

Examine yourself before Passover! (Part 2) By Frank Borg

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). God gave and sent His begotten Son because of His love for us. The Passover sacrifice demonstrates the greatest act of love by God for mankind! Christ’s sacrifice demonstrates God the Father’s and Christ the Son’s supreme love for us, and we have the opportunity and privilege of partaking of the Passover symbols and understanding the deep significance and meaning of what they represent.

Till recently, God’s people have differentiated between physical and spiritual sins: we believed that breaking physical laws constituted the committal of ‘physical sins’, and that Christ’s beating and scourging prior to His death was the penalty that paid for the forgiveness of our ‘physical sins’. Meanwhile, we also believed that the breaking of spiritual laws constituted the committal of ‘spiritual sins’ which were forgiven through the spilled blood of Christ.

Consider this: Our physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). If, for example, we eat poorly or treat our bodies harmfully, are we not damaging the temple wherein dwells the Holy Spirit? When we break ‘physical laws’ such as these, are we not ultimately sinning against God? Whether breaking a ‘physical’ or ‘spiritual’ law, isn’t sin just that – sin?!

Is not ALL sin spiritual?

Scripture doesn’t differentiate between physical or spiritual sin, it simply discusses ‘sin’. The Bible clearly tells us that ALL sin is forgiven by the shed blood of Christ. Please read and understand the following scriptures carefully:

- 1) “...THE BLOOD...of Jesus Christ His Son CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN” (1 John 1:7).
- 2) “In whom WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD” (Eph. 1:7).
- 3) “...Unto Him that loved us, and WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD” (Rev. 1:5).
- 4) “...CHRIST DIED FOR US...BEING NOW JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be saved...” (Rom 5:8-9).

(Emphasis in the above scriptures are mine throughout).

Scripture is so clear! It plainly states that it is Christ’s blood that washes away our sins! Forgiveness of sin is made possible through Christ’s spilled blood. Furthermore scripture also tells us that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23). Notice carefully! This scripture says that *death* is the penalty of sin. It doesn’t say that beating or scourging is the penalty of any sin – not even so called ‘physical sin’! You will not find one single scripture in the Bible that supports the preconceived idea, or theory, that ‘physical sin was forgiven by the *beating* of Christ’. (We will come to Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Pet. 2:24 later). Christ *had to die* for the forgiveness of ALL our sins. Irrespective of whether we term certain sins ‘physical’ or ‘spiritual’, Christ’s *blood* had to be, and was, spilled for the forgiveness of ALL sin!

Let us proceed by taking a look at Isaiah 53:5 (1 Pet. 2:24 is almost identical). This most crucial scripture is one which we certainly have to study carefully along with all the aforementioned scriptures on this subject to get a true understanding of Christ’s sacrifice and honestly ‘discern the Lord’s body’:

“He was WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, He was BRUISED FOR OUR INIQUITIES: the CHASTISEMENT of our peace WAS UPON HIM; and WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED” (Isaiah 53:5).

Christ went through tremendous beating and scourging. He endured the pain of being whipped with leather whips. These whips had metal spikes at the end of them which ripped into and tore open Christ’s flesh and disfigured Him to the point where He was no longer recognizable (Is. 52:14). It was by the stripes of Christ that the *first step* of the forgiveness of our sins and healing was made possible. He was brutally *wounded* as a result of our sins, but those sins were actually forgiven by His spilled blood. Without the stripes of Christ, our sins could not be forgiven and we could not be healed! This is what we must understand: All of our sins were ‘borne’ (Strong’s 5375: accept, carry, taken, worn, etc) upon Christ’s body by and through every stripe of the whip that He received (Is. 53:4-5). The transgressions of God’s law (physical and spiritual) were placed upon Him at the time of His beating and scourging. This is when He bore our sicknesses and diseases (Is. 53:4) and every other sin (verse 5) on Himself! This was a tremendous burden our Savior carried because of God’s tremendous love for us. Understand further: When Christ was beaten, *no sin was forgiven!* The beating that He suffered signified the heaping of our sins upon His body! He then carried the weight of those sins to the stake. He still bore the sins on the stake (1 Peter 2:24). It was then by His spilled blood that our sins were washed away (1 John 1:7; Eph 1:7; Rev 1:5; Rom 5:8-9; Rom 6:23 etc). On the stake, Christ finally took His last breath as “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34). The story continues in Matthew 27:50-51:

“Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent”.

The moment the soldiers spear ripped through Christ’s side, His blood was spilled and He died. At that same time, the veil of the temple was ripped in two.

Hebrews 10:19-20 clearly confirm that (a) our sins are washed away through Christ’s spilled blood, (b) His death gave us access to God through Christ’s torn body representing the torn veil of the temple, and (c) Christ’s sacrifice provided access to God so that He can forgive our sins and heal us from all our sicknesses and diseases. We must deeply understand the meaning of Christ’s sacrifice before partaking of the Passover.

Carefully read chapter 4 of the Faithful Church of God in Laodicea’s booklet entitled “God’s Holy Days: Passover” to understand this subject fully and more deeply. Meditate upon the meaning and significance of Christ’s beating and spilled blood as we examine ourselves in the run up to Passover.

As we discern the Lord’s body over in the run-up to Passover, we must continue to search ourselves and ‘root out the leaven’ so that we can be partake of the Passover in a worthy manner. Examining ourselves also means that we must discern the Lord’s body: we must take personal responsibility for Christ’s sacrifice and understand what He went through and why He went through it! In conjunction with the first article on this two-part series on examining ourselves, following are further areas where we need to be examining ourselves so as to root sin out of our lives more effectively:

- ***Is my lifestyle in obedience to God, allowing my light to shine?***

2 Cor. 13:5 “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates”.

Eph. 4:22-24 “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness”.

Matt. 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world....Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven”

- ***Am I committed to following God and His Word?***

2 Cor. 13:8 “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth”.

- What must we overcome?

James 1:14 “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed”

- ***Do we seek perfection by growing in grace and knowledge?***

Hebrews 6:1-2 “Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment”.

2 Peter 3:19 “Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior”.

- ***Do we do good for the right reasons?***

Matt. 6:1-4 “Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly”.

- ***Do we rule our tongue, or do we allow our tongue to rule us?***

James 3:5-10 “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be”.

- ***Do we fulfill our roles within marriage the way God expects?***

Eph. 5:22-28 “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and

gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.”

· ***Do we apply scripture or do we deceive ourselves?***

James 1:22 “Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves?”

We must study and examine ourselves if we are to show ourselves approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15). Self examination is not easy; it is something that human nature does not want to confront. However, out of love for God and for the tremendous sacrifice Christ went through, we must search ourselves so as to be accounted worthy to partake of the Passover!