

The Brazen Laver

by Charles S. Price

The sermon emphasizes the importance of looking into the Word of God to see ourselves as we truly are, and the consequences of ignoring this mirror, including judgment and the danger of pride.

Scripture: Exodus 38:8, Psalm 51:7, Isaiah 64:6, John 14:6, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 9:22, 1 Peter 1:18, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Spiritual Cleansing", "Redemption Through Christ"

Description

Charles S. Price preaches on the significance of the laver in the Book of Exodus, emphasizing the need for spiritual cleansing before entering God's presence. He draws parallels between the Old Testament types and their fulfillment in the New Testament, highlighting the importance of self-reflection through the 'Mirror of Gospel Truth' found in God's Word. Price urges listeners to acknowledge their spiritual filthiness and need for salvation, emphasizing that true gratitude and humility come from recognizing the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross as the only means of redemption.

Transcript

The basis of my message tonight is found in the eight verse of the thirty-eighth chapter of the Book of Exodus. "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." As Christians, we know that we can find Christ in the Old Testament. We don't have to turn many pages of Genesis before we come into contact with the Christ. All through the Prophets --Major and Minor -- Judges and other books, we find Jesus on almost every page.

The Old Testament abounds with beautiful types that found their fulfillment in the antitypes that came in the New Testament dispensation of Divine Grace. I was reading this verse, one time, and I wondered why looking glasses were fitted into the foot of the laver. You remember that the story hinges on the building of the Tabernacle. While yet in the wilderness, the children of Israel were given instructions to build a tabernacle. This tabernacle was to be erected according to divine specifications.

Every door, every court, its furniture and hangings -- the entire structure was symbolic. These types later found fulfillment in their antitypes. SO THE LAVES HAS A MEANING. This laver was made of brass. It contained water. In this laver, every priest had to wash himself before he could enter the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a huge framework made of forty-eight pieces of acacia. Silver, gold and costly hangings were freely used. An abundant supply had been consecrated to this use.

I am not here to say where it all came from. But it was there. But there was one piece of brass work that stood out prominently. IT WAS THE LAVER. The body of the laver was made of brass, out of the looking glasses of the women assembling. As the priests came to wash, they could see themselves in the looking glasses. These glasses were not like the ones that we use. They were highly polished brass mirrors. They reflected the dirt on his feet, as the priest approached the laver.

His instructions required that the feet, as well as the hands, be washed. All the filth had to be taken away, No priest was allowed beyond the laver UNTIL HE HAD WASHED HIMSELF. The laver was put there expressly for his cleansing. Just beyond, and behind the veil, was the Ark where the Shekinah glory rested. But before he could go behind that veil, before he could touch the Ark, before he could stand before that Shekinah glory--he had to wash in the laver. As he washed he was able to 1 see in those mirrors just how dirty were his feet.

The mirror would show the unclean hands and the unclean feet. The mirror was faithful. It showed him just what he was. I am going to place before you tonight the Mirror of Gospel Truth. It is only as we look into God's Word that we can know our real condition. Man may look upon an inspiring image of himself in Medicine and Mathematics. He may find an ambitious reproduction of himself in Literature and Art. He may gaze upon an excellent picture of himself in Commerce and Industry.

He may see a glorious reflection of himself in Science and Religion. But, if he is looking for a genuine, faithful and true portrait of himself, he will have to look into the Divine Mirror--the Word of God! I remember an incident that happened when I was a boy. It was on the occasion of a party. My Mother had dressed me up, and, according to English custom, I had a change of shoes wrapped up in a bundle. Only party slippers were acceptable inside the house. While waiting for my little sister, Jessie, I went out on the yard and engaged my time by playing with the dog.

We had a great time together. He would jump up, and plant his muddy feet on my clean clothes. After awhile, I went into the house to ask how soon my sister would be ready. Mother saw me. "Sydney!" she ex-claimed. "Look at yourself in the mirror!" I was all muddied up. "Your face is dirty, and look at that collar. That was the only clean one left." I said, "Mother, I don't know where I got it. I'll go upstairs and wash right away." She was just getting ready to see about that.

I was dirty, but I was not conscious of it. I HAD TO LOOK INTO THE MIRROR BEFORE I COULD SEE THE DIRT. And that is the same way with us spiritually. We do not see how filthy we are UNTIL WE LOOK INTO THE WORD OF GOD. We do not realize our unrighteousness and unholiness until we see ourselves before the Mirror of Divine Truth. The Holy Scriptures reproduce faithfully every spot and wrinkle on the features of man's naked soul. Look into the mirror tonight, My Brother. You may be a self-righteous man, relying upon your morality, your good works and your reputation to take you through the pearly gates.

