



June 25, 2023

**Abounding Grace: Belonging
Behold, the Lamb**

John 1:29

For Discussion and Reflection

1. The consistent testimony of God, from Genesis 3 to Revelation 22, is that salvation must come from a source external to us. Romans 3, Paul tells us that even the most righteous amongst us are sinners. The Apostle Paul says that he's the "chief of sinners." (1 Timothy 1:15) Like the believers in our Bible, we know this but struggle to lay our performance aside and cling only to Christ. How do you experience that battle? How does the Lord's Table communicate this to you?
2. In Genesis 3:14-21, God preaches the gospel to Adam and Eve, clothing them with the skins of animals sacrificed for them. Focus on the idea of being clothed by God: Psalm 132:16, Isaiah 61:10, Zechariah 3:4, Luke 15:22, Galatians 3:27. What does it