

Introduction

We are continuing through the Book of Exodus. We went through most of the plagues last week, so if you weren't here last week, you avoided the plague. Pretty good job! (Laughter) Today we'll see the final plague upon Egypt, the faithless in that area, how God is working to free His people from slavery, and to eventually set them up as a nation. All these amazing things were all for His Name's sake, not for them or their glory but for Himself and His glory, so that He will be worshipped.

Before I start reading here, I do want to make a correction; I just felt the need to do this. Last week I made a reference to the Scripture referring to Satan as a counterfeiter, and I said that that was found in Galatians. It's actually in 2 Thessalonians, so if I lost points with any of you or any of you even remember that reference, my heart is now clear because I brought that correction to you (Laughter) ...but there's a reference in 2 Thessalonians that says that Satan works through counterfeit. I talked that last week with all the false gods of Egypt.

Today we're picking up in chapter 11. The final plague is threatened, and we'll get into some of chapter 12 with the institution of Passover. Then we're going to dive in and see what all that means. So, Exodus chapter 11, starting in verse 1: *"The Lord said to Moses, 'Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely. Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.' And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of the Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.*

"So Moses said, 'Thus says the Lord: About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on the throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been nor ever will be again. But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me saying, "Get out, you and all the people who follow you." And after that I will go out.' And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Pharaoh will not listen to you, that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.'

"Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land."

Chapter 12: *"The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, in the land of Egypt, 'This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.*

"Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter

herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt."

So this is the final plague. We saw, last week, that God wasn't just trying to be twisted or creative in how He brought judgment into Egypt but that He was working through the river, the sky, the land... through His creation... and manipulating these things to bring plagues, not just to punish the faithless and the pagan and the idol worship of the Egyptians but to attack their idols, their false gods, because all of their gods were tied to different areas of creation: gods over the river, gods over the sky, and gods over the land. So when God was working in His creation and manipulating His creation and proving His sovereignty, He was saying, "These gods are not real; they are lesser. I am the God over all of these things that you worship. You worship the creation and I am the Creator." He was addressing these things through the different plagues that He brought. Well this time, instead of working through creation, God is just going to intervene directly. He says that He is going to kill the firstborn; He will come through and strike down the firstborn.

What I want to do is kind of zoom out; we don't want to just look at the cool narrative which is really amazing... It tells us about who God is and His purposes for Israel and all those kind of things... But if we want to say, "Well how does that affect me?" We have to say, "Well, what does this say about God and how He relates to people and how people stand in relationship to Him?" I would say that there is a consistency in Scripture with all those things. We want to look at that today as we look at this story, as God is calling worshippers to Himself. Remember, it's for His great Name's sake. It's not for Israel that He is setting Israel free; it's for His worship, and His namesake, and His glory.

1. The Sin.

The first thing I want to talk about is the sin: This sin thing, this sin issue... Sin to be punished, sin to be addressed, and the fact that there is sin. The New Testament tells us, in relation to the Gospel, that we are all born sinners. We are born separated from God by our sin; we have sinful hearts. The Bible says that the heart is deceptively wicked and deceitful. The Bible says that anything that's not done in faith is evil. The Bible says that no one is righteous. The Bible says, "Apart from Christ, we can do nothing." So what we have is a pretty bleak picture of humanity on our own... humanity apart from God; a humanity apart from Christ is in a really bad situation. We say that all have fallen short of the glory of God. We are all sinners. It's an even playing field. When we look at how God extends grace to sinners, grace in the light of sin is that much greater. It's that much sweeter. The Gospel is good news. If there was no bad news, the Gospel would just be news. Since there is bad news, there is good news to compare it to and contrast it with, and that's the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we say that sin is kind of an even playing field, that no one is righteous, do we see that here? It's tempting to think "No" because He is punishing the bad guys, and He is saving the good guys. Right? It almost looks like He is for the moral and against the immoral. God is for morality and against immorality. But if we're tempted to think that salvation or eternal favor with God is purely poured out for the moral... or earned... then it's not grace; it's a reward... it's something that we deserve. That's not the Gospel. The Gospel is about grace. Grace is just extended even though it is not deserved. So, do we see that here? I would say, "Yes"... so I'm going to make those arguments to you.

