
Ignite

“Heavenly Father, how we praise and thank You for the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. Thank You that He was the sacrifice for OUR sin and acts on our account as our heavenly High Priest, Whose sinless blood has been sprinkled on the heavenly altar as the full and final payment for all our sin, and the sin of the world. Thank You for Your message through Pastor Chris that helps us to understand so much of what Christ has done for us. Thank You that by grace through faith in Him our sin has been forgiven - once and for all. Thank You that the power of sin in our life was defeated at the cross and thank You, that because of the Lord Jesus the presence of our sinful nature will be finally gone forever, when we see Him face to face - thank You in Jesus name, Amen.”





SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

Leviticus 3 - Pursuing Holiness:

From Unclean to Clean

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

Leviticus 11:1-8

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Say to the Israelites: ‘Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud. “There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. The hyrax, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. The rabbit, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

Introduction [Luke 24:44](#)

Out of 613 commandments from the Law of Moses, 247 are found in Leviticus and 15 carry death penalties. This Law of Moses is singular in the sense that all the laws under it hang as one. Breaking any single one of the commandments would mean breaking the entire Law. It being one is a representation of God’s holiness. Holiness denotes wholeness, completeness or being healthy in all aspects including mentally, emotionally, physically or spiritually. God’s standard of holiness is extremely high. To the Jews, adhering to the Law of Moses was a matter of life and death.

The centrality of the bible is that God is Holy, and because He is holy, our sin has to be dealt with. We cannot go near to God unless we are clean. No doubt we may never be completely clean and righteous because we cannot be perfectly obedient. However, out of His love and mercy, God provided a way out for us through the sacrificial system. In Leviticus, we read about the different kinds of sacrifices that the Jewish people had to offer to God. In the New Testament, Christ died on the cross for our sins. He is the ultimate and better sacrifice, high priest and altar.

Happiness or holiness - which comes first? We all want to be happy now and hope for the day when we will be made holy in heaven. Yet, the better way to gain happiness is to be holy. We would be happier when there is wholeness in our lives. Even though it may be a painful struggle now as we try to fend off our old nature or the hindrances of living a Spirit-filled life, the end result is eternally more joyful. So, be holy first.

Leviticus 11-15 lay down the concepts of what is clean and unclean. These passages answer the pressing question on how we can be clean before God so that we can enter into His Presence.

BIG IDEA: All of your life is to be lived under the watchful eye of God.

Content 2 Cor 5:10, Psalms 121:7-8, Lev 11:1-23, 15:31, Ex 3:5, Luke 17:12-14, Mark 7:18-23, Matt 5:22, 1 John 3:15, Matt 5:28, John 13:8-10

All of our lives is practically about everything that we do, 24/7. Imagine walking around, or sleeping with a CCTV over your head. The good and the bad that we do are all being taken notice by God. *Are you living a holy life and keeping in step with the Spirit? Or is your life laden with sins and wrongdoings?*

The Leviticus passages in focus cover regulations on food, childbirth, skin diseases, mold, mildew, ritual cleansing and pronouncement of healing, and bodily discharges. The passages remind us that we live in a very broken and sinful world. The things around us can contaminate and influence our lives, drawing us away from God.

There was no mention of how the animals were categorized as clean or unclean, but a logical reason points to the hygiene of these animals.

Above that, a theological distinction was God's call to the Jews that they may live differently, and set apart from the pagans in surrounding lands.

Being in God's presence is not something that should be taken lightly. Back in the days of Moses, when God spoke to him through a burning bush, it was on God's terms that Moses had to remove his sandals as he was standing on holy ground. Likewise, we should not treat God carelessly. When we come before Him, we should be mindful to honour God by making sure that our feet are clean too. *How sure are you that your feet are clean?*

A question that pops in our minds also is whether the Law of Moses is still applicable and relevant for us today? Well, the good news is that these specific regulations are no longer applicable as they were meant to help the Israelites determine whether they were fit to enter the tabernacle. Tabernacle and temple worship are over.

In the New Testament, we learn that we are God's temple in whom His Spirit dwells. This leads us to the next question on how the concept of clean or unclean is applied in the New Testament. In *Mark 7:18-23*, Jesus explained this truth to His disciples.

