

# Biblical Worship

## Week 3 – Christ our Once for All Sacrifice

**Introduction:** Christ was foreshadowed in the Old Testament sacrifices of Israel. We look now at what it means that He is our “once for all sacrifice” and how our worship both privately and publicly is to be aimed at magnifying Jesus Christ. He is our God and Savior, and we honor and praise Him because He is worthy of it. He purchased us by His blood, and we are His people. The sheep of His pasture. Every time we gather it is an occasion to remember His sacrifice and to give thanks to Him.

### I. The Lamb of God – Our Passover Sacrifice

1. There are symbolic similarities between the Old Testament sacrifices and what the New Testament writers have in mind when they talk about Christ’s sacrifice. The *olah*, *minhah* and *shelamim* were the primary examples we have previously covered.
2. However, among the New Testament writers, the sacrifice that seems to be in view more than any is the lamb that the Israelites had to provide in Egypt during the Lord’s Passover.

#### A. The Passover

† **Exodus 12:12-13** – “For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.”

- It was the blood of the spotless lamb that saved them from the judgment executed on Egypt. **PTQ**

#### B. A Spotless Lamb

† **Exodus 12:5-8** – “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. <sup>8</sup> Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.”

- They were to select the lamb on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month and keep it until the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month. The four days leading up to the Passover were meant for preparation and examination. **PT**

#### C. The Spotless Lamb

- We see through later revelation that the time of preparation and examination, is reflected in Jesus’ triumphal entry, being recognized as a righteous one or a “lamb without blemish.” This story is referenced in all three gospel accounts which highlights its significance.

- † **Matthew 12:1-2;12-13** – “Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. <sup>12</sup> The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup> took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: “Hosanna! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ The King of Israel!””
- Jesus follows their shouts by quoting Zechariah 9:9 and showing that He fulfilled the prophecy of His coming. He is the righteous king, humble and mounted on a donkey. **PTQ**
- “According to Josephus, it was customary in his day to kill the lamb at about 3:00pm. This was the time of day that Christ, the Christian’s Passover lamb, died.”<sup>1</sup>
- We see this idea of Christ being our Passover Lamb reiterated in the New Testament epistles.
- † **1 Peter 1:18-19** – “*knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*”
- This is where the author of Hebrews refers to Jesus as our “once for all sacrifice”:
- † **Hebrews 7:27** – “who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.” **PTQ**

## II. The High Priest – After the Order of Melchizedek

1. The author of Hebrews also describes Jesus as our High Priest. Unlike the Levitical priests, He does not need to make sacrifices for His own sins because He is righteous, without sin, and without blemish. He is both the spotless Lamb of God and the perfect High Priest.
  - † **Hebrews 4:14-16** – “*Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*”
  - A. Jesus was called by God just as Aaron was (Hebrews 5:4)
  - † **Hebrews 5:5-6** – *So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” <sup>6</sup> As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*

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<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Study Bible*. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2006.

- B. Melchizedek is a figure mentioned only two times throughout the entire Old Testament. We see him in Genesis 14 and in Psalm 110.
- † **Genesis 14:18** – *“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.”* PTQ
- C. We see he is mentioned here as “priest of God Most High.”
- † **Psalm 110:4** – *“The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”* PTQ
- D. This Psalm is widely understood to be referring to King David and his dynasty but with a future fulfillment found in Christ.
- E. “The name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; and “king of Salem” means “king of peace” (Heb 7:2). Christ, too, brings righteousness and peace.”<sup>2</sup> PTQ
- † **Hebrews 7:3** – *“without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.”*
- F. Longman asserts here that “If we read this statement with modern lenses on, we will misunderstand it to say that Melchizedek was not born in a human way and is still alive. But if we put ourselves back into the ancient world that produced Hebrews, we will know that the author is speaking about Melchizedek as a literary figure. Nowhere is his birth or death recorded. He pops into the narrative in Genesis and pops right out again. The author of Hebrews exploits this literary fact in order to make the overriding point that Jesus is better than Levi and his priesthood surpasses the Levitic priesthood.”<sup>3</sup> PTQ
- † **Hebrews 7:9-10** – *“Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,<sup>10</sup> for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.”*
- G. This passage indicates that Melchizedek was superior to Abraham and in that way he typologically prefigured Christ. He was a type of the Priest King Jesus who was to come.
- H. “The remarkable teaching of the Bible is that Jesus provides all the resources we need for the worship of God. He is the place of worship, as well as the means and the mode of worship...Christ is our one and only priest, who leads us into the very presence of God.”<sup>4</sup>
- † **1 Peter 2:4-5** – *“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,<sup>5</sup> you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* PTQ
- I. Peter refers to believers here as a “holy priesthood.” This is most often referred to as “the priesthood of all believers.” It simply refers to our immediate access to

<sup>2</sup> David Gundersen, [“Psalms.”](#) in *The NIV Grace and Truth Study Bible*, ed. R. Albert Mohler Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2021), 803.

