

Message 6: The Greater the Sin, the Greater the Sacrifice.

4/17/2022

Easter

Message 6/52

Exodus 32:30–35 (CSB)

³⁰The following day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a grave sin. Now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I will be able to atone for your sin."

³¹So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a grave sin; they have made a god of gold for themselves. ³²Now if you would only forgive their sin. But if not, please erase me from the book you have written."

³³The LORD replied to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me I will erase from my book. ³⁴Now go, lead the people to the place I told you about; see, my angel will go before you. But on the day I settle accounts, I will hold them accountable for their sin." ³⁵And the LORD inflicted a plague on the people for what they did with the calf Aaron had made.

1. A grave, and serious, sin.

A. The past two weeks, we have talked much about sin.

1. This isn't anyone's favorite topic.
2. Yet, confronting sin is an important part of Christianity and church.
3. It is not the world's job to confront with sin; that is the job of Christ through His Word and Spirit.

B. The Golden Calf incident was a serious and grave sin.

1. It broke a Covenant, a Marriage, and God's heart.

2. The seriousness of the sin led to death and a plague by God.

C. We do not help anyone when we deny the gravity of sin or try to cover it up.

1. A mistake is a mistake.
2. An accident is an accident.
3. But sin is sin and requires atonement.

2. All sin separates us from God. But not all sin is the same.

A. I get kind of sick about how people talk about sin.

1. A preacher says something is sin and people respond "well so is gluttony, or being lazy, or all kinds of things."
2. But that ignores a fundamental and spiritual reality.

B. For example:

1. In the American code of justice, we have different punishments for different offenses.
2. We recognize that some crimes are more serious or heinous than others.
 - a. This week, a man was sentenced to 375 years for killing a woman and her 2 children over a Facebook post.ⁱ
 - b. The headline after that one says "Florida man arrested for possession of drugs, guns, and an alligator."ⁱⁱ
3. No one would say that these crimes are the same or deserve the same punishment.

C. Scripture teaches that ALL SIN separates us from God.

1. But not all sin is the same.
2. The Apostle Paul laments the drastic nature of sexual sin.

D. This is why the sacrificial system was tiered:

1. The greater the sin, the greater or more costly the sacrifice.

2. All sin separates, and requires a sacrifice.

a. Sacrifices for the sins of the nation and for the priests was more costly than everyday uncleanness issues.

b. Moses knows this, because he had just received the Commandments detailing sin and sacrifice.

c. Israel hasn't heard that yet.

E. Now, the nation of Israel has committed the greatest sins: the breaking of a Covenant, a Marriage, and even God's heart.

1. From where would forgiveness come?

2. What or who could possibly be sacrificed to atone for Sin.

3. Moses understands that the sin is great, therefore the sacrifice must be greater.

A. Moses, understanding one of God's principles, declares "perhaps I will be able to atone for your sin."

1. We do not use the word "atone" a lot.

2. Biblically, the Hebrew has several ranges that try to capture the meaning.

3. To atone is: (MOUNCE)

a. make amends,

b. pardon,

c. release,

d. appease,

e. forgive.

4. Moses is hoping that he can go up the moment and atone, make amends for, or receive pardon, forgiveness and release from God.

5. If Moses cannot atone for the sin, all of Israel may die.

B. How bold is Moses' conversation with God!

1. Notice he starts with confession "the people have sinned".
2. He then specifies the sin "made a god for themselves".

C. Then Moses asks for forgiveness!!!

1. Now if you would only forgive!!!!
2. God doesn't have to forgive.
3. God doesn't have to save.
4. But Moses calls upon God's mercy, love, and faithfulness.

4. How far would Moses go for his people?

A. The "idea" behind atone means to offer something in place.

1. As Moses goes up the Mountain to meet again with God, Moses is prepared to offer his life for them.
2. Moses tells God, "If you will not forgive their sin, then erase me from the book you have written."

B. This book of "eternal life" tells of who will enter eternal life and who will enter eternal death.

1. This is the same book we read about in Revelation, "The Lamb's Book of Life."
2. Notice what Moses is saying:
 - a. My life for theirs.
 - b. I didn't sin, but I will die so that they might live.
3. Moses was not guilty, but He was willing to give his life so that Israel might live.

C. God won't accept this.

1. God declares that, whoever has sinned, that God would erase from His book.

2. No penance, no purgatory, no shortcut.
3. Each man and woman must answer for their sins.
4. Each man and woman is responsible for their own accounts, and God will hold each one of us responsible.

5. Moses was not the right man to die for the sins of Israel.

A. But Moses was on to something.

1. Moses wasn't the one to die for Israel's sin.
2. Moses wasn't the one who was to ascend and atone for humanities' sins.
3. That's because God had another plan.

B. At a distant time, God would send His son to Earth.

1. And Jesus, the perfect, sinless, Son of God would take upon His shoulders the weight of the world's sin and He would atone for their sin.
2. Moses wasn't the savior, he was the foreshadower.
3. Moses wasn't the perfect sacrifice, Jesus is.
4. Moses wasn't the right person to die so others might live, because Jesus would come and He would atone for our sins.

C. And all the way back in Exodus, we see God pointing us to the Cross.

Apply: God still has a book.

A. Revelation 20:11–15 (CSB)

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and one seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. ¹²I also saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works by what was written in the books.

¹³Then the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; each one was judged according to their

works. ¹⁴Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

B. There is coming a day in the future, when all of us will stand before God.

1. Whether we think we committed big sins, small sins, or no sin, we will all stand before God.

2. And at that point in eternity, the thing that matters is: Had Jesus atoned for your sin?

a. Had we confessed our sins and asked for forgiveness?

b. Had we given our lives to Jesus, and followed Him?

c. Had we trusted Him in this life?

C. It doesn't matter how hard you work:

1. No matter how much stress, worry, or condemnation you carry.

2. No matter how much of a good person you try to be.

3. Try as you might, you cannot ascend the mountain and pay for your sin or the sins of your family.

4. But there is one who can, and He did.

5. Jesus has already provided for your forgiveness; you just need to accept it.

Close: [Today is a great day to follow Jesus.](#)

A. My sincerest hope for everyone of us is that we are all right with God.

1. Just like Moses, I hate the idea that there might be one of my people who must pay the price for their sin.

2. As pastor, I pray for you and think about you all far more than you may realize.

a. When I don't see you for a long time, I worry.

b. If I see on social media that you are not living for Jesus, I am grieved.

3. No matter how much I love you, I can't save you.

B. But I can point you to the one who can save you.

1. This morning, If you've been trying to carry the load by yourself, would you be so bold to surrender that all to Jesus today?

2. Perhaps your life has been full of many things, but Jesus isn't one of those things, would you today be so bold to ask Jesus to forgive you, change you, and help you to live for Him?

ⁱ <https://www.foxnews.com/us/nj-man-375-years-sentence-2016-killing-spree-woman-kids-facebook-post>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.foxnews.com/us/florida-man-arrested-baby-alligator-guns-drugs-truck>