While we know that our sins are forgiven, we are constantly engaged in a battle in our minds, fighting a spiritual warfare between the desires of the flesh and the spirit, of what is clean and unclean. The listing of unclean food and the need of ceremonial washing are reflective of what goes on in our inner lives.

The question is not about the things we have touched or the food we have eaten, but rather what is in our hearts. What comes out from us stem from our hearts and minds.

We can defile this temple of worship, ourselves, when we show contempt with our inner impure thoughts. We may do everything religiously right in prayer, serving in church, attending bible studies and CG regularly etc, and still have an unclean heart. *Do you see the power of the Prayer of Confession at every Holy Communion?*

There is an unequivocal difference between *salvation* and *sanctification*.

Part 1 of Leviticus (Chapters 1-16) is about justification where the access to God is through sacrifice. This part is a done deal by Jesus.

Part 2 (Chapters 17-27) is about sanctification, in which we have to do our part by walking daily with God and cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says that we ought to have our feet washed regularly because in our walk through this world we can become unclean in so many ways, intentionally or

otherwise. Some of these defilements can be avoided, and some cannot. There will certainly be many times when we need to wash our feet.

Conclusion *Heb 10:22, Lev 8:23*

Holiness does not mean perfection on our part. Holiness on our part is to recognise the completed work of Christ for our salvation by grace and to live a life of humble confession and repentance daily.

God will never reject us when we draw near to Him with a sincere heart. We need to allow the Word of God to examine our hearts everyday as we read, meditate and dwell on His Word. We need to come humbly before Him, laying bare our inadequacies, defilement, mistakes and our sins whether in thoughts, words or deeds. God will cleanse us. *Are you sprinkled clean?*

Let us be cleansed by His Word, and invite Him into our lives every day. Steer clear of the things that can make us unclean. Stand out to be recognised that we are God's people. Make good and wise decisions. Be holy. God is here to be our helper.

When we touch the lobe of our right ear, *it signifies that we will hear God's voice.*

When we touch the thumb of our right hand, *it signifies that we will do the will of God with our hands.*

When we touch the big toe of our right foot, *it signifies that we will walk in the ways of God.*

We are all appointed as a royal priesthood. May we live our lives, not just with the aim of being good, but rather, to be holy.

Irishman, Robert Smith, said, *"There are 5 gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the Christian. Most people will never read the first four."*

Your life is a living testimony that people will "read". Will you then choose to live out the Gospel in Christlikeness?



SERMON REFLECTION

It's been over a month now since my studies started. It wasn't all rosy as MCO 2.0 had begun around the same time, shifting in-person classes to online ones. Social interactions came to a screeching halt and I found myself on the pendulum of excitement of a new season and blankness of a repeating #stayathome norm. In between reading materials and spring-cleaning before the Lunar New Year, I craved for my leisure holidays which I enjoyed last year.

I questioned God on why He has brought me out of 2020 to where I am right now, even though His promise of goodness after my studies would be like '*milk and honey*'. I sighed with regret at putting too much on my plate only to reason that doing 3 subjects is minimal considering that I am not working full-time. I shrugged as I stared at all the printed handouts that I would have to read, reflect and review on. I slept off afternoons as an excuse to escape from the heat and humidity of each passing day.

I tried, not that I didn't, to get myself out of this seething rut and four walls, with the constant reminder that sin is crouching at my door. If I am not careful, I would be devoured whole by the evil one. I made sure that I would finish my BRP devotions weekly, be present and productive when I am on prayer hosting and Ignite duties, attempt my assignments, and even go for walks in the neighbourhood or spending precious hours with my relatives, some friends and my spiritual parents during this CNY.

To quench my question on why I should not complain about the difficulties and discomforts that I was experiencing, God spoke through Leviticus 11:45 which says, "I

am the Lord, who brought you up out of [...] to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.”

