

THE CLEANSING POWER OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

1 John 1:5-10

Service Information

Lessons: Free Text

Hymns, ELH:

331 vv.1-4, 6 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

334/335 vv. 1-4, 6, 8 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

332 O Darkest Woe

Faith & Our Savior Lutheran Churches

Medford & Grants Pass, Oregon

Edward L. Bryant, Pastor

<https://d.docs.live.net/81ac7f830c90c375/F-OS Church/Sermons/2019-20/Good Friday 2020 SRM.docx>

1048 Words

1 John 1:5–10 (CSB)

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in him. ⁶ If we say, “We have fellowship with him,” and yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. ⁷ If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say, “We have not sinned,” we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Dear fellow redeemed: In our age that is big on feelings, moods, and thoughts in general, we aren't so good at being specific. On Thanksgiving we are supposed to list what we are thankful for, but unless we include to Whom we are thankful, we just have a list of things we like. We carelessly say things like, “My thoughts and prayers go out to our heroic healthcare workers,” but, really, we don't pray to them. Our prayers go to our true Lord, who can watch over them – and us.

Likewise, on Good Friday we can cavalierly say that we know that Christ died for our sins, but who really wants to get specific? In our general confession of sins, we say, “I confess unto You all my sins and iniquities, with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your punishment in both time and in eternity.” That's general enough, except now we are facing a social, economic, and medical calamity, and it is because of my sin, and because of your sin. In the face of the very worst of these

calamities, Jesus says, ***“No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as well.”*** (Luke 13:5, CSB)

To repent means to turn around, to turn away from our sins. It means more than just saying “I’m sorry.” Once again it makes a difference to be precise. It means I confess of my particular sins. It means I confess to God, whom I have truly offended. You too.

What difference does it make to say, **and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin**, if I don’t stop to consider MY sin?

It is comfortable to think of other people’s sins. I’m good at admitting those. You too. Surely this nation, this whole world deserves judgment for the millions of lives snuffed out in infancy. Only one elective procedure is permitted in Oregon – the killing of children. Our society deserves judgment as the natural expression of love between a man and a woman is bent and twisted by pornography. So many bend their minds through intoxication – whether drugs or alcohol. People swear in God’s name to be true for life, and they aren’t. People swear to the living God to raise their children in the Christian faith, and then they don’t.

Gossip and lies are the currency online, destroying reputations and alienating people from one another. Love grows cold. Covetousness burns in people’s hearts as they envy and resent what others possess. Those who seek power stoke the fires of envy incessantly.

And people repent, not to the true and living God, but they set up idols of nature or government to whom they look for rescue. Prayers are offered up to imaginary “gods” like Allah and the Mormon gods, and whatever god inhabits the common imagination.

People grow careless of the name of Christ, and preach (or believe) falsehoods taught as Christian truth. So many are indifferent toward the word of Christ that they don’t for 15 minutes miss gathering together around word and sacrament to receive the gifts of God.

But by now we recognize those “sins of other people” are our own sins. I am selfish. You have misused God’s name. I have not loved Him above all things. You have not been faithful to his word. You have been hurtful to people He loves, negligent of pastors and others whom He has called to lead you. I have been unfaithful, stingy, and covetous.

And if you don’t think so, then you convict yourself of self-righteousness and the cloud of disapproval you cast over others brands you as a hypocrite. John anticipates our denials, **⁸ If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**

The more we understand the depths of our sinfulness, the more we grasp the immensity of the gospel promise, **the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

To walk in the light is to live in faith, to live in the knowledge of God’s perfect holiness, and to acknowledge that we are not holy, but deserve to be cast of by God. To live in the light is to live in faith, in the knowledge that Jesus, the Messiah, lived out that righteousness having washed our sin off of us and onto Himself, He has atoned for our sins and so now declares you innocent.

The shedding of the blood of God’s son, His rejection under God’s wrath, was a terrible price to pay, but it was the price of our sin, so that ... **⁷ If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

““Come, let us settle this,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are crimson red, they will be like wool.” (Isaiah 1:18, CSB)

AMEN.