So we do see a sense that Egypt is the bad guys; they are the oppressors. They have enslaved Israel. Israel is the good guys. Right? They are God's people. They are held against their will in Egypt... all these kind of things... and so it's tempting to think that's just what this story is: It's the good guys and the bad guys. God is for the good guys, and it's because they are good people, God wants to protect them and save them. That's not true. If you remember, God chose Israel before they were enslaved. God chose Israel before they chose Him. God chose to show grace to His people and initiate a relationship before there was any thought of "Be our God." He said, "You will be My people first." That's just the grace of God and we see that at play here.

This final plague that is threatened is threatened for everyone. God says that He will make a distinction between Egypt and Israel because He still has a purpose for the nation of Israel, the people of Israel, that He wants to carry out, that He wants to execute for His glory, so He's going to work those purposes out. But... we still see here that it's faith that God is looking at... not the good works of Israel and the bad works of Egypt that are really at play. He is looking at faith. I want to state why I believe that here.

He promises the final plague. In verse 5, He says, just looking at Egypt alone: *"... every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die. From the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on the throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill..."* So wealth and prosperity and privilege... none of these things have earned any favor with God. So God will bring judgment against Pharaoh who sits on the throne and against the slave girl at the handmill who has no privilege or wealth or prosperity. So it's not like there is any sense of "I can buy favor with the Lord" or "I've been born into favor with the Lord"... anything like that. So we see this level playing field, even amongst Egypt.

The other thing that is a bigger point or a bigger thing to look at is that He is still going to visit the Israelites homes too. Right? If He was just going to pour judgment out on Egypt and not on Israel, He would just go to all the Egyptian houses and kill their firstborn and just skip the Israelites because they were the people who deserve it. Right? But that's not the case. God is coming by to assess the faith and see if there has been faith in His plan and what He has promised them for redemption. In verses 12 and 13, when He talks about going to look and when He sees the blood on the doorposts, He will pass by, He will relent, He will hold back the destroyer who is to kill the firstborn. So why is He visiting the houses of Israel? ...To see if there is evidence of their faith... To see if they have trusted in His promise... If He said, "Hey, I'm going to do this, I'm going to cast judgment, I'm going to kill the firstborn... here's how you avoid that. Here's how I withhold death: It is by trusting in this plan." So there is blood shed. There's blood put on the doors, and when He comes through, He visits Israel too (an even playing field)... He visits the households of Israel and the households of Egypt to see if there are signs of faith... to see if they have faith in what He has promised. Does this sound kind of familiar? It's really cool to see all these parallels with our lives and how God works with us and how He works with his people back then.

So Israel was on the same playing field as Egypt when it comes to salvation. Ultimately, their freedom, their nationhood... all these things that He is setting up for them as a people... that's outside of their eternal salvation... just based on righteousness. The Israelites are not any more righteous than the Egyptians. It's only by faith that they are found righteous. So that's why we see that parallel back then and today, the same way God interacts with His people. We know this, that the Israelites weren't any better, because if you were to read through the Old Testament and look at Joshua 24:14 or just skip ahead to Joshua 24:14... you would see a reference to some of the Israelites in Egypt, under oppression and in slavery, had adopted some of the household gods, some of those false gods, some of those idols of the Egyptian people. After four hundred and something years of slavery, they had adapted to the culture... they had fallen under the

influence of those and had brought those idols into their homes. So that shows us that not all Israel is just "We're a better people because we're Israel... we're a more moral people just because of the nation we're in." Does that sound kind of familiar? So he says that they had brought idols into their homes, they had brought false gods, they had worshipped another god, and so there is sin in their hearts just like there is sin in the hearts of the Egyptians.

In Romans 3, Paul talks about this again and throws out some of these rhetorical questions about "Are the Jews at some kind of moral advantage because they're Jewish?" And he says, "No, they're not. Jews and Greeks (so Jews and non-Jews) are all on a level playing field when it comes to righteousness apart from Christ. "There is none righteous..." We're all in the same boat. We're all sinners separated from God.

