on see in Exodus 38 verse 8 it says that he made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze from the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting so they give of their mirrors and where would those have come from when basically they plundered the Egyptians when the Egyptians gave them stuff when they were leaving the women gave their mirrors and in my research I couldn't find out if this would be a mirror like we think of glass more likely it's probably polished bronze that melted down to make this basin and the basin or the bowl was for ritual cleaning they had to wash their hands and feet remember not the whole body because that's already been done in the ordination ceremony now they have to wash their hands and feet though every single time that they either offer a burnt offering on the altar and

I haven't really talked about the position of this but this is position which is where the holy place and the holy of holies is so it's right in between those two because when they go to offer sacrifice they had to wash beforehand and they give a sacrifice and then if they were to enter into the tent of

meeting at all they always had to wash as well so it's right in between the two where it would be convenient for washing for either those and this is a perpetual command they're to do it throughout their generations it says forever for Aaron and his sons we understand as well that there's come an end to the Aaronic priesthood Jesus has come he now is our high priest and so as your pastor I'm not obligated to wash my hands and feet before I come typically do but not in a bowl out in the foyer so it's not as though that has to continue on in that way but it's repeated it must be done look at verse 21 they shall wash their hands and their feet so that they may not die it shall be a statute forever to them even to him and to his offspring throughout his generations so much like with the senses so that a plague would not break out here we're told so if you were to decide one day as a priest

I'm going to offer a sacrifice but I'm not going to wash my hands first there's no reason because my hands are going to get bloody and dirty anyway I'll wash them afterwards you would die if you thought maybe even presumed that you were clean enough to enter into the holy place without washing you would die and so there's maybe a New Testament equivalent and this kind of can help us understand the spiritual realities behind what we're seeing here 1st Corinthians 11 29 30 and consider this because we're not too far away let's see maybe we're an hour away from taking the Lord's Supper here in our church 1st Corinthians 11 29 30 for anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself that is why many of you are weak and ill and some have died now

Paul here is speaking of the Lord's table when they come together to take communion some of them it says we're not discerning the body and we see elsewhere there's even talk of sinning against one another unreconciled sin or unrepented of sin not reconciliation between brothers the discerning of the body I think probably means the discerning of Christ's body in the elements to understand that Christ is spiritually present in the bread and in the juice and because of that because some have just done it flippantly perhaps they haven't thought about they haven't meditated on Christ and his work when they took the table some of them have gotten sick in the church in Corinth and some of them have died I thought maybe that's a New Testament equivalent they approached that which is holy with very little thought for it they didn't discern the purpose of it and what it meant to come before these things and it cost them their life now I have to assume that this wasn't a unique circumstance in the church in

[28 : 40] Corinth and so in many ways we're warned the same way and without divine guidance we probably cannot discern if the Lord takes somebody home because even as a believer they take the table but they weren't really understanding or thinking about the purpose of it now I say all that to say prepare your hearts for the Lord's table that's not to say don't take it I think if you're a believer it is a spiritual blessing that we get to take to the Lord's table and at the same time we approach God in worship and at the table with reverence and awe because our God is a consuming fire so balance those things as we go to the table later but this is also an important reminder because it shows us that even the priests were sinners that need to be washed none of the priests were good enough just to washed and cleansed they're sinners too Isaiah 52 11 says depart depart go out from there touch no unclean thing go out from the midst of her purify yourselves you who bear the vessels of the

Lord so speaking to the priests they're being warned go out from the midst of her make sure you purify yourself before you touch these things another commentator John curid says the very ones who are to operate the services of atonement and reconciliation are themselves in need of cleansing from their own sinful hearts and deeds the men of the priesthood themselves in other words are profane and sinful and so this is a reminder for them it's a reminder for us that none of us will ever enter into the presence of God based on our goodness our cleanness even the priest even your pastor is a rotten sinner that needs to be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ there's not one of us that's good enough to stand before him on our own first Corinthians 6 11 testifies to this 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're in need of that washing all of us if we're to enter into his presence now as we look at these priests we have a contrast that's given to us in the book of Hebrews again that Jesus is a priest like these priests but not like these priests because Jesus is sinless high priest Hebrews 4 15 for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin now