And some of you may say, there is no need of my conversion. I don't need to be saved. Why should I seek God? I am not a sinner. And there are thousands of people that really believe that all through Seattle today. They have never been born of the Spirit of God. They cannot see their impurity and unrighteousness and unholiness until they look into the Word of God. Isaiah thought himself perfect. Why not? Was he not the prophet of God? But one day, after King Uzziah died, he came in contact with the holiness and the beauty and the glory of God.

When Isaiah saw God, he saw his own ugliness, his impurity and his utter worthlessness. He saw himself as God saw him. He was nothing but filthy rags, but he did not know that, until he saw the Lord! When the temple was filled with the glory of the Divine Presence, listen to what Isaiah says, "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." When Isaiah saw God, he had a different opinion of himself. Ah, a great deal depends on where you look.

When you look at the thief, you can praise yourself. 2 When you look at the murderer, you can congratulate yourself. When you look at the drunkard you can applaud yourself. When you look at the poor dope fiend, you can pat yourself on the back. When you look at the libertine, you can commend yourself. Compared with them, you are a saint. But, Brother, you are not going to be judged in comparison with anybody. Neither will you be judged according to your own estimation and appraisal of self.

YOU WILL BE JUDGED BY THE WORD OF GOD. "My Word it is that shall judge him." We are not to look into the life of one man or the experience of another. We must look into the WORD OF GOD, if we want to see ourselves as we are, and as He sees us. We can never know what God thinks until we look into His Word. Listen to what the Word says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Look! Can you see your face in that? "ALL HAVE SINNED and come short of the glory of God."

ALL HAVE SINNED! And every son of Adam represented here tonight, is a sinner -- AND NEEDS SALVATION. You may be good in your own estimation, but that won't hold water before the Judge. You may be righteous before the eyes of your neighbors, but they will never be summoned to the witness stand. You are going to be judged BY THE WORD. And it says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The iniquity of us all! Do you consider your morality an adequate and effective substitute for holiness? Many of you do. Brother, I want to say that, if you are taking that view of your destiny and salvation -- before God, I want to say that I do not know anyone in Seattle who is doing more to impede the work of God! But, Brother, it is not adultery--not robbery--not lying or murdering that will separate you from the love of God, and send you to eternity without salvation. No!

No! IT IS NEGLECTING SALVATION. It is refusing the offer of Jesus Christ, and turning your back on Him. As far as I am concerned I would rather be the man who is a sinner, and knows himself a sinner, than the man who is trying to climb into heaven in some way other than through Jesus Who is the only Way. I would much rather be an out-and-out sinner than the theologian who would substitute the process of evolution or some other system of philosophy for the Shed Blood. And did you ever stop to think of this?

If just ONE of you can get into heaven by allegiance to a Christless morality-- if ONE of you can do it, two can do it. If two can do it, three can do it. And our Christianity will resolve itself into religious education. And that's exactly what we have in our churches. Friend, religious education will never save you. If you believe that, you are converting into a farce the great tragedy of Calvary! Brother, if you are trusting in yourself, stop! PUT YOUR TRUST IN JESUS. Your salvation is in Him.

Don't be comparing yourself with others, as you intuitively do. This will not, and cannot avail you anything. Coming back on the Berengeria from Europe last summer, I happened to be watching the crowds in the steerage when the following incident took place. There were hundreds of them, huddled together. They 3 did not have the comforts and conveniences of those traveling second and first class passengers. At this time, a party was going through the steerage. In this party was a well-dressed woman.

She looked around, inspecting the passengers. She looked at the women with shawls on their heads. (God bless them!) She adjusted her lorgnette; muttered "Poor Creatures!" drew her skirts and passed on. I watched her with infinite disgust. Friends, that's the world without Christ--comparing ourselves with others! Fixing our own standards! Seems all right, but it will not stand. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." I remember, during the campaign in a certain eastern city, we met another woman of this type.

She sent a twenty-dollar bill to me in my office. I took it. With the money, was a note: "Will you see me?" I would. She got out of her Pierce-Arrow. "O, Mr. Price, I think you are wonderful!" I said, "Don't say that. It is the Lord Jesus Who is Wonderful." "Well, anyway, I have never seen anything like it. I want to contribute to the work. I want to make a real donation. I just had that bill in my purse. I want to help. But WHAT DO THEY GET BY KNEELING AT THE ALTAR?" "Don't you know that we must be born again?"