So the temptation here for Israel... and we'll see this play out if you follow Israel through their wandering in the desert and all this stuff, before He establishes them... The temptation is to feel entitled, to feel like it's not an act of grace that God has extended these blessings towards us... "We've earned this." So after hundreds of years of slavery, it would be really tempting to think, "We paid our dues... We were the oppressed... We were the downtrodden and now we're getting what's owed us; we're getting a reward. We're getting our own nation. We're getting a people. We're getting to plunder the Egyptians without even fighting them. We're going to go door-to-door and just ask them for gold and silver, and they're going to hand it over." It says that God gave them favor in the sight of the Egyptians. That word "favor" is the same word as "grace." God is pouring grace on them. The Egyptians are handing over gold and silver to the Israelites as they leave. The temptation, I'm sure, for Israel is to think, "We've earned this. We deserve this. This is our right because we are a better people and we... in theory or in name... we are God's people and we worship the one true God so these things are owed to us." That's going to be something that they're going to struggle with throughout their history as being God's chosen people... thinking that somehow salvation is equal to these different blessings and promises that God is fulfilling in them and for them, that they are not tied to their salvation. That's the temptation for them and the temptation for us.

This sense of entitlement, I think, is pretty prevalent in our culture. We're kind of a "Me" society... an entitled society. There's an example here. My brother told me about this story a few years ago. Back in 2009, KFC was coming out with a new product, and they thought that they would utilize technology and branding and all this kind of stuff and really boost sales and boost exposure. They had a new product... I think it was their grilled chicken, so they used Oprah to advertise, "Hey, we're going to give away free grilled chicken meals to whoever brings in this coupon. This coupon will only be available for 24 hours so there's a small window. We can probably handle the traffic. Oprah, help us out." I don't know how the pitch went but "Oprah... help us out. Advertise this coupon for us. We'll get a lot of business." Well, she does her part and says, "Hey everybody; go download this coupon; you have 24 hours. Take it in to KFC and you'll get your free meal." The thing is, this was kind of the technology age... 2009... things go viral pretty quickly. News spread really quickly about this coupon... this free sandwich. So, I think 10.5 million coupons were downloaded in this 24-hour window. I'm sure it was advertised as, "Download this coupon, come in; while supplies last, you'll get a free chicken meal." Well, they didn't have enough (laughing). It went so widespread and so crazy; like wildfire, people were showing up and they didn't have enough of the chicken... they didn't have enough of the sides because it was a whole meal they were supposed to get and people were there with coupons saying, "I have the coupon and so I should get the meal." They were saying, "Well, we can substitute this for your mashed potatoes." They were trying to make them happy. People were irate. They went online and they were just blasting KFC, "How could you do this. You're a terrible company." All this kind of stuff, but losing sight of the fact that it's a "free meal." (Laughter) So if you advertise a free meal and someone shows up and you don't have a free meal, people get really angry

because "we've been entitled to this. We deserve this. This is something that belongs to me. I have a right to this free meal" ...losing sight of the fact that it was a gift offered while supplies last. Yet, this entitlement speaks up in us and says, "Wait a second... I want my meal this way, and I want my meal now." So they had to do all this damage control to do rain checks and all this kind of stuff. So they definitely got the exposure and the publicity they were looking for, just not in a good light. It was very negative and they just didn't realize the expanse of that. That's just kind of a window on our entitlement culture.

