

Lenten Devotional 2020

Tuesday, March 31, 2020
Day 30, Exodus 30

Bathe Once

Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from it. (Exodus 30:19)

In yesterday's devotion (which I wrote and published earlier today) I pointed out the parallel between the rituals of the priests and Christians today. In short, we are all priests before God. Today, we want to see how the sacrifice of Jesus is greater than the sacrifices under the first covenant.

In John 13:1–17, Jesus is gathered with his disciples having dinner, when he gets up and begins to wash his disciples feet. This was considered a lowly job, really for a slave, because the feet got so dirty from the dusty roads and the open toed shoes. Naturally, the disciples are shocked and as usual Peter brashly says what everyone is thinking—I can't let you wash my feet! When Jesus replies that without the washing Peter can have no part in him, he exclaims, "Then not just my feet, but my head and my hands as well." Jesus then has to correct Peter in the other direction saying a person who has bathed only needs his feet washed to be fully clean."

The story goes on and here is much to unpack from it, but here we will focus on this particular element of the story. Some interpret this conversation around baptism. To ask Jesus to wash head and hands as well Peter is asking to be baptized once again. Jesus then says no, Peter doesn't need to be rebaptized—just have his feet washed. In this interpretation then, having the feet washed points to the Christian's need to continue to confess and repent.

The discipline of on going examination, confession, repentance, and assurance of pardon is very important in the Christian life. We don't need to have the ongoing ritual for baptism, because Christ's baptism is sufficient. But, we do need to continually recognize and deal with sin in our lives.

Prayer

Lord, thank you for your cleansing work and the way it remains effective for us. Help us to take it seriously by identifying and dealing with sin that invades our lives. Amen.