My heavenly Father, for the times when I wished you weren't looking, forgive me. I was busy scheming in self pity and pride to reach the point when my heart almost settled for a rebellion against your Word. I reasoned and bickered with you for a life of ease, but you reminded me through John the Baptist's reproach in Luke 3:8 - that I should not take for granted that I am your child. You are after all, God. Sovereign over my life and so I should seek to live my life well, to be Christlike. To be holy, set apart, because You are holy. I should not, and need not, any reason beyond that truth. Thank you for Your abounding love, grace and mercy upon my life. Amen.

Contributed by Wendy ML Tan



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Questions

- What is the household chore that you least enjoy doing? Which gives you the most satisfaction when it is done? Why?
- Imagine a personal CCTV looming over your head for 24 hours. Describe how you would feel about it.

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- In the Old Testament, how can the Jews become unclean?
- Why was it important that the Jews came to God clean? How can they make themselves clean before God?
- In the New Testament, what does it mean to become unclean?
- How do we become clean? What does it mean today to be entering into the Presence of God?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- Do you consider yourself a good Christian? Rate yourself from 1-10. 1 being very unclean. 10 being perfectly clean.
- Other than Jesus, is there a role model whom you look up to as a standard of living a clean life? Why do you admire that person?
- Holiness comes before happiness. Do you agree with the statement 100%? Why or why not?
- In the analogy of our feet getting dirty as we walk the world, give an example on how we can get unclean in light of Mark 7:18–23.
- In what ways have we come into the Presence of God with unclean hearts?
- What steps can we take to move forward in having a posture of the heart that is holy, and Christlike?
- How can we ensure that our feet will not easily become unclean again?

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Being perfectly clean is difficult and hard. Since God is merciful and forgiving, is it all right for me to enter His Presence just as I am?
 - What would happen when we tread into the Presence of God with our unwashed feet?
 - There are people that we may have perceived as holy but they commit scandalous crimes like fraud or sexual misconduct. How should you respond when you hear or read about such incidents?
 - There's a saying that states that the true test of our character is when no one is watching. Have you cheated on someone or something recently? Share with your cell leader or mentor about it before it becomes a bigger problem.
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PRAYER



Photo by Timothy Eberly on Unsplash

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

China

Raising up future leaders is an essential task in building and maintaining the church. There are about 38 million attendees at China's Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) churches. Their next generation of pastors, preachers and teachers will need to be in training now, but it appears that there is a shortage of candidates.

China's 22 TSPM seminaries are finding it difficult to attract students to fill their courses. The government's current tough stance toward religion is causing parents to think twice about encouraging and supporting their children in choosing a career in ministry.

Though sanctioned by the state, TSPM churches are not immune to persecution and congregations are no longer feeling secure. The coronavirus pandemic has hit churches in the pocket and subsequently affected the income of the seminaries. Some seminaries have resorted to fundraising themselves.

Prayer:

a) The church will not allow fear to come between them and service to God. May God grant peace to the families of those who want to enter seminary training.

b) God will protect and build His church, according to His will.

c) The seminaries will have enough funding to carry out their missions.

(Source: Amccsm Dec 2020)"

Covid-19 Pandemic

Successful efforts to break the chain of infection

- Wisdom for the authorities to effectively plan, communicate and implement measures to contain the pandemic
- People to be patient, vigilant and responsible to willingly do our part in compliance
- Employers to be responsible for the protection of their workers, especially migrants.

Operational readiness and vaccine roll-out

- Planning and logistics of distributing the vaccines
 - Wisdom and peace of mind as people work through the issue and choice of vaccines
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OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!



Our Bodies are Icons of God's Grace

seedbed.com

God fashioned our bodies to be the perfect means for rec...

Timothy Tennent

Christian Living

Article



The Sacredness of Ordinary Trasks

seedbed.com

All work is sacred when it is seen through our status as im...

Timothy Tennent

Vocation Christian Living

Article



Walking with God Through Grief

voice.dts.edu

Mom lingered in a coma for a few days. The stroke had c...

Michael Ward

Counselling Suffering

Article



Theology of Stewardship

45 minutes (Transcript provided)

voice.dts.edu

In this episode, Dr. Darrell Bock and Scott Talbot discuss ...

Darrell Bock Scott Talbot

Vocation Work

Podcast

OTHER RESOURCES

Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