that's remarkable if we understand this in light of what we see here in the book of Exodus if we know the background if we know that every priest that's ever ministered had to be first ordained which involved a full body washing he had to be anointed we're going to look at that in a second but and then still each and every time he came to serve God he had to purify himself he had to wash his hands and feet before he could serve there why because he's a sinner and because he sins over and over again he doesn't reach some state of perfection and then we have Christ who doesn't have to make atonement or be washed over and over again he's sinless and so likewise we understand I'll touch a little bit more on this in the conclusion but we understand that we too are those who have been washed by Christ we've seen that already back in first Corinthians 6:11 but you are washed you are sanctified you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God Ephesians 5 is another one it's speaking of union with Christ and how marriage is a model of union with Christ in Ephesians 5:25 through 26 husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word and so again Jesus is sanctifying his church he's cleansing his church he's washing them it says here with water of the word of water with the word so his word he uses to cleanse us we're going to look at more later about other cleansing thirdly anointing this really is covered in verses 23 through 33 it describes the recipe for the anointing and then tells us what all is to be anointed and what's the finest of rare spices many of these didn't even grow in the area in which they were they would have had to be imported and again probably into Egypt initially so people have brought them out they're rare maybe they're holding on to them but they give them for the worship of God and the anointing so verse 23 take the finest spices the choicest spices of litwood myrrh sweet smelling cinnamon aromatic cane and then of cassia now I know we're familiar probably really familiar with cinnamon myrrh is a sap that when you cut certain trees it's I won't remember the scientific name it's balsam myrrh but you cut it and it leaks out or drips out the sap that hardens and then you can take it and use it for myrrh and apparently litwood myrrh in that day which apparently no longer exists but statate was a very rare and expensive perfume in that day a sweet smelling scent and so that's likely what was used here so again we couldn't even replicate that if we wanted to there's some myrrh we could get the other things the cinnamon we talked about we know cinnamon but the stalk the cane is not real clear it sounds like something that would come from a reed of sort by a lake or river but again that's hard to identify and then cassia as well may have been the flower of the cinnamon bush but we don't know exactly what it is but either way it would have been a sweet smelling perfume and olive oil would have been what tied it all together or what would be scented by it and we covered this already a little bit back in chapter 25 verse 6 but it was part of those things that were donated for the tabernacle oil for the lamps spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense which we looked at last week so all these things were given by

[36 : 25] God's people maybe we could be encouraged that they're giving their best for the work of the Lord and we could be encouraged as well that we God calls us to give our best for his work and then all these things are anointed or consecrated for the Lord that's really a dedication of something or it's inauguration into service these things are being set apart to serve in the tabernacle everything that gets sprinkled by this anointing oil all the fabric all the furniture the priest they are being set apart to the Lord they're being set apart as holy that they're given for serving the Lord maybe even as part of making someone or something fit for service to the Lord it's no longer just a normal piece of fabric it has been anointed and now set apart to serve the Lord look at verse 29 it says you shall consecrate them that they may be most holy whatever touches them will become holy this is one place

I pretty much disagree with the ESV the Hebrew isn't real clear and I think the New King James version the revised standard version both do a better job of translating it they say you shall consecrate them that they may be most holy whatever touches them must be holy I think that's probably a better rendering there seems to be nowhere in the Old Testament where it's recounted that just touching some element that had been anointed would make you holy rather nothing unclean that had not been set apart for the Lord would be allowed to touch those things that had been anointed that makes a lot more sense I think that's what's being communicated and then verse 33 we have the threat of death again whoever compounds my wife my wife my wife my wife really likes that smell too my wife my wife really likes that smell too my wife really likes that smell too and she's gonna love it when I wear it you're cut off from the people of God which can have a

double meaning it means cast out of God's people maybe the equivalent of what we would say today of excommunication you're being declared not to be a part of God's people his covenant people in this instance because your lack of obedience to God's command demonstrates that you're not really following God you haven't honored him you haven't revered him the way you should but it can also have a connotation of death so how does all this apply to us

I think one thing is to see that there really is no privileged status in the tabernacle all gave equally to it they were all equal parts of God's covenant people even the priests that served had to be washed and had to be sanctified with anointing oil before they could serve people's riches and their possessions don't really matter when it comes to the day of judgment right God's not going to care how much you accumulated in this life what ultimately matters what determines anything for them and really for us is do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ that's all that matters have you trusted in Jesus Christ as your savior stuff doesn't matter ultimately relationship with Christ does and so in Christ we have an eternal inheritance secondly the need for ransom or atonement we understand that we too need to be ransomed and atoned for this is a quote from C.H. Spurgeon now remember

I talked about that the base upon which the poles were held were made out of silver and that's part of what he's talking about here but he says the foundation of the worship of Israel was redemption the dwelling place of the Lord their God was founded on atonement all the boards of incorruptible wood and precious gold stood upon the redemption price and the curtains of fine linen and the veil of matchless workmanship and the whole structure rested on nothing else but the solid mass of silver which had been paid as a redemption money of the people so you gather he's arguing that redemption's the basis every time they would go in and they'd see that silver there they would say not just I contributed to that but my atonement is a part of what's happening here redemption ransom atonement is the basis upon which I enter into the presence of God without ransom without atonement

I cannot enter into the presence of God the same is true for us how do we do that well the answer isn't that we pay a half shekel a year right you're not buying salvation by giving in the offering plate first Peter 1 18 18 through 19 answers this for us knowing that you were ransomed from the feudal ways inherited from your forefathers not with perishable things such as silver or gold okay so understand silver or gold is too cheap it perishes but with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish their spot so all of us need to be ransomed we need atonement and how are we going to do that well it talks about feudal ways inherited from their fathers their fathers being these that we're reading about in Exodus