I have another example: it's a little more close to home because this is something that I fought personally in my life. I don't know if you're aware of this... I was trying to remember what season it was, but I determined it probably wasn't last season because it was tied to Texan wins... (Laughter) ... the Houston Texans... I'm a fan. I don't know if you know this but Sonic gives you a free slush the day after a Houston Texan win. So if you go in... I think it's a Texan theme... It's "Battle Red" cherry flavor. I heard this so I thought, "Whoa, alright. That's a pretty good deal. I'll try that out." I wouldn't normally get cherry flavor but it's a free slush. So, the Texans had won; I went to Sonic, I ordered the slush. They brought me the slush and it was rock hard... frozen solid. You know what they do? They realize, "We're going to have to give out a million of these stupid slushes," and so they make them ahead of time and stick them in the freezer, so when some schmo like me shows up and orders a slush, they can just give me the slush... they know that they're not going to get any money... and I will be on my way. I had to fight in myself, "Wait a second; this is no good. This is frozen solid; nobody wants this slush." Then I thought, "Wait... this is free. It doesn't matter. I'm not out anything. Why do I feel so entitled to this 'Battle Red' Texans slush? ...Because I've earned it. Right? The Texans earned it for me, so I deserve this." I had to fight that urge in me to complain, to grumble, to say, "This is not what I wanted." There's a sense of entitlement, I think just in our culture, where things are offered for free... things we haven't earned, things we don't have rights to and yet we complain about them... we grumble about them.

Israel fought this in their wandering. They had been set free from four hundred-plus years of slavery. They are in the desert; they're wandering which is not overall good but it's freedom. God starts to rain food out of the sky for them. They don't have to go hunting; they just have to gather it. Eat what they need for the day. It's supplied... and what do they do? They grumble; they complain. "We had leeks and onions in Egypt. We might have been slaves, but we had some flavor in our meals. Moses, did you bring us out here to die? What's the point of all this?" It was the sense of entitlement creeping up in them to say "We've lost sight of this grace gift that God has given us to set us free from oppression. He is going to establish us as a nation, and we're here to worship Him; that's the purpose we're here for." They had lost sight of that and said, "We're looking past that grace, and we think we earned it; we think we deserve it because we're a better people." We have that temptation every day, especially as Christians in America... and, if you're a native Texan, especially as a Christian in Texas. All these different levels of the privilege I was born into and the freedom that I was born into, the nation I was born into... maybe the middle-class status you were born into... all these things are tempting us to think, "I've somehow earned this. I deserve this life I'm living." God forbid, we look at our Christianity that way and say, "I deserve salvation; I deserve to go to heaven; I deserve fellowship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit because I'm a good person and I've earned it." That's not grace. Grace is offered unmerited. Grace is offered to sinners. If we deserved it, we wouldn't need it. Does that make sense? We don't deserve grace. We're sinners separated from God with sinful hearts, and so we are in need of grace. Our only hope for salvation is the grace of God... a gift extended to us that we haven't earned. If we've earned it or deserve it, it's no longer grace. So this sense of entitlement that we battle is the same sense of entitlement that Israel battled back then. That sin issue, that sin problem... it's a level playing field. We're all separated from God by a sinful heart.

2. The Substitute.

If we look at the substitute that's provided... so there's a penalty to pay or a price to pay. There's a death that is going to happen. What's the substitute? Well, in chapter 12, with Israel and the Passover, we read that it's a lamb or a goat... a male, a year old, without blemish... without defect... and if they will sacrifice that lamb and put the blood over their doorposts then God would see the blood and pass over them and relent. The substitute for them was a lamb. The substitute for us is Christ, the Lamb. This isn't a coincidence. Scripture makes this connection for us. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, it says that Jesus was the Lamb that took our place. We also read that John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Christ, by no mistake, is the Sacrificial Lamb who is the substitute for sinners. So, for Israel, they sacrificed a lamb as a substitute. The lamb gave its life so that they didn't have to give their firstborn. In Christ, He gave His life so that we don't have to die. There's a substitute there.

