



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Exodus 25:1 - 27:19

"The Age of Law, Part III – Law Education"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of studying again from Thy word. We thank Thee for the wonderful grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee for the way in which Thou hast spoken to us through Thy word concerning him. We pray, Lord, as we study tonight we may learn more of him, and May, Lord, he be glorified in our hearts, in our minds, and through our lives. We give Thee thanksgiving and praise for him, and look to Thee for Thy blessing now. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Now, tonight we are concluding our series of studies on the Law, and remember, I haven't a diagram on the board, but the Law is the last age or dispensation before the cross of Jesus Christ. The Law was given to Israel in three parts. It was given to Israel as in the first, the moral law, or the Ten Commandments. Then Israel was given civil and social law, which we call the judgments, for this is the term of Scripture. And also, Israel was given a ceremonial law, and the ceremonial law had to do with the Tabernacle, which you see here, the Tabernacle, the priesthood. The priests were those who served in the Tabernacle. And the offerings, the offerings were that which the priests

brought in their service in worship. So the law was composed of three parts, moral, civil and social, and ceremonial. And we tried to emphasize that the Law was given to Israel as a unity, and if we broke one part of the Law we are guilty of all. For James writes in James 2, in verse 10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

We pointed out that the Law was never given in order to be the means of salvation, for no one could keep the Law. And today, of course, no one can keep the Law. We cannot keep the Ten Commandments. Our Lord came and gave us an interpretation of the Ten Commandments that utterly shatters any notion that men may have of keeping the Law, for not only is the Law not to be observed outwardly, but the Law is to be observed even in our inmost thoughts. And if we have thoughts that are contrary to the Law, we are guilty of breaking the Law.

The Law was given, we saw, for two purposes primarily. I gave you seven reasons, but these, I think, can be gathered up under two general heads. First, the Law was given to show us our sin. The Law is like a mirror. We have often used mirrors with our children, have we not? As we've seen them come in playing, "Goodness gracious, where in the world have you been playing?" "Well mother, I didn't know I was dirty you know." And face is dirty and hand is dirty, "Come in here and let me just let you get a look at yourself." And so you pull back the door and you let your child look in the mirror. Now, the mirror is able to reveal the dirt of the child, but the mirror can do nothing about it. You must take the child into the bathroom and wash the child, or tell the child to wash himself or herself. So the Law is a mirror. The Law shows us that we are sinners, but the Law can do nothing about our sin. It reveals sin. Remember, Paul said in Romans 3:20, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." So the Law was given to show us our sin, the Ten Commandments particularly, because the Ten Commandments are the moral law.

But the Law was also given, we pointed out, to show the Savior Jesus Christ. For God not only gave the Law in order to convince Israel that they were sinners, but in the Tabernacle, the priesthood, and the offerings, God gave Israel, before the cross, before the time when Jesus Christ would come, a large object lesson to teach them in picture and pageant form the things that Jesus Christ would do for them when he came. So the Law was given to show sin. It was given to show the Savior Jesus Christ. As a matter of, of course, the whole of the Bible is a revelation of Jesus Christ in a sense. In Edinburgh two years ago I went into a church to hear the liberal E. Stanley Jones preach. He was in the city, and so I thought I at least ought to hear him once. And in the course of the message, he unfolded the pulpit of a Church of Scotland church, a large picture of Jesus Christ. And it was on a piece of linen, I believe, some kind of material. And he told us that the whole of the Bible was on this piece of cloth. And so afterwards everybody crowded around, and he put out the picture on a table like this, and then took out a magnifying glass, and sure enough, you could start at the top of the page, and in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And then down at the end the Book of Revelation. Now, I may have this wrong, because I did not put it down, it may be that it was just the New Testament, but the point is the same, that the whole of the Scriptures, which were unfolded here, presented Jesus Christ. And as you saw this, it was a portrait of Jesus Christ, or a painting of Jesus Christ. But then when you examined it, it was the text of Scripture all in this portrait.