I asked. She said, "No, not until you mentioned it today." "Are you a Christian?" She replied, "I belong to the Church." Now this woman was very sympathetic. She was speaking out of her heart. But the poor soul did not understand. She did not see herself. I said to her, "I am going to ask you a question. HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN?" "What do you mean?" "Have you found Christ?" "Oh, most assuredly!" "Where?" I asked. "Oh, I don't remember where, but always," she said. "I cannot remember the day."

"You are trusting in your confirmation, in your church membership, in the beauty and dignity of your church services (and they are beautiful), in their atmosphere; but, Sister, in your heart you are hungry." "Oh, I am satisfied. I am perfectly happy." And I began to think that she was. The next day, she came back. The next day, she came back again. Once in a while, I noticed a little embroidered handkerchief would come out. I said to myself, praise the Lord! I did not let on.

I kept on preaching true to the Cross-and true to the Blood. One Saturday night, when the attendance was poor, the power fell. The saints became a bit noisy. It was all right. Most everybody present could appreciate it. I had no intention of making an altar call. I was dismissing the people--when up she comes, silk dress and all. "O, Jesus, I am such a sinner!" she was saying. And I said, "Thank you, Lord! Here's another we have landed for your glory." Now listen! She was a good woman.

She was a woman with a big heart. She was sincerely trying to do good. But she had been looking in her own looking glass, and all she could see was a face covered with the powder of her self-estimation. If ever I heard a woman crying in that Campaign, that woman was doing it. She said she was a sinner, when SHE LOOKED INTO GOD'S LOOKING GLASS. Before they could get into the Holy of Holies, they had to be clean. Before they could enter this Most Holy Place, they had to pass the laver.

And the laver said, 4 "Wash!" No sin can enter there. Let me repeat: No sin can enter there--not one bit--not an iota--NOT AN ATOM OF IT. And, if I read my Bible aright, there was only one way to be cleansed. That was through the laver. Praise God, this is a type of that Fountain opened to the House of David. Praise the Lord for that Fountain of Blood! Well, Brother, will you look into the mirror? What does God's Word say about you? What do you see in there? I am sure some of you are looking at this: "INGRATITUDE" Yes, we say "Thank you!" for a glass of water.

"Thank you!" for a toothpick--and you can get a hundred of them for a penny. But what do you say to Jesus? What do you say to him for that suit of clothes you are wearing? Yes, you purchased it. And you laid down enough money to pay the tailor for making the suit, enough to pay the mill's proprietor for weaving the fabric, enough to pay the ranchman for raising the sheep. But Jesus, for Whom the Father

made the earth that makes the grass that makes the sheep that makes the wool that makes your suit, what does He get out of it?

Jesus not only clothes you, but he feeds you and gives you to drink? Again, you pay enough to compensate those who serve you the meat and drink. But Jesus, into Whose Hand He hath given all things including meats and drinks, what does He get out of it? The cattle upon a thousand hills are His, and His are the rivers, Whose Finger traced their courses down the mountainsides. And what do you say to Him who supplies the very breath in your nostril? Who is the source of all your life!

Who blesses that life with blessings innumerable as the rolling sea! WHAT DO YOU SAY TO HIM WHO IS YOUR ALL? No! Not even a "Thank you" for Jesus. No! You haven't a word of appreciation for Him, because you cannot see what He has done for you. You cannot see what He has done for you, because you are looking into the Mirror of Self-righteousness and Self-sufficiency. Stop! Think what Jesus gives you not daily, but moment by moment. And you don't even return "thanks" when you sit down to the table.

Your table is loaded down with things good to eat--all because of God's goodness. Yes, God is responsible for every article of food set before you. He made that potato. You did not make it. You can't. There is not a man living, scientific or otherwise, who can put life into a potato, or cause a single blade of grass to grow. But the Lord faithfully keeps up the supply. Daily we satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst. AND DAILY W E SHOULD B E GRATEFUL TO HIM. Did you ever hear the story of Kate Shelley?

Coming out West, we took the Southern route, and came through Des Moines, Iowa. Rain had been falling heavily in that section of the country, and hundreds of acres of land were under water. This was back in the days when there were no concrete bridges. The Des Moines River was gradually overflowing as the heavy rains continued to fall. It was nine o'clock at night. The rain was beating down mercilessly upon the cabin where Kate Shelley lived. She was peering into the darkness of that night, and she was thinking of the bridge.