[42 : 40] God's calling that which he declared for them to do I think even feudal it didn't actually accomplish a purpose it was only symbolic it was a shadow of the reality and what is the reality the reality is that silver is not enough to buy salvation gold is not enough there's not one of us that has enough that we can atone for the price of our sin we can't buy our souls but Christ has done that he has paid the atonement and what was the cost notice the word precious we don't always think of it this way sometimes we say oh that's precious I don't know that's in the south we say that all the time oh that's precious isn't that precious precious here means rare valuable the precious blood of Christ that is of greater value than gold and silver is what bought our atonement Matthew 20 28 even tells us that this is the purpose of the incarnation the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many this is why

Jesus came so what we're seeing here is even testifying first of our need for ransom but also telling us that Christ will come to pay that ransom and so I want to encourage you have you trust in Jesus Christ to pay that ransom there's a debt that all of us owe for the sin which we've committed the wages of sin is death and we're going to pay for that eternally either in hell or it's paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ so which are you hoping in which are you trusting in today there's not another option either hell or Christ and I don't want to portray hell as if you know you hang out there for a while and you've paid atonement it is eternal there's nothing that we could do even eternal suffering isn't enough to pay the price for our sin thirdly the idea of washing and in some ways

Hebrews 10 19 through 25 combines the idea of the washing and the anointing with oil therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus I think I've hit that every week every week now for a while in our sermons by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh and since we have a great priest over the house of God let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean

from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water our hearts sprinkled clean think of that anointing oil being sprinkled on everything our hearts have been sprinkled clean and then likewise we see our bodies washed with pure water there's probably some degree in which he's speaking of the idea of our hearts sprinkled clean that anointing oil points us to the blood of Jesus Christ that we've been cleansed in and the water here washed in the water may well refer to the baptism or the spiritual reality of the circumcision of the heart that the spirit accomplishes that's symbolically portrayed in baptism but we've been sprinkled with his blood we've been washed by the spirit and so as we think about this washing how might we be washed how might we be cleansed well I want to start by just saying Jesus Christ who brings that cleansing but God's word also talks about other ways in which we are washed for example confession and I don't mean going to the priest listen first John 1 8 through 9 it says if we have sorry if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness so again not confession to a priest what is he speaking of he's really speaking of what happens in salvation we confess our sins to God and we look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and we're washed clean of that from all unrighteousness I said already his blood I'll hit on that again there's a few passages that demonstrate that in the New Testament 1 John 1 7 but if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin so it's the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin Ephesians 5 26 that we looked at earlier talked about sanctifying her having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word and so the word also brings cleansing to us John 15 3 Jesus said to them already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you and if I remember correctly this is in the context again of them wanting to wash themselves and not have Jesus wash their feet but already you are clean because of the word I have spoken to you John 17 17 the high priestly prayer

[48 : 19] Jesus prays sanctify them in the truth your word is truth and so maybe here we're talking about a little bit cleansing we've been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ by confession of our sin by faith we become saved all unrighteousness has been dealt with but there's this ongoing way in which we're being sanctified made more and more like the image of Christ and one way that's done is by washing with the word sanctify them in the truth your word is truth I could say it a different way how do we protect ourselves how do we keep ourselves clean Psalm 119 9 how can a young man keep his way pure by guarding it according to your word and then 1 Peter 1 22 having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly love love one another earnestly from a pure heart so here having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth and so

God's word how it teaches us how it instructs us even our obedience is one way that he's continuing to cleanse us so I want to encourage you all of us need that atonement and that's only found in Jesus Christ finally if you are a Christian today understand that you have been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ that you stand now in Christ as one who is sinless even though you still sin God looks upon you and sees you in Christ as sinless as clean as pure as ready and anointed to enter into his presence understand with the Holy Spirit for service to the Lord we've been ransomed from futile ways maybe we could say to the proper way to service of God we've been made fit to serve him we've been set apart as holy to the Lord for service and that ought to encourage us in all that we do think again of that tabernacle what was that anointing oil to be used for one the incense one purpose even if you like how it smells we're not using it in our home likewise

God has sanctified us for his service whatever we do in life and there's a great variety of things that God may call us to but all of it should be done in service to the Lord is that foremost in our thought when we go about our daily activities or is it about serving me maybe as noble as it sounds serving my family but God calls us he set us apart as Christians to serve him let's pray together dear heavenly father we thank you that you have ransomed us from the futile ways that we have inherited Lord we know that that looked different for Israel but for many of us we were raised in homes that maybe with parents who didn't know you maybe who had beliefs in other religions Lord for probably all of us we've been ransomed from the futile thought that we're good enough to take care of this ourselves that we are deserving of salvation

Lord we thank you that you've ransomed us from that Lord we pray even for those in this room who maybe yet have not been ransomed help them to see the futility and hoping in anything other than Jesus Christ for salvation and we pray that by your spirit you would wash them in the blood of Christ Lord may we be those who are counted as your people Lord that we would commit to your body

that we would publicly profess faith Lord that we would join your people in baptism signifying our union with Christ Lord would there be no one we pray there would be no one here who would leave today trusting in that which is futile attempting to enter into the holy place without first being washed Lord lead us to Christ in whose name we pray these things amen