Now, the Bible is like that. Of course, the Bible speaks of Jesus Christ from beginning to end. It is a revelation of him. But especially in certain institutions, in certain events, in certain persons do we see illustrations of Jesus Christ. And the Tabernacle is a beautiful illustration of Jesus Christ's work. A large, in fact we could say a Texas size, object lesson of the Lord Jesus Christ. In John 1:14, now I would like for you to take your Bibles and turn to John 1:14. In John 1:14, John writes words like these, John 1:14. Now, notice the first verse of John, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with

God, and the Word was God." Now, in the 14th verse John continues the prologue by saying, "And the Word was made flesh." Now, your English text says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." In the Greek text, that word is a word which means "to Tabernacle" it is the Greek verb, skenoo, from which we get the word skenei which means "a Tabernacle." In fact, that very word is used of this Tabernacle in the New Testament. This is a Tabernacle, and Jesus Christ came and Tabernacle among us, "And we beheld his glory," we beheld the Shekinah, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Jesus Christ himself was a personal Tabernacle of God.

Now the Tabernacle of the Old Testament is designed to be a representation of the work and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's a large object lesson. I don't know whether you realize it or not, but when you read through the Bible, and I think we all have this experience, and I must confess after having studied the Bible for a number of years now, I still have difficulty when I begin to get into the section dealing with the Tabernacle, to keep everything before me at all times. Occasionally I get lost in the measurements of the Tabernacle, and I'm sure that some of you, at least, have that experience. But one thing that has impressed me through the years is this, you read along, and you start the Bible and first two chapters tell us about the creation. We have nothing else about the creation, except some scattered references to it, and maybe a verse or two elsewhere. But then when you get to Exodus chapter 25, where Moses begins to describe the construction of the Tabernacle, he gives intricate directions, that is God gives the directions to Moses, and then Moses details how these were carried out. And then in the Book of Leviticus, he describes the worship that the priests carry on in the Tabernacle and so, until ultimately you have about fifty chapters of the Bible devoted to the Tabernacle of Israel and only two to creation.

Now, I think you can see from this the importance in the sight of God of the truth concerning the Tabernacle of Israel. And while in the beginning of our studies, like almost all human beings, we have a little difficulty with it, and we get a little bogged

down, and we may even say under our breath, so the preacher won't hear you, you know, "That's awfully difficult for me. He seems to be getting something out of it, but I just don't seem to be getting anything out of it." It's all right for you to say it out loud as far as I'm concerned, because I've had that same experience many a time. As I say, I still occasionally get a little bogged down, and have to go back and reread the paragraph or section again. But at any rate, I know through the years, reading this, I have been more and more impressed with the importance of it, as evidenced by this amount of space devoted to it.

The purpose of the Tabernacle was to instruct Israel. We must put ourselves back in the time of Israel and remember that they did not have the revelation of God that we have. They did not know the holiness of God as we may know it today. They did not know the righteousness of God, they did know the justice of God, they did not know the love of God. There are many things about God that Israel did not know. And above all, they did know the details of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And since they did not have this background of sacrifice, and holiness, and righteousness, and mercy, and truth, and all of the things that are revealed in the sacrifice of Christ, especially God's hatred of sin, and how he must have sacrifice for it. This was the means of instructing them in picture fashion, so that day by day they might learn a little bit more about God and what he would do for them. So this is why God gave the Tabernacle, to instruct Israel in the work of God, to instruct Israel in the way to God, in order that the two of them might dwell together.

Now, take your Bibles and turn back to Exodus chapter 25, Exodus 25. And I want to read just the first few verses of this 25th chapter. I wish we had time to just spend the rest of this night, and maybe all of tomorrow, and tomorrow night, and we could just through verse by verse this entire section. I'm afraid I would lose some of you, though. [Laughter] So we'll just have to compromise on an hour or so. Verse 1, chapter 25, that's Genesis, Exodus, I hope by now you can find the Book of Exodus in the Bible.

[Laughter] Well, after all some of you may not have known where the Book of Exodus was when we began back in September or October.

