

FURTHER STUDY GUIDE

THE BRONZE BASIN: CLEANSED FOR HIS PRESENCE Exodus 30:17-21, Titus 3:5, Ephesians 5:26

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The bronze basin was located in the courtyard of the tabernacle, between the bronze altar and the Holy Place. The priests first approached the altar, where they made sacrifices, then came to the basin to wash.

This order is significant. Sacrifice preceded cleansing.

The priests could not enter the Holy Place casually. Exodus 30:20 says they were to wash with water so that they would not die when they entered the tent of meeting or approached the altar to minister before the LORD.

The basin therefore communicated an important truth: God's presence is holy, and those who minister before Him must be cleansed.

The New Testament develops this imagery. Titus 3:5 speaks of the "washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit," while Ephesians 5:26 describes Christ cleansing His church "by the washing of water with the word."

The picture moves from the tabernacle to Christ:

Altar → Basin → Presence

Sacrifice → Cleansing → Communion

ICEBREAKER QUESTION

What is something you would never do without washing or cleaning first? Why does cleanliness matter so much when we are preparing to enter an important place or meet an important person?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CLEANSING BEFORE ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE — Read Exodus 30:17-21

The priests were required to wash before entering the tent of meeting to minister. The basin reminded Israel that God's presence is not something to approach carelessly.

Yet the basin came after the altar. The priest did not cleanse himself to make the sacrifice acceptable. The sacrifice came first, followed by cleansing.

This points toward the gospel: Christ's sacrifice establishes our access to God, and His cleansing prepares us to walk faithfully in that relationship.

1. What does Exodus 30:17–21 teach us about the holiness of God's presence?

2. Why is it significant that the bronze basin came after the bronze altar? What does this teach us about the relationship between sacrifice and cleansing?

3. How should knowing that God has made a way for us to enter His presence affect the way we approach Him in prayer and worship?

JESUS WASHES US THROUGH THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD — Read: Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:26

The New Testament takes the imagery of washing beyond physical water.

Titus 3:5 points to the **washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit**. Our salvation is not the result of our own works of righteousness. God saves us because of His mercy and gives us new life through the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:26 speaks of Christ sanctifying His church through "the washing of water with the word."

The Word exposes what needs to change, reveals God's character, reminds us of the gospel, and teaches us how to live. The Spirit takes that truth and applies it to our lives.

The Christian life is therefore not simply about being forgiven. It is **about being transformed**.

4. According to Titus 3:5, what does the Holy Spirit accomplish in our salvation? How does this differ from trying to make ourselves acceptable to God through good works?

5. How does Ephesians 5:26 connect Christ, cleansing, and the Word of God?

6. What happens when Christians try to grow spiritually without regularly allowing God's Word to examine and shape their lives?

ONGOING SANCTIFICATION IN THE CHRISTIAN WALK — Read: Romans 6:22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12–13

The basin also gives us a picture of something that continues. The priests repeatedly washed as they served in the tabernacle. In a similar way, believers experience an ongoing work of sanctification. We have been justified by Christ, but we are still being transformed. Sanctification means that God progressively makes us more like Christ.

This does not mean we are repeatedly saved. Christ's sacrifice is once for all. Rather, the finished work of Christ becomes the foundation for an ongoing life of repentance, obedience, renewal, and holiness.

We do not pursue holiness to become God's children. We pursue holiness because we are God's children.

7. What is the difference between being forgiven once for all and being continually sanctified?

8. Why is repentance an important part of the Christian's ongoing walk with Christ?

9. Where do you most need the Spirit and the Word to bring cleansing and transformation into your life right now?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Consider the movement from the tabernacle to the gospel:

THE ALTAR

Christ's sacrifice atones for our sin.

THE BASIN

God cleanses and sanctifies His people.

THE PRESENCE

We are being prepared to live in fellowship with God.

PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL

"WASH ME, LORD"

Read

Psalm 51:1–12

David's prayer comes from a place of brokenness. He does not merely ask God to remove the consequences of his sin. He asks God to **cleans** his heart, renew his spirit, and restore the joy of salvation.

The bronze basin reminds us that God desires a people who are prepared to live in His presence. The gospel tells us that this cleansing ultimately comes through Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Take time to reflect on this truth:

I have been forgiven because of Christ.

I am being cleansed by the Spirit.

I am being transformed through God's Word.

I am being prepared to dwell with God.

QUESTIONS | REFLECTIONS | OBSERVATIONS