During the afternoon, she noticed that the waters had weakened it. It was now nine o'clock, and the ten-thirty train would soon be roaring over the bridge. Suddenly, there came a grinding noise-- and then a crash! "Mother!" Kate cried, "The bridge is down! I wonder if George knows it." George was the watchman, and he lived across the bridge. "How can he know? There is no telephone," Kate was thinking. "Mother!" she announced. "I had better go." "But what can you do?" the mother said.

Kate Shelley waited until her mother's back was turned to the door. She threw a mackinaw about her; grabbed her father's lantern; and slipped out into the storm. She found that only a skeleton of the bridge was left. The waters had taken most of it down the river. But the rails still remained, and now and then a tie was still fast to the rails. Those little feet sought precarious footholds on those ties. She swayed dizzily on account of the madly rushing waters. She started her perilous journey over that raging flood.

She was gingerly making her way from tie to tie, and twice she nearly dropped her lantern when her uncertain footing treacherously gave way under her weight. When she came to the open spaces where the ties had broken off, she was compelled to make her way hand over hand until she came to the ties again. Her hands were now bleeding, lacerated and torn by splinters of smashed timbers. Going was becoming more difficult, for she was now becoming tired. But, from away off, there came the screeching whistle of the locomotive!

The ten-thirty express with its valuable cargo of human lives! Urged by that spirit which makes heroes of men, Kate Shelley redoubled her efforts. Running as hard as her fast ebbing strength would allow her, she reached her destination. And, when her message was delivered, she dropped unconscious to the ground. The watchman grabbed the red lantern, and waved it furiously in the middle of the track. Her heroic story was told to the passengers gathered about the unconscious form.

When Kate Shelley regained consciousness, she found herself the center jewel of a lavish collection of jewelry and currency -- a tribute of gratitude paid her by those whose lives she had spared that night. Kate Shelley loved to travel. And she toured all over Europe at the expense of the passengers on that ten-thirty express. A lasting expression of gratitude had been given her in the form of an annuity. She died some time ago. But out there in old Iowa, when folks are gathered around the fireside, they still tell the story of the bravery of Kate Shelley and the gratitude of the passengers.

Bleeding, nail-pierced Hands and Feet! Thorn-crowned Brow! Wounded Side! The Fountain opened for your cleansing! The Fountain flowing that you might have life. AND SUCH AN ABUNDANT LIFE! For daily He is bestowing on you blessings innumerable! Yet you withhold your life and your service. Brother, look into the mirror. Do you see ingratitude there? If you do, I plead with you! In the name of Jesus, come. Come to Jesus and say, "Blessed Lamb of Calvary, I thank you for all that I am and ever hope to be.

I thank you for my hope of heaven through Jesus, the Bright and Morning Star--the One Altogether Lovely--the Fairest Among Ten Thousand--The Rose of Sharon--the Lily of the Valley! Look in the mirror again. Can you see PRIDE there? Methinks as I look into 6 your eyes, if anything would keep some of you from coming to God, it is that thing we call "PRIDE." People are "too proud to come." How can you be "too proud to come," when you think of the sacrifice that took Him to the Cross?

Who are we, anyway, that we should have an exalted opinion of ourselves? "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." I don't care what you call it: inbred sin or total depravity. THE FACT IS, IT IS THERE. By nature, man is sinful, unholy, and corrupt. You get it from your father. Your father got it from his father. It has come down from Adam. I will not quarrel with you about definitions. The fact is, it is here. It is here, and nothing but Calvary's Cross and the Shed Blood can take it away.

O, Brother, don't be proud. Don't let your self-opinion keep you from the Cross. Brother, Sister, there is coming a day when you will be glad to give your pride ten thousand times over just to be able to say, "The Blood of the Lamb." There is no salvation apart from the Blood. I don't often like to make mention of something against other religions. My method is "Yet I show unto you a more excellent way." If you really get born again, you will be all right anywhere, anytime. But tonight, I have to refer to the statement made by Mrs.

Eddy. Listen! "The blood of Jesus Christ was no more efficacious when it flowed on Calvary than it was when it flowed through His veins as He walked the hills of Judea." Friends, that is not true! "Without the shedding of the Blood, there is no remission of sin." It was the Blood that flowed on Calvary that brought redemption. That Blood, and that Blood alone, can present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Oh, HALLELUIAH FOR THAT SACRIFICE! PROUD!