Now, you are a veteran of Bible study. Haven't you found it by now? [Laughter] "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering." By the way, no offerings are to ever be given God if they are not given willingly. You know, it does not help one bit to grudgingly put ten dollars in the collection plate. Keep it in your pocket. You lose your ten dollars; you don't get any credit in heaven either. Willing giving, willing giving, that's what counts. "This is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood." This shittim wood, we will see over and over again as we go through here, it was really a kasha wood, a kasha. "Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate."

Now, here is the verse that is important for us, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Now, in the 22nd verse, in describing the Ark of the Covenant, we read these words, "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims." This was a gross mistranslation. It should have been translated cherubim and not cherubims, because a cherub is one, and when you say two you say either cherubs or to use the Hebrew transliteration, cherubim. But to put an "s" on cherubim is like putting another "s" on horses. How would you like to say, "I went out and got five horsess." Well, that's cherubims, because the "m" ending is a plural ending. Well, now, that's and aside, but anyway. "Which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." So God gave the Tabernacle in order that he might dwell with Israel and his dwelling with them would be contingent upon the life of the community of Israel in connection with the Tabernacle. And so God would dwell

there, and by means of the Tabernacle, the priesthood, and the offerings, he would commune with Israel. He would dwell with them and commune with them.

Now, let me say just a few general things about the Tabernacle, now. I'm sorry; I went to get my pictures of the Tabernacle. I have two sets. One, I have a long Tabernacle chart, which extends for about 20 feet, but there is no place to put that up. I don't want to nail any nails in Louis' walls. And then I went to look for my other pictures and couldn't find them, and so I was sort of desperate and I pleaded with my wife, and she agreed to let me use her child evangelism materials. [Laughter] So boys and girls, it's good ... [Laughter]. This is the Tabernacle, from which she teaches the Tabernacle to children. Now, this is in general how the Tabernacle looked. This, of course, the fence we'd say, the curtain about the outside. The Tabernacle was about one hundred by fifty feet. This front is the gate into the Tabernacle, and here is the brazen altar where the animals were slain, and parts of the animals at times were burned. This is the labor, and then in the inside, and I have some more material here I'm going to put up in just a moment or so, we will see the inside of the Tabernacle itself. But this is the Tabernacle of Israel.

You will notice the varied color gate, the curtains at the gate, the blue and the purple and the scarlet. These are all designed to represent certain things about the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, the blue representing his heavenly origin; the purple the fact that he was the king, because that is the color of kings' garments; and the scarlet, the fact that he is the sacrifice for sin, and the one who redeemed us by his blood. Other things represent various other things in connection with the Tabernacle. The white, of course, about the Tabernacle curtain represents the holiness and the righteousness of God. Israel's tents, by the way, were black, and so the black of Israel contrasted with the white of the Tabernacle curtains, emphasizing the sinfulness of Israel and the holiness of God, all of this designed to instruct Israel, you see.

Now, the first thing that I want you to notice in general about the Tabernacle is that Moses did not come to God one day and say, "Now Lord, wouldn't it be nice if we built us a Tabernacle so that you could dwell among us?" The Tabernacle was a thing that God initiated himself. God drew the plans for the Tabernacle. He did not draw the plans even and say, "Moses would you appoint a building committee, and we'll submit my plans to the building committee for their approval." God drew the plans of the Tabernacle. In fact, he's very specific about it. In the 9th verse he says, "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Moses was not allowed to deviate in one single iota, for you see, redemption is a revelation from God. It is not an invention of man. And so, in the very that God initiated the Tabernacle; we see illustrated again, the fact that we do not have anything to do with the initiation of redemption. This is the work of God. He comes down to seek us. We do not seek after God. When anyone seeks after God it is because God has already been seeking them. Remember that. So God drew the plans for the Tabernacle. If we had time, and we were to read through this, we would come to the 30th and 40th chapters, and we would see over and over again, that as God commanded, so Moses made the Tabernacle; undeviating adherence to the standards, to the patterns that God set forth. This is important, because it emphasizes that when God gives us a plan of redemption, we are to undeviatingly adhere to it.

