

July 30

Leviticus 1: 4: And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

Under the old covenant, the burnt offering, like all the other offerings, was given by God to show a picture of the atoning work of Christ by the shedding of his own blood. By requiring the sinner to put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, God declares the necessity of the sinner coming to God through faith in Christ, apart from any works of his own. The precious blood of Christ and faith in that blood are each essential to salvation. God has provided himself a Lamb! Behold, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, God's Own well-beloved Son. God chose him, appointed him, inspected him and found him to be the spotless perfect Lamb. Then God put all the sins of all his people on Christ. Christ the Lamb was slain thus Christ satisfied divine justice for all his people. God accepted Christ as a sweet-smelling savor. One essential thing remains for every sinner for whom Christ died to do. Each one must be brought to lay our hands upon the head of God's sacrifice. This was an act which typified the believer's faith in Christ. What was the sinner saying by laying his hand on the head of the sacrifice? What are we saying by faith in Christ?

First, by confessing our need for Christ to save us we are confessing that all we are is sin. That is what every true believer was confessing when he laid his hand on the lamb and it is what every true believer confesses who comes to God through faith in Christ. (Lev 16: 21) God gave his Son to die as a sacrifice for and to call, none but sinners. Only true sinners need a sacrifice. If we would be saved by Christ Jesus, we must come to God, laying our hands of faith upon Christ, acknowledging our utter ruin in sin. This confession of sin is a confession of our helplessness: we are confessing that it is by God's power alone that we have been made willing to confess our sins and helplessness; we are confessing we cannot keep God's law; we are confessing we cannot make atonement for our past sins; we are confessing we cannot make ourselves acceptable to God by any future obedience; we are confessing that apart from the blood of Christ we deserve to die; we are confessing we must have the blood of Christ who we trust made atonement and covered our sins by his one offering. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 Jn 1: 9)

Secondly, by laying the hand of faith upon Christ the Lamb of God, we repent from all other vain ways of salvation which we once imagined could save us. Through faith in Christ we confess before men that we believe Christ is the only Way of salvation and that all other ways are vanity. (Rom 5: 12-21) We believe Christ himself is our salvation: our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. Faith is not trusting in doctrine or in a knowledge of doctrine or in our works or even in our confession—faith in Christ includes repenting from all other ways to the one true Way, Christ Jesus himself.

Thirdly, when we lay the hand of faith upon Christ we confess that we believe God has transferred our sin to Christ and Christ's righteousness to us. It was pictured—only pictured—on the day of atonement in the ceremony when the scape goat had the sins of Israel laid upon it ceremonially, took those sins away ceremonially into a land not inhabited and the lamb's innocence was ceremonially transferred to the children of Israel. (Lev 16:21) It was not the very image of the thing but was given to picture Christ on whom the iniquities of all God's elect were really laid and whose righteousness we have really been made by his one offering at Calvary. (Heb 10: 1-2; 2 Cor 5: 21) God made His Son to be sin for us and made us to be the very righteousness of God in His Son. By faith, the believer simply accepts this finished work, adding nothing to it. Faith believes God that this great transference is complete and thus we are complete in Christ.

Lastly, when we lay the hand of faith upon Christ we identify ourselves with our blessed Redeemer. We truly behold that Christ's death was the death of our old man of flesh, when Christ died to the penalty of the law we died to the law, we believe when Christ was buried our old man of sin was destroyed, but when Christ arose we arose in him and sat down at God's right hand. We confess through faith that the only reason we now live is because Christ lives in us. (Gal 2: 20) As truly as Christ is accepted of God, through faith, we identify ourselves with Christ as accepted in the Beloved!

Sinner, the only way God will receive you is if you lay your hand of faith upon Christ, confessing these things. Do it without delay giving God all the glory, for it is only by the glory of God that any sinner can.