There's a big word in Scripture called "propitiation." "Propitiation" just means that it appeases God. There's something in God that has to be satisfied, a price that has to be paid... something that's owed, a debt that's owed... and it has to be made right. So Jesus is the substitute, the atonement, the propitiation for our sins because we fall short and we owe a death, so Christ paid that debt. He is the substitute. We talked about this last week. We talk about it most weeks because this is what we're all about: The Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ came; He lived fully God and fully man, and He lived a sinless life. He lived a sinless life and then He gave up that life, so His death covers the debt of sinners. He is not a sinner so He didn't have any debt. So His blood, His death, covers that of sinners. He was in the grave for three days and then He was raised to life three days later to conquer the power of sin and death, establishing Himself as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. If we, by faith, will believe in that, cry out for that... recognize it, admit, and confess to God that we are spiritually bankrupt... we are unrighteous, we are unholy, undeserving. We have nothing to offer. "All we bring to You is our sin, and by faith I believe in the sacrifice that Christ made." Then His death was the substitute for our death because way back in Genesis there was a curse placed on mankind for sin so man owes... that curse is supposed to be poured out on man... wrath needs to be poured out on man for the sins of man. That's why Jesus had to take on humanity, so that the wrath of God poured out on Jesus on the cross would be poured out on a man, and a man would pay the price. That's why Christ had to go to the cross. That's why we don't still sacrifice lambs or goats or sheep. Scripture says the blood of those animals was not sufficient to cover the sins of men because they didn't owe a sin debt to the Lord, so their death was more symbolic to show us that sin is important... it's a big deal... it's a great offense that cost a life.

In this cool progression throughout Scripture where you see early on in Scripture where it's almost a lamb per person is brought to sacrifice and then a lamb per household and then a lamb for the nation, and then ultimately a Lamb for the sins of the entire world. What God is trying to show us there, I think, is that "Look, you're all on the same playing field... all of your sin is covered by the One Lamb, Jesus Christ." The blood of the animals was not sufficient. It was to point you to something greater. And then when Christ went to cross, shed His blood and gave up His life, you no longer have to sacrifice these animals because His blood was enough... His blood was sufficient to cover sins so you don't have to sacrifice bulls, goats, and sheep, and all this kind of stuff because Jesus bled every drop of blood He's ever going to bleed on the cross. He doesn't have to get back on it. His blood is sufficient; His blood is enough; the cross was enough to cover the sins of the world. So, if by faith we believe in that message and trust in that, and again surrender our lives to Christ and say, "God, obviously Your plan is way better than my plan. I have nothing to bring to You. I need redemption... I need salvation and so I cry out for that. I call out to You by faith for

that"... we will be saved. Christ acts as the substitute... the Lamb that pays with His life, just like the lambs back then.

Romans 3:21-25 says, *"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:... (we heard this earlier)... "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." (verse 24) "...and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith."*

God provided the substitute for His wrath that He was going to pour out, and He poured it out on Christ, and we are justified by this grace... this grace gift in the sacrifice of Christ... *"His blood poured out to be received by faith."* We don't earn it; we can't buy it; we can't conjure it up with some kind of magic spell or magic beans, or whatever... We trust by faith in the work of Christ. It's not a "work"... it's "faith" in the work of Christ. His work is enough. We're justified by the gift of grace.

Another crazy thing in all of this... Revelation 13:8 says that Jesus is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. The cross was not a Plan B. God knew before Creation that Jesus was going to go to the cross. God knew before Creation that Jesus was going to take the wrath for sinners. God knew before Creation that Jesus would surrender His life. It wasn't a backup plan. It wasn't, "Well, this first thing is not working. This blood, these goats, I thought this would appease Me but it's not working. Something greater has to give their life." God knew the whole time... from the foundation of the world... The Lamb was slain. God had this great, great plan of redemption. Pretty amazing.

3. The Sign.

To remind us, to remind Israel, God often uses signs... things that will serve as symbols in our life to point us to a Scriptural truth. It is important for us, as we practice them or look towards these things, not to just make it some kind of empty tradition but to actually use them as things to reflect upon a spiritual truth or something that has actually occurred. In chapter 12, verse 13, it says: *"The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt."*