If, for example, he says that there is redemption only through the blood of Jesus Christ. We cannot come to God and say, "Lord we do not like that. We think that we ought to get to heaven on the basis of our good works. We think that we ought to get to heaven because we are a member of the Methodist church, or the Baptist church, or an Independent church where they preach the Bible or something like that." You see, we cannot dictate to God in matters of redemption. He sets the standard, for it so happens that heaven belongs to him. And he has set forth the way of approach to himself. This is all illustrated this Tabernacle.

Now, looking at the Tabernacle, there were six pieces of furniture. We'll look at them in a moment separately. There was the brazen altar, which we saw just a moment right here. Then there was also the labor, which was made of brass, and inside the Tabernacle there was a golden candlestick, we will see it in a moment. The table of showbread, the golden altar of incense, and then behind the second veil, this is the first veil, behind the second veil, the Ark of the Covenant. The interesting thing about Exodus is that if you'll look in verse 10 here, when God begins to describe the instruments of the Tabernacle, he begins with the Ark of the Covenant. Now, when he describes these instruments to begin with the Ark of the Covenant, which was in the holy place, the holiest of all, this means that God begins with the instrument over which his presence was. So he begins with God. From the standpoint of God, you see, in the Tabernacle as he describes it. He presents anew this truth that the Tabernacle, representing Christ, shows us that God seeks men rather man seeking him. Now, when Moses constructs the Tabernacle, we see the other order, for that's the human side. We come to know God by going through the gate to the brazen altar, to the labor, then on into the place of service, and finally into the place of communion. But when God reveals it, he starts with the Ark of the Covenant.

One interesting thing about this is that you will notice that right on the line, this brazen altar is right on a line with the brazen labor, and then on the inside on one side is the golden candlestick. On the other side is the table of showbread. And then in the center, on the back of this next room, is the altar of incense, and then back beyond that is the Ark of the Covenant. And if you were to take a pencil or a pen and draw a line straight through here, and then a line from here to here, what would you have? Why, you would have the cross, of course. And this is, I do not think, this is not without accident, that these pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle are arranged in the form of a cross. Now, there is nothing in Scripture that says that that's important, but I think you can see from

this that it might well be that God had that in mind when he, for he himself said that they were to be stationed in certain places.

How many gates are there to the Tabernacle? There is one gate to the Tabernacle. Now, that is very important. The Lord Jesus said, "I am the door." Would you like to take a look at that? It's John chapter 10, and verse 9. It's very important that we see this, John chapter 10, and verse 9. While you are looking at it, let me just mention this, that this gate was seven and a half feet high. Nobody could look into the courtyard. This was sealed off from man. Now, there may have been some very tall basketball players in those days, but in those days men were usually smaller, so that this was a representation, again, visibly of the fact that the service of God belonged only to those who entered through the door. Also, this gate was about thirty feet wide, so if the fact that it was high prevented anyone from going in any other way, the fact that it was wide signified that anyone could go in. So, whosoever will may come, but they must come the one way. Now, John 10:9, Ray would you read that out loud for us. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Yes, now notice the little article "the" the definite article. "I am *the* door, *the* door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

Turn over to the 14th chapter and the 6th verse, the 14th chapter and the 6th verse, the Lord Jesus said, Dean would you read that out loud for us? "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Yes, "I am *the* way, *the* truth, *the* life." Do you notice it? "I am *the* way, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Was Jesus Christ a conceited braggart? Was he a man afflicted with folie de grandeur? Was he a mad man? A mad man might say something like this. Was he an imposter? Was he just pretending or was he telling the truth? You see, we don't have much of an alternative here. We have to make that decision. You'll often hear college professors who have never thought too much about spiritual things say

something like this, "Christians say that Jesus Christ is God, we cannot accept that. But we do believe that he was a great teacher. That he was an unusual man."

But let me ask you a question, can you consider unusual in a good sense, a man who goes around saying he's God if he's not God? That's not the unusual type of man that I want to follow. So when Jesus of Nazareth makes the claim to be God, to be the only way to God, then we must seriously consider this, and if it's not true, then it's no use for us to say that Jesus Christ is a very good teacher. He's not. He's a very misleading teacher. But if what he says is true, then we must follow him implicitly, and we must forget to follow anyone else. We must away with approaching God in any other way than through Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth, the life, and no man cometh unto the Father, except through me." He did not say, "I am a way, I am part of the truth." He did not say, "I am a door, but there are many other doors. You may go through Hinduism. You may go through Daoism. You may go through Confucianism. You may go through Christian Science. He said, "I am the door." He did not say to me, "Ye may be born again." He said, "Ye must be born again." So you see, right here in the beginning, the Tabernacle tells us in picture form there is only way to approach God, for there is only gate to the Tabernacle.