<sup>3</sup> Longman, Tremper. *Immanuel in Our Place: Seeing Christ in Israel’s Worship*, P & R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 2001, p.157.

<sup>4</sup> Longman, Tremper. *Immanuel in Our Place: Seeing Christ in Israel’s Worship*, P & R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 2001, p.158-159.

Christ. We do not need a priest to intercede for us because Christ intercedes for us. We go to Him. As believers we “offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Our worship should be shaped by these “spiritual sacrifices.” We make these sacrifices through Jesus Christ and therefore we act in a spirit of worship when we pray, when we read and study the Word of God. When we take communion with other believers in the local church body. When we sing songs in response to what we have heard from the Lord in His Word.

- J. Having examined Jesus Christ as our High Priest and our “once for all sacrifice” we will now take a look at key elements that were common throughout three historic liturgies. Christ was central, and the gospel was communicated in their practice.

### III. Examining Three Liturgies – The Word and the Upper Room

#### 1. Calvin, Luther and Rome – The Word

Chart 4.1 Calvin’s Liturgy of the Word Highlights

Rome   <sup>Ⓜ</sup> pre-1570	Luther   <sup>Ⓜ</sup> ca. 1526	Calvin   <sup>Ⓜ</sup> ca. 1542
<i>Liturgy of the Word</i>	<i>Liturgy of the Word</i>	<i>Liturgy of the Word</i>
Choral Introit	Entrance Hymn Introit	Scripture Sentence (e.g., <a href="#">Ps. 121:2</a> )
<i>Kyrie</i> (“Lord have mercy”)	<i>Kyrie</i>	Confession of Sin (with pardon at Strasbourg)
<i>Gloria</i> Salutation (“The Lord be with you ...”)	<i>Gloria</i> Salutation	Psalm Sung
Collect(s)	Collect	
Old Testament Reading Antiphonal Chant		Ten Commandments (sung with <i>Kyries</i> at Strasbourg)
Epistle Reading Gradual (a psalm sung)	Epistle Reading Gradual	
Alleluia		Prayer for <a href="#">Illumination</a> (with Lord’s Prayer)
Gospel Reading	Gospel Reading Apostles’ Creed Sermon Hymn	Scripture Reading
Sermon	Sermon	Sermon
Nicene Creed Sung (or <i>Gloria</i> )	Post-Sermon Hymn	
Dismissal of Non-communicants	Exhortation	

## 2. Calvin, Luther and Rome – The Upper Room

Chart 4.2 Calvin's Liturgy of the Upper Room Highlights

Rome † pre-1570	Luther † ca. 1526	Calvin † ca. 1542
<i>Liturgy of the Upper Room [Always]</i>	<i>Liturgy of the Upper Room [Always]</i>	<i>Liturgy of the Upper Room [Quarterly]</i>
Offertory		Collection of Alms
	Prayer for the Church	Intercessions Lord's Prayer
Preparation of Elements	Preparation Hymn	Apostles' Creed (sung as elements prepared)
Salutation <i>Sursum Corda</i> Sanctus Benedictus	<i>Sursum Corda</i> Sanctus	
Eucharistic Prayer: •Remembrance ( <i>Anamnesis</i> ) •Offering Elements for Holy Use ( <i>Oblation</i> )	Preparation: •Call for Holy Spirit ( <i>Epiclesis</i> ) •Consecration of Elements •Remembrance ( <i>Anamnesis</i> )	
•Words of Institution ( <i>Verba</i> ) •Call for Holy Spirit to Change Elements ( <i>Epiclesis</i> ) •Amen	•Words of Institution ( <i>Verba</i> )	Words of Institution Exhortation
Lord's Prayer	Lord's Prayer	Consecration Prayer
Kiss of Peace		
Fraction		Fraction
Agnus Dei	Agnus Dei	
Communion	Communion (with psalms sung)	Communion (with Scriptures read)
Collect	Collect	Psalm Sung
	Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving Prayer
Dismissal Blessing	Aaronic Blessing Closing Hymn	Aaronic Blessing

