

Title: IT DOES MATTER, LUKE 4:14-21
(Chatham, NJ; 01/27/13, AM) [D – Topical]

Theme: Leviticus reveals more than the sacrificial system; it reveals that sin matters and that holiness is a necessary characteristic of serving God.

Purpose: To demand that we have a serious concern for sin; to demonstrate that the New Testament also demands holy living; and to illustrate how Jesus' ministry reflects concern for those things.

Introduction:

1. The covenant of Jesus' blood has replaced the Old Covenant of Moses based on the Law and the sacrifice of animals.
2. Although we know that the new covenant is better, it still carries with it many of the foundations from the old.
3. Today we focus on sin and atonement, holiness, and how those are inherent in the new.

I. Sin cannot be swept under the rug: Leviticus

- A. Unintentional sins are not ignored.
 1. Priest (4:3), community (4:13-14), leader (4:22), everyone else (4:27)
 2. Good intentions don't insure we have done the right thing
 3. "The road to hell is paved with good intentions"
 4. Making excuses, saying it doesn't make any difference, doesn't work with God
 5. We have no scapegoat but ourselves
- B. Sin must be rooted out
 1. People were expected to speak up, 5:1
 2. Any sin must be atoned for, 5:17
 3. Sins against a neighbor must be atoned for, 6:2
 4. Only when the person is aware of it can it be atoned for, but the sin is there even before the awareness
 5. Intentional sin may be another matter altogether: it was expected that this wouldn't happen
 6. Leviticus 16 – a special day set aside for Atonement
- C. Blood of Christ: better than bulls and goats, Hebrews 10:4
 1. God's justice demanded a sacrifice, Romans 3:26 – God's justice is satisfied in the sacrifice of Christ
 2. This doesn't negate the seriousness of sin; it accentuates it
 3. Hebrews 10:26-31 warns us not to take it for granted

II. Holiness is not optional

- A. Be holy, Lev. 11:44 & 19:2
 1. "Do not follow the practices of the nations around you"
 2. The Law of Moses demanded that Israel be different from Egyptians and Canaanites
 3. Holiness is based on the nature of God: be holy because I am holy
 4. God's identity did not change with the change of covenants
- B. Holiness is not optional in the New Testament either
 1. Hebrews 12:14, we won't see God without it
 2. 1 Peter 1:16 – 19 draws on the Levitical tradition
 3. 1 Peter 2:1 demonstrates that holiness is a behavior not just a cleansing

4. Sanctification is done to us by the grace of God and by us in that we live according to God's will
5. Justification by faith still demands holy living

III. Jesus in the light of Leviticus, Luke 4:14-21

- A. Preach good news
 1. Sin is atoned for by the blood of Christ
 2. Forgiveness is complete
 3. By the Gospel we avert the condemnation from sin
- B. Sight for the blind
 1. Only when we believe and admit the truth about ourselves can we see
 2. "People loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil," John 3:19
 3. The crucifixion opens our eyes
- C. Liberty for the captives
 1. Freedom from the dominion of darkness, Col. 1:13
 2. If God has given us freedom, why should we submit to things that enslave us?
 3. Earthly kingdoms have no right to make us violate the laws of God

Conclusion:

1. We should be grieved when people make a mockery of "living in sin," and we must not shrink back from being outraged.
2. We should also be grieved at the depth of our own sin.
3. Only the Gospel of Christ takes away sin and guilt.
4. Repentance is the step by which we admit our guilt before God.
5. Confession is the step by which we admit we need Jesus to take it away.
6. Baptism is the step by which God washes away sin.
7. Atonement makes for holy living.
8. Because we have received it, let us strive for holiness. It is the best witness we have.