Well now, let's take a look at the pieces. And I'm going to take this down, and I hope, I haven't taught children in many years now. And so I'm not so sure that I'm going to do this too well, but maybe you'll enjoy my discomfiture anyway. But I'm going to try to put up this other piece of material that my wife has. Now, if I were a good child evangelist and teacher, I would be telling you boys and girls stories while I do this, but I didn't prepare my stories. So you're just going to have to wait on me tonight. And this is not going to be put up too well either. I'm apologizing already, but it's the truth. And if it falls on the floor, then you will see that I am not very practicing in my, that may not be right. I think this is supposed to go on here. I think I'm supposed to have something to

cover this up, but I couldn't find it. [Laughter] Just forget it. That's something like the way it's supposed to be.

And then we have the Shekinah glory. The Shekinah glory, shekan means "to dwell" and so the Shekinah glory is, of course, a term signifying the place where God dwells. That's what he wanted to do. And the Shekinah glory was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. And whenever the Shekinah glory moved, Israel was to move. And I don't have the other part of that thing, but you can see that this is the brazen altar. This is the laver. Now, this is the covering, and the coverings of the Tabernacle were very interesting, because they were of different material. This you can see is skin; that is one. We're going to take it to pieces now. Moses constructed a better Tabernacle than this, but all of these colors were significant, and here is the white. The Tabernacle was a very beautiful structure. It was only a tent, but it was beautiful. It was meaningful.

Now, this is the last. Remember the Tabernacle was a portable structure. It was taken down when Israel and it was reconstructed when Israel set up camp. And Israel was set around about the Tabernacle so that this was in the center of the movements of the camp. Now, this is the veil, the first veil, inside this is called the holy place. And this is called the holiest of all. Now, I'll take a little more off in a minute or two, but the Tabernacle as a whole faced east. This is not facing, well we can act like it is facing east. This is the holy place. This is the place where the priests came in and ministered. They came in, they put each day, they put the bread, or rather at the appointed time they put the bread on the table of showbread. They, of course, supplied oil for the golden candlesticks. They also put incense. And here is the altar of incense just before the second veil. And then here, that's the Ark of the Covenant. This is the Ark of the Covenant in the holiest of all. This is the place where God dwelt, and no priest could go into the holiest of all except Aaron, and Aaron alone once a year, in order to accomplish the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement. They were forbidden to come this holiest of all.

Remember when Jesus Christ died on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent in twain.

Now, the temple was not constructed exactly like the Tabernacle, but similar to it, and the veil was rent in twain from top to bottom. That was to signify that when Christ died on the cross and shed his blood, the way of access into the presence of God had been opened for everyman. But until Christ died, the veil of the temple could not be this last place could not be entered, except by the high priest, and that once a year, when he, for Israel, sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat, which is the top part of the Ark of the Covenant.

Now let's take a look at the spiritual significance, very briefly, of these pieces of furniture. It is quite important, and as I say I wish we had time to go in details, but we cannot. We could spend a month or two studying the Tabernacle. For all of this whole ministry, not only the materials but the ministry carried on had great spiritual significance. Let's start right here, for remember, this is the piece of furniture nearest the gate. The first thing the priests met as they came through the door is the brazen altar. The altar was constructed of brass, because brass was the metal that signified judgment. This was the place where the animals were slain. The sacrifices were made right by the brazen altar. This fire was kept continually going, and certain pieces of the animals were burned according to the specifications of the sacrifices. So, that the first thing that the priests met as they engaged in the service of the Tabernacle was the place of sacrifice. Of course, this was designed to teach us that we cannot serve God, for this was the service of God, we cannot serve God if we have not first approached him by means of sacrifice. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Without shedding of blood, there is no service of God. No man can serve God if he has not had his sins forgiven through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's impossible.

