

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

July 25, 2019

Purging Our Conscience

When I was about eight years old, I uttered some words my mother found very disrespectful. “You need your mouth washed out!” she exclaimed. She then summoned me to the bathroom and stuck a bar of soap in my mouth. I don’t know if it actually cleaned anything, but it sure made me pay attention to what came out of my mouth. If only it was this easy to wash the human heart.

All human efforts to deal with sin fall short of being a true solution. At best, human remedies only deal with a portion of the problem. The Mosaic Law used the fear of death to effect change upon the people. [Hebrews 2:15](#). Yet with all its rituals, commandments, and ordinances it could only change the actions of a person. It could not change what they were in heart and nature. Jesus described this approach as being like those who washed a cup on the outside, but on the inside it remained filthy.

No book in the Bible deals more directly with the failure of human effort to cleanse a person from sin than the epistle to the Hebrews. Paul presents that a person is not “complete” before God until they have been washed from sin, not only in their actions, but in their heart also.

The KJV Bible uses the words ***“perfect, perfection, and perfected”*** to describe the completion spoken of in Hebrews. These terms are not speaking of some kind of “spiritual robot” who never makes a mistake, but these describe a work that is not partial or incomplete in its reach and effect. When Paul says *“for the Law made nothing perfect”* he is pointing out that the Law could never do a “complete” work in a person. On the other hand, when he writes *“For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,”* Paul is showing that Jesus Christ does not bring a partial salvation. When he sanctifies a person, he does it completely.

Central to our “completion” through Christ is the issue of our ***“conscience.”*** This speaks of “our innermost thoughts and feelings.” Our *“conscience”* determines why we do the things we do and think the things we think. This is what Jesus referred to as *“the heart.”* He said, *“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man...”* Matthew 15:19-20.

Any answer for sin that does not wash it from the heart is *“weak and unprofitable.”* Hebrews 7:18. This includes Moses’ Law, which *“...could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.”* Hebrews 9:9. This inability to “complete” the worshipper is revealed in the fact that the Law through its various washings could *“sanctify to the purifying of the flesh...”* Hebrews 9:13, (which speaks of the outer man), but it could do nothing to purge the inner *“conscience”* from sin. Paul points out that if the sacrifices of the Law could have purged the

conscience they would no longer need to be offered because “...*the worshippers once purged should have had **no more conscience of sins.***”

Hebrews 10:2. Those sacrifices could never purge the inner “conscience” from sin, therefore it left the worshipper very “incomplete” and defiled before God.

The Apostles presented the blood of Christ as a far superior sacrifice because it does so much more than cleanse the outside of a person. The Bible says, “*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?*” Hebrews 9:14. This is what Jesus described as “washing the inside of the cup.” Matthew 23:25. The offering of Jesus Christ upon the cross was the first and only sacrifice ever given that could wash sin from the heart and nature of man or woman.

The purging of our “conscience” from sin is what Paul gives as the basis of our completion in Christ. He says, “*For by one offering he (Jesus Christ) hath perfected (completed) forever them that are sanctified.*” Hebrews 10:14. The word “forever” means “into perpetually.” The blood of Christ has no expiration date. If you do not draw back from faith in Christ Hebrews 10:39, the blood that washed your heart from all sin when you came to Christ will keep it clean throughout this life and into the world to come!