And what are we? Measured with his own eyes, man commands attention in three different dimensions, and feels exalted beyond measure! But fling him out into the infinite, illimitable, boundless, uncharted space--and where is he? Drop him into that immeasurable expanse inhabited by flaming worlds multiplied millions of times bigger than ours--and man fades into approximate nothingness. He becomes so infinitely

minute that it takes the sympathetic eye of a loving God to notice his existence!

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falls away." Yet we get all puffed up! We swell up like a great, big inflated zero. But there's nothing to it. There's nothing within and nothing without. IT IS NOTHING ALL OVER. Don't misunderstand me. I don't mean to say that man should underrate and under-estimate his privilege to rise to heights unknown. I do not mean to rob man of the ambition necessary to inspire him to soar to heights yet unattained.

No! A, thousand times no! But I say, in the light of Divine Truth; in the light of eternity and things eternal--you have nothing at all of which you have any right to be proud, SAVE THE CROSS OF JESUS. I am a sinner saved by grace. 'Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the death of Christ, my God.'" I was in a western town sometime ago. A man had been coming to church with 7 his wife. The wife had salvation: the husband didn't. This fact often caused trouble at home. He was moving with a fast crowd.

He used to say to his wife, "Come with me to the bridge party tonight, and I will go to church with you next time." Did you ever hear the devil say that? But at last, she said, "I can't go." "Woman, come along. Be reasonable; come on. If you come tonight, I will even go to hear Price. There's no harm in a good picture show. Come with me this time." But she had come to the place where she had to say "No." She said, "Joy has gone out of my heart. I can't pray after the show." "Oh, rubbish!

What are you talking about? There's no harm in what I am doing. If I was in the back room of some saloon, that would be different." He was on his way home one night. It was raining. He was in a hurry. To avoid an accident, he slammed on the brakes. The car skidded and swung into a telephone pole. I was in my office. The 'phone bell rang. "O, Mr., Price, will you come over?" It was a woman's voice, and she was sobbing. He was just cut to pieces. Two doctors were there. They had a bandage around his arm.

He said, "Stand by, doctor! It is too late! Mr. Price, TELL ME ABOUT JESUS" Yes, you may go to the pearly gates with your bridge, if you please. "Oh, there's no harm in it. On with the dance!" All right, you go ahead and tell that to the angels. But, so far as I am concerned. I am going to say, "SAVED THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS!" Brother, that is the only password that will open the gates of pearl to let the redeemed pass in. Ah, Brother, don't be so proud as to turn Him away.

While in Versailles, I visited the room where the Peace Treaty was signed. That room is full of mirrors. There are mirrors all around, no matter which way you turn. Sometimes, I could see myself in half a dozen places at once. I did not like the room. They called it one of the most magnificent rooms in that palace. Standing there with those mirrors all around, I felt uncomfortable, felt so uncomfortable that I had to get out. The Word of God is just like that. As you stand before it, it gives you a view of yourself from every angle.

The whole man stands revealed just as he is. Now, the water in the laver was fresh every morning. It was not a basin of unclean water. All the dirt was kept washed away. And it was never seen again. Praise the Lord! We can wash in a FLOWING FOUNTAIN. When our sins are washed off, they are also washed away by the flowing stream that runs into the Sea of God's forgetfulness. And He remembers them against us no more. Brother, when we stand before the Judgment Throne, we will be as pure and holy as newborn babes.

FOR THE BLOOD CLEANSSES EVERY STAIN. The laver was between the Ark and the tent of the congregation. Before anyone could go into the holy place, he had to wash in the laver. Brother, before you can be ushered into the Presence of God, you will have to go through the Fountain opened in the Side of the Dying Lamb. That laver stood before the people and the Ark. God 8 laid down the penalty of death to everyone who failed to wash in that laver before coming into the presence of the Ark.

THEY HAD TO WASH THERE OR DIE. They could not go home, and wash at home or elsewhere. They could not do it behind the piano. Naaman found out that, when God said, "Wash in the Jordan," He did not mean some other river. No other river could have done him any good. No! No other place except the altar. No other washing place but the laver. No other fountain but the Fountain opened to the House of David. Brother, there is but one salvation. That's the one God provided. There is but one cleansing power.

That's the BLOOD OF JESUS. And God has laid down the penalty of death to every man and woman that enters His Presence without going through the Fountain of Blood. Brother, look into God's mirror, and see yourself as God sees you. Dip into the Fountain of Blood, and be what the Blood alone can make you. Let us pray! (Two hundred and eighty-seven answered the altar call. Praise the Lord.) 9

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