So many people in our churches today have not been born again, and yet they ignorantly think that they are serving the God who is the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is very pitiful, but they are not. You cannot serve God, except through

Jesus Christ who died for us. This is the place of sins' judgment. It is the place of sacrifice. It is the place of substitution. But an Israel brought an animal. The priests slew the animal here. And for example, on the burnt offering, when he brought his burnt offering, the priest told him according to Scripture to put his hand upon the animal. Then the animal was slain. God said, "It shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him." And so he put his hand upon the animal in token of the fact that the animal was taking his place. And when the animal was slain, the offerer was in effect saying, "I deserve to die, but I have brought a substitute, an animal." And so the animal, unblemished, dies in the place of the offerer. And God says it, the animal, shall be accepted for him, the offerer, to make an atonement for him

And then we read that when the offering is made and the animal is burned, a sweet savor ascends up to God. In the Hebrew text it is literally, "an odor of rest," "an odor of rest." Because, you see, God as he sees the finished work of Jesus Christ represented by the animal rests in what he has done. He says, "Jesus Christ hath done enough. He has paid the penalty for sin. My holiness is satisfied. I therefore rest." And when an offerer brought his animal, he in effect was saying, "I rest my case on Jesus Christ, too." So when the Lord Jesus died on the cross, he fulfilled all of these sacrifices, and today when I put my faith on the Lord Jesus, when I believe in him, many of our hymns express this, you know, about laying our hands by faith on him. When I do that I say I have no other hope before God but Jesus Christ who died for me. He was my sacrifice. I rest in him, that's faith. Faith is simply this; I'll stop trusting the church. I wouldn't even trust the Northwest Presbyterian Church, and that's a good church, but I wouldn't trust that church. It can't save you, can it? It cannot. Nor can Dr. Macomb, and he's a fine spiritual man of God. He cannot help me.

We do not trust the church. We do not trust the holiest of human beings. We do not trust our good works. We do not trust our culture. We do not trust our education. We can only trust in Jesus Christ, and when I by faith, say thank you Lord for giving Jesus

Christ to die for me, I put my hand by faith on him. And God says, it, the offering, he now, he shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him. And that's why Paul writes concerning Christians that he has made us, God has made us accepted in the beloved one, in Christ, see. Do you get the point? All of this Old Testament, every day an offering was slain in the morning. At night another offering was slain. When Israel committed trespasses they brought trespass offerings. When they committed sins, they brought sin offerings, peace offerings, meal offerings, the offerings over and over representing things that concern the Lord Jesus. But here the place of sacrifice, it's the first instrument in the Tabernacle. No man can serve God if he has not been to the altar of the cross of Jesus Christ.

If any man served God in Israel in any other way, he came under the ban and anathema of God. It's much better that you lay down all service in the local church, if you have not been born again. You should not be serving in the church. Now furthermore, now I'm going to step on somebody's toes, but I don't care. You need your toes stepped on every now and then. If you are in a church that wants to put you to work the minute you put your name on the rolls, not having found out whether you are even a Christian or not, that's not the kind of church that you ought to be in. New birth is primary.

Secondly, a Christian should begin to know something about God before he even begins to serve God. All right, the second instrument, by the way, this altar was not a very beautiful piece of furniture. It looks good here, but it was not. Because you see, it was crusty with rivers of blood. Many an animal had been sacrificed here, black with fire, crusty, with parched blood, not very pretty. The cross of Christ is not a lovely sight either, but it's the place of redemption. People are often offended when you talk about the blood of Christ shed on the cross. This is the most beautiful instruments that the world has ever seen to a Christian. We think of the one who hung upon the cross, crowned with thorns, blood streaming down his face. We don't want him to be in any

other place, those who know him. But to those who reject the truth of God, this is not a lovely sight, and they frequently criticize it. We're criticizing God if we do.