We're going to look at two sides of this coin here. First, the blood serves as a sign to the people. I usually have skipped over that my whole life. Usually I think, "The blood is there. God shows up, sees the blood." The blood is also a sign to the people. It's a reminder to the people. It says, *"The blood shall be a sign for you..."* The blood shed and put over the door... it tells us, "My sin is a big deal." Sin is a great offense to the Lord, and something had to give its life. If that lamb didn't give its life, then God was going to take the firstborn. For us, fast-forward to now... we see that Christ's blood is the sign, to remind us, that sin is a big deal. That Jesus, fully God and fully man... grotesquely tortured, beaten, and crucified... shed His blood. So when we think on the cross, we see victory... yes... but we also see why did we have to have that victory? Why did Jesus have to give up His life? ...Because our sin was so offensive to God. Our sin deserved that wrath. Our sin deserved that gruesome and bloody and grotesque of a death, so that's the reminder to us... a sign to us... to show us, "My sin's a big deal." But God has a plan; God has shown us grace.

It's not just a sign for us, but it served as a sign to God. It served as a sign to God that there was faith in the people. When God saw the blood on the doorposts, He said, "There is faith in My plan, in My promise,

in My purpose, so I will relent and I will pass over these people." It wasn't like the blood was some kind of magical force field that restrained God from entering a home. That's kind of black magic-type voodoo stuff. That's not the Gospel. It's not like they put the blood there and said, "Oh, make sure... wait... you didn't quite get it right there." Like maybe God could sneak in at that part. The blood didn't have some kind of supernatural ability of its own. It was an evidence of faith. So when God came by and saw the blood on the doorposts, He would say, "There is faith in My promise; I will pass over."

When God looks at those who are in Christ, guess what He sees? He sees the righteousness of Christ because of the blood of Christ. So it's a sign for us to say, "Our sin's a big deal; it's a great offence. Jesus had to lay down His life because of it." It's also a sign to God that we are covered by the blood of Jesus. When God looks at you and sees the blood of Jesus, He sees the righteousness of Christ. He doesn't see that sinful heart that we are all born with. So, if we are in Christ and God sees Christ's righteousness... guess what? Fellowship with God... eternal life and not separation. That's the sign that He sees. That's what God looks down on.

If you look at a hymn book... we don't have them anymore... but if you research things on the internet and look up hymns, there are a lot of songs about the blood of Jesus. Some are really almost-grotesque images of being washed in blood and covered in blood and we think, "That's gross." Well, first of all, Jesus bled the blood. He lived through the shedding of so much blood, so we should be taken aback a little bit by the violence of it because of the wrath poured out on sin. But also, we should welcome it because we are washed clean by that blood. We are made righteous by that blood. We have a right standing and are justified before God because of the blood of Jesus. We want to be washed by the blood. We want to bathe in the blood of Jesus. We want to be covered by it and engulfed by it, as gross as that sounds because, again, it's not some supernatural power in the physical blood of Jesus but the work and sacrifice of Christ on the cross represented by His shed blood. As we are covered by His blood, God looks at us and sees the righteousness of Christ. We have that eternal life, we have that fellowship, we have those things that we haven't earned, we're not entitled to... they are simply a grace gift from the Lord. If we will keep focused on that, we'll stay humble. We will receive the gift in humility and will extend that grace to others. When we fall back into that entitlement, we think we've earned it and then we start to say, "You haven't earned it. You haven't earned it... You haven't earned." It's tempting to say, "I don't extend the grace of God to you because you're not a good enough person. That's what we do when we think we are a good enough person, when the reality is we're all sinners. So the grace that was extended to us is also extended to anyone else, however vile we might think they are, because they're a sinner in need of a Savior. That's the message of grace and the message of the cross.

God sees the sign; we see the sign. Not only in just the act of the crucifixion, the surrender, did we have a sign on the cross, but God has given us the Lord's Supper as a way to remember His sacrifice and to proclaim His death. When He instituted the Lord's Supper, He said, "Every time that you do this, remember Me." Not just, "Hey, remember Me hanging out when we had this time together." He said, "This is My body broken for you, so you remember how My body was broken... how My life was poured out. This is My blood in the cup, so remember My sacrifice. Remember Me laying down My life."