### IV. Christ through Word, Prayer and Communion

- Throughout our examination we will focus most heavily on Calvin's model because at this point in our reading, it is the closest to our modern context and informs our understanding of many of the practices we see in churches today. We will start by examining the Word in our worship.
- "Based on their study of Acts 2:42, Bucer and Calvin identified four elements essential for worship that should continue according to their understanding of apostolic patterns in the New Testament: the Word, prayer, the meal, and alms."<sup>5</sup>  
 † **Acts 2:41-42** – "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. <sup>42</sup> And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." **PTQ**
- "Calvin believed devotion to God needed to be on God's terms. True devotion could not be found in human invention or ceremony—these were only subtle forms of idolatry—whereby humankind asserted its pride in its own provision. God establishes

<sup>5</sup> Bryan Chapell, [Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 42–43.

the way that he is to be worshiped in his Word, and this Regulative Principle of Christian worship meant that Calvin studied the Scriptures to find his liturgy.”<sup>6</sup>

4. As we have studied the Old Testament sacrificial system and the power of God’s word from the dawn of creation, we see this continued pattern that God determines how He is to be worshiped and thus it is His word that instructs our worship.

**A. Scripture Sentence** – In Calvin’s liturgy he opened with a scripture sentence as a word from the Lord. This opening “echoes the ancient pattern of starting the gospel story of the liturgy with an assertion of the nature of God that both awes and humbles the worshiper. Calvin’s opening sentence does not match the ceremony of the Roman Catholic Introit, but accomplishes the same purpose with scriptural simplicity.”<sup>7</sup>

- The introit would call the congregants to worship and would invite people to celebrate what the Lord has done.
- What separates the early Roman introit from the scripture sentence that opens Calvin’s liturgy, is that the latter would have involved the whole congregation. It was not simply the clergy or those in vocational ministry that were singing the psalm, but also the lay members of the congregation.
- The scripture sentence might have been something like the opening to Psalm 121 where we are lifting our “eyes to the hills” remembering where our help comes from. Who is God? He is the maker of heaven and earth. This was and continues to be a helpful way to open a service, by remembering the character and nature of our God.

† **Psalm 121:1-2** – *I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.*

- By first acknowledging God’s help and power, we then set the stage for confession of sin and assurance of the pardon that we have received in Christ.
- Some church liturgies will recite phrases of historical confessions or confessions that they have written to publicly confess sin and publicly give assurance to the believer in Christ. This was the example shown by Calvin’s liturgy: **PTQ**

**1) Confession of Sin** - “Almighty, eternal God and Father, we confess and acknowledge that we, alas, were conceived and born in sin, and are therefore inclined to all evil and slow to all good; that we transgress thy holy commandments without ceasing, and ever more corrupt ourselves. But we are sorry for the same, and beseech Thy grace and help. Wherefore have mercy upon us, most gracious and merciful God and Father, through Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ. Grant to us and increase in us Thy Holy Spirit, that we may recognize our sin

<sup>6</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 44.

<sup>7</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 44–46.

and unrighteousness from the bottom of our hearts, attain true repentance and sorrow for them, die to them wholly, and please thee entirely by a new godly life. Amen.”<sup>8</sup>

**2) Assurance of Pardon** – “Let each of you confess that he is really a sinner who has to humble himself before God. He must believe that the heavenly Father will be gracious to him in Jesus Christ. To all who have repentance and who seek Jesus Christ for their salvation, I pronounce forgiveness in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.”<sup>9</sup>

- While every church does not necessarily recite from a confession, we see these elements at play when a pastor assures the believer from the pulpit that “if you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and turned to Him in faith. If you are not living in unrepentant sin, you can rest in His forgiveness.” **PTQ**
- Indeed, the songs we sing are ways for us to confess our sin to the Lord and to express an assurance of pardon. Which is why it is essential for the pastoral leadership of a church to be wise and discerning towards what songs are being sung in our services.

**1)** Are we remembering the Lord in these songs?

**2)** Are we confessing our sin and failings?

**3)** Are we assuring ourselves and one another of the “once for all sacrifice” that paid for our sins and makes a way for pardon?

**B. Thanksgiving and Response** – We see prayer woven throughout each element of Calvin’s liturgy. For example, the “Confession of Sin” would be an opening prayer. In many modern services though, our prayers are present more in the songs we sing or following a scripture reading. They are a response to what we have sung or heard.

- We pray for the Spirit to move through the preaching of the Word.
- “‘When the Bible speaks, God speaks,’ Augustine wrote. Calvin additionally believed that when the Word of God is faithfully preached, Jesus still speaks in his church by his Spirit in the hearts of his people. This is blessed work that requires the Spirit’s presence and motivates the preacher’s prayer.”<sup>10</sup>
- Prayer can be more formal in a service where someone up front opens the service to pray. There may be times when a congregation member will open to pray. We can also see the songs we sing as a form of prayer.
- “Calvin was initially unconvinced that singing was a biblical element of New Testament worship, but ultimately reasoned that song could be a form of prayer. And, he knew that prayer was included in New Testament worship!”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 46.