The second piece of furniture was the laver. Now the priests, as they went in to tend, he pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle had every one of them to pass by this brazen laver. It is brass, and so it has to do with sin. And so, every day as they passed by, they had to stop and wash their hands and their feet. And so as they went from this place into here, they would stop and wash their hands and their feet, day after day after day. This was also designed to teach Israel some important truth. Luther once said, "The devil allows no Christian to reach heaven with clean feet all the way." He was right.

Once we have received Jesus Christ as Savior, and have been cleansed from sins, we are not cleansed forever, in the sense that we never sin afterwards. Our old nature is still with us. Before God we have been justified and declared righteous. Practically, we still have the old nature and we still sin. And we need daily cleaning, so daily the priests had to stop and wash their hands and their feet. This was designed to represent the truth in the New Testament that when a man believes in Jesus Christ, he's still just an old sinner. He has a new nature now, and that's the difference, by the way. It's not that he's a lot holier than before. In fact, some Christians can be the most exasperating of people, you know. You haven't been a Christian long if you haven't discovered that. Don't sit there looking at me so pious, I know what we're like. [Laughter] You haven't run into any Christians like that. Don't tell me you haven't, I know you have. Because we are not very lovely, we're not, in the sight of God, our position.

And furthermore, because we are Christians and because in the sight of God our sin has been cleansed, we ought to begin to make progress in holiness. But we still have the old nature with us. And it is necessary for us to be constantly cleansed. We need to pass by the laver. The laver represents the word of God. We are cleansed as we spend in the word of God allowing God to speak to us through the word. Jesus Christ uses the

word, and as we read and study the word, the Lord uses the word and our lives are cleansed.

Furthermore, we are also required as Christians to confess sin. I have a friend in Houston who is pastor of a large church there, and he likes to say that the "Christian life is a matter of rebounding and keeping moving. Turn in your Bibles to 1 John chapter 1, in verse 9, 1 John 1:9. That's near the end of the New Testament, 1 John 1:9, not the Gospel of John, 1 John 1:9. This is John's first epistle. John wrote more than one book, you know. He wrote five books of the New Testament; the Gospel of John, the Book of Revelation, and three letters. And we want to look at the first Epistle of John, chapter 1, verse 9. Since the women are to keep silence in the churches, Louis Allen, would you read that verse for us out loud? "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Right, now notice it says, "if we," we who? We Christians, this is an epistle written to Christians. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

So when a Christian sins, he is to confess that sin. To confess means to acknowledge that sin before God as a sin. And also, to the best of our ability, purpose not to commit it again. And thus we confess our sins, then he forgives us. You see, we may rebound and keep moving. Once we believe in Christ, our sins are eternally forgiven us as far as entrance into the presence of God is concerned, but our communion depends upon our daily confession of sin. And that is done by simply acknowledging the sin as sin, purposing with God's help not to commit that sin again. The moment we confess, say the same thing about it that God does that it is sinful and wrong and wicked, he forgives us. Our part is to confess. His part is to forgive, and he does.

So you see, the laver which represents our cleansing through the word is important, a daily thing in the Christian life. Well let's go into the holy place, the first part of the Tabernacle, and look first at the lamp stand. We call this a candlestick. It really was a lamp stand. It is a seven branched one. And of course, the oil was the means for

the light. As the priest carried on his ministry in the holy place, he ministered in the light of this candlestick. Now, the candlestick represents the Lord Jesus as the light of the believer, not the light of the world. He is the light of the world, but this is in the holy place where the priests serve. And every believer today is a priest. So as we do the Lord's work, we are to do it in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He is our light as believers, and he reveals himself to us by the light of the Holy Spirit, the oil, so that we serve him in the light of Jesus Christ.

Now, let me say another word to you about your church, and your service in the church. This has nothing to do with the church that you're in. But I say this to you, as Christians, when you serve Jesus Christ you are not to serve Jesus Christ according to your own opinions, according to your own reasoning, according to your own thinking. You are to serve God in the light of the word of Jesus Christ. Everything in the local church is to be governed by the word of God. Does this practice agree with the word of God? Does this that we are doing agree with holy Scripture? Furthermore, this means, you see, that your morning service, your evening service, your Sunday School, must be justified from the standpoint of the word of God. Does the word of God say it? This is important. Suppose I were in Israel and I were to say, "Well I like the Tabernacle, and I'm a priest. I'm a son of Aaron. But I don't like to wash my hands every day at the laver. I don't like that idea. It doesn't seem rational to me. I don't get my hands dirty like everybody else. I'll just skip the laver." Do you know that if you did that in Israel you wouldn't serve as priest very long? You would come under divine judgment. God's service is to be carried on in God's way. That means that everything in the local church is to be in accord with the word.