Just as God gave the Israelites Passover and said, "You're going to do this a lot so that you don't forget where you came from and My grace toward you. You're going to eat bitter herbs with this meal to remind you of the bitter times of persecution. You're going to eat it with your belt fastened and ready to go, staff in hand, because you're going to remember that when I call you, you are to follow in obedience. So He set reminders in the Passover meal itself. Jesus has done that in the Lord's Supper for us. "Here's My body...

here is My blood." Take and eat... take and drink... so that we remember the sacrifice of Christ, and we proclaim His death until He comes again.

I'm always personally convicted... I hesitated earlier to say this in the first service, but I'm going to go ahead and say it again in this service... When we take the Lord's Supper and we eat the bread and we drink the cup, it's always, to me, personally convicting to hear the sounds of cups being put in the chairs so hastily as they pass from us, as we set them down, as we get them out of our possession. Again, not trying to guilt you, but for me, I have been convicted. "God, don't let the cup be so quick to pass from my hand. Let me reflect... let me remember the sacrifice that You gave in laying down Your life." Jesus struggled with that Himself. "If this cup can pass from Me, let it; but if not, Lord, Your will be done, not mine." So when we take the Lord's Supper, we are to be drawn back to Jesus laying down His life, surrendering, sacrificing. It was always symbolic to me... again, I'm not trying to guilt you for me... but when I take the Lord's Supper, to not just hastily put the cup away and pass on from that moment but to think, "The sacrifice that You made... Your body given up, Your life surrendered; taking the punishment that I should have taken. The substitute that You served as, in my place for my sin. I haven't earned this Christianity; I don't deserve this grace." It's a gift extended to a sinner in desperate need of a Savior. God has given us a sign to remember and to proclaim what He has done and who He is until He comes again.

I think today before us we obviously have just covered a lot of stuff, but ultimately we always want to provide a time to respond and to reflect. As I said last week and I'll say again today, there are two types of people in the world: There are the righteous and the unrighteous... not of ourselves. There are those who are in Christ and those who are apart from Christ. We want to provide a time of response for you. Today it's more of a time of reflection, so we'll just ask that you remain seated. There's going to be some music playing, but respond to this powerful Gospel message, this truth of Jesus Christ... this truth of our sin and what God has done to reconcile us to Himself. If you are apart from Christ, meaning you have never trusted by faith in Jesus for salvation, you can respond by faith today and trust in Him. You can mark that on the Respond Tab of your worship guide and put that in the offering basket. Even though you're seated, you can still come up and talk to someone. We will have encouragers here. You can cry out to God right where you are. Offer up that faith; surrender your life to Him.

If you're in Christ, maybe today something we talked about just resonated with you. Maybe God revealed some entitlement issues to you or something that you need to get corrected in your life, that you might be more humble in how you walk by faith and how you walk in grace and not things that you believe you've earned or deserve. I know that's something that I struggle with all the time. "God, please remind me; I don't deserve any of this so why would I ever withhold it from anyone else? Why would I wait for someone else to clean up their act before I say, 'Hey, come to church and be like me, now that you're a good guy.'" That's not how it works. Christ has extended grace to sinners in need of a Savior.

We're going to have a time to respond. You can pray where you are. Take time to just reflect on this truth, maybe read some Scripture. There will be Scripture on the screen... but respond to God and His great act of grace through the powerful Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"God, thank you so much for this time. I thank you for the truth of Your Word and the power of Your Gospel. God, I pray that You would reveal the condition of our hearts to us... everyone in this room... God, that You would show us and speak loudly to us... lay it on our hearts and minds, whether we are in Christ or apart from Christ, God, and that it would just be the loudest message we hear all day until we respond. God, I pray for the faith to believe. I pray for salvation in this place. I pray for those who are in

The Blood of the Lamb | Exodus 11:1-12:13 | July 13, 2014

By Jeremy Wilson. Part 6 in the series "Out Of Egypt."

Christ, God, that we would walk with humility, that we would extend grace as a gift, not as something that we think needs to be earned and is only deserved by those who are good and moral people. God, help us to see people as You see people. Help us to see ourselves as You see us, and thank you God for seeing the righteousness of Christ in us as we are covered by the blood. We ask all these things in His powerful Name. Amen."