<sup>9</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 47.

<sup>10</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 51.

Calvin's Regulative Principle also led him to the conclusion that songs in formal worship should be the Words of God, and thus he published psalters and largely limited the congregation to psalm singing."<sup>11</sup>

- It is also worth noting, that the largest book in the Bible is the Psalms. A collection of Hebrews songs that were sung or recited at festivals, weddings, ceremonies, etc. It would seem just by observation of biblical canon, that singing is an important aspect of our praise to God. Not to mention that we are told to sing in scripture:  
 † **Psalm 96:1-2** - *Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.*
- "True obedience for them and for us is a response to God's grace, not an attempt to earn it. By singing God's law in the context of his faithfulness, the congregation is reminded that their own holiness is a response to the God who has already heard their confession and yet remains faithful to his covenant."<sup>12</sup>
- Our prayers are a response to God's grace. Even opening the service in prayer is a response to the work He has done in our hearts by faith. **PTQ**

### C. Christ through Communion

- We remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus through corporate participation in the Lord's supper or communion.
- Jesus instituted the Lord's supper during the Passover meal with his disciples.  
 † **Luke 22:14-20** – *"When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. <sup>15</sup> Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." <sup>17</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; <sup>18</sup> for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." <sup>20</sup> Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." **PTQ***
- There are four main views on what takes place when we gather for the Lord's supper. Those views are the memorialism, real presence, consubstantiation and transubstantiation, which we will cover in a later lesson. For now, it is sufficient to acknowledge that all believers recognize that in partaking of the elements, we are remembering the Lord's death until He comes. This is something the Lord commands (an ordinance) and it is something deeply

<sup>11</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 48.

<sup>12</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 49.

beneficial to our spiritual life. Both as an individual believer and for the sake of the gathered saints.

- In Calvin’s liturgy: “By prayer and scriptural Words of Institution the elements are set aside for holy use. Calvin perceives it as important to have Scripture precede the Prayer of Consecration, so Christ’s command rather than human prayer sets apart the elements. They are made useful *not* by being transubstantiated into Christ (i.e., Catholicism) or by communicating his real presence into the body of the believer (i.e., Lutheranism), nor is the Lord’s Supper a simple memorial service where believers are merely reminded what Jesus did (i.e., Zwinglianism). Calvin understands the New Testament to teach that the elements of Communion are rightly appropriated by faith into a spiritual meal (John 6:63) whereby the believer is lifted to union with Christ. Christ is not re-embodied on earth (1 Cor. 11:25–26), but the believer is lifted to a spiritual communion with the Savior that is the nourishment and strength of grace for living in loving obedience. In order for this spiritual nourishment to occur, the believer needs to come in faithful dependence on Christ’s grace. For the sacrament truly to be a means of grace one must not merely participate in the ceremony; rather, one must sincerely acknowledge and faithfully receive what the sacraments signify.”<sup>13</sup>
- **1 Corinthians 11:27-32** – *“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. <sup>30</sup> For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. <sup>31</sup> For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. <sup>32</sup> But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.”* PTQ
- This is a spiritual meal where we are communing with Christ in remembrance of His death and His sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, we are warned by Paul not to come in an unworthy manner. We must examine our hearts before communion. Nevertheless, this ordinance is a way for us to obey the Lord in His command and to meditate on the cleansing power of Jesus blood that was poured out for us. His body was broken for us. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

**Conclusion:** Christ’s sacrifice was “once for all” in that there is no need for any further sacrifices. There is nothing that comes between us and God except Jesus Christ. He is our High Priest, our Mediator. Indeed, this was the problem that became of Roman Catholic liturgy was its emphasis on the Priest’s intercession and their misguided administering of the sacraments. We do not need a spiritual intercessor because Christ has already interceded on our behalf. When we believe on Jesus Christ, our faith is counted as righteousness because of the work

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<sup>13</sup> Bryan Chapell, [\*Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 53–54.

that He alone has done. Thus, we remember Him through the public preaching and reading of scripture. Through public and private prayers confessing sin, remembering His grace and requesting aid. In preparation for the Lord's supper, it is an occasion for us to reconcile with one another and confess our sin to the Lord. In remembering our Lord's death, we anticipate a meal with the Bridegroom one day in heaven. The finality of Christ's sacrifice shapes our worship of Him.

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