Furthermore, let me say something else. You men who are elders or deacons in your church, you go back in your church and you do things according to the word. But let me say something else. There are many things in the Bible or rather in your church that you must carry on about which the Bible may say nothing. You may be faced with

decisions, for example, shall we help the poor in a certain area? What shall we do about this? Or it may be a question of who shall we choose for officers in the church? There may be decisions that you face. Every decision that you face is not to be settled by reason. It's not to be settled by human opinion. Someone's not to get up and say, "Now in the business world we do it his way." That may be God's will, but it may not be God's will. Even the decisions like this are to be in accord with the guidance of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. He is the head of the church, and so things are to be done under him. The service of God is carried on in the light of Jesus Christ who is our light.

Also, here is the table of showbread. For you see, we need not only a teacher, we need not only a guide in the Christian life. But we need sustenance. When we are in the home, we need not only a father who will spank us, but we need a father who will do what else? Put bread on the table, right, put bread on the table, and more than bread, too. Because you see, we must have someone to provide for us. And so in the Christian life and service, God undertakes not only to be our life as we serve him, but also to be the one who supplies our needs. So for the weary, he may find rest. For Jesus Christ is the bread of life, of course. For the lonely, they may have Jesus Christ as one who sticketh closer than a brother. For the forsaken, he says that he a friend, for those who are needy; he is the one who can meet their needs. For the unstable, and we have many Christians who are unstable today, too, for the unstable, he is the rock. I won't say a word about psychiatry, but let me say this. Now, I said I wouldn't say anything about it, but I'm not really going to say anything about it. [Laughter] I want to say this, that if more Christians were paying attention to the word of God, there would be less business for psychiatrists. We wouldn't need them. There are times when we need them. But there would be less business for the psychiatrists if we were honoring God's word. If we were feeding on Jesus Christ day by day as the showbread.

Well, our time is getting nearly up, so let me briefly say a word, and then I'll say a little bit about this maybe next time. But here is the golden altar of incense. Now Jesus

Christ is our great high priest. The priests were come in; they took fire from off this altar. For you see, no praise to God may go up which is not based on the sacrifice. This represents the cross of Calvary and the judgment for sin. "He was made for us," Paul said, "he who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him." So fires from off the altar were taken and placed on the golden altar of incense. And then the priest took incense, and he put the incense on the golden altar of incense, and you can see the smoke that ascended up. The altar of incense represents the Lord Jesus as our great high priest. Hebrews chapter 7, and verse 25 says, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He is our great high priest, through whom we offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God. So through Jesus Christ, of course the Lord Jesus when he prayed in the 17th chapter of John, that's the Lord's prayer by the way. The other was the disciples' prayer. But the Lord's Prayer of John 17 is the Lord Jesus acting as our golden altar of incense and praying for us.

Now then, into the last part of the Tabernacle, the holiest of all was the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant here was composed really of two parts. There was the ark and then on top the golden plate, which was the mercy seat. And on the Day of Atonement, one animal, remember, was slain, and the blood was taken in and sprinkled on the mercy seat. If the mercy seat were not there, the ark would be a justice and judgment seat for all of mankind. But the ark represents the Lord Jesus as our mercy seat, as our way of access and communion with God. You see, he was, the brazen altar represents the sacrifice of the cross. The blood is taken and sprinkled here, so that the Ark of the Covenant represents what we have by virtue of what happened here. We have access into the presence of God, for the Shekinah glory was right above the mercy seat. God dwelt in the holiest of all. And entrance into the holiest all was only by virtue of the blood that was shed here. This is the Old Testament way of saying that we may only approach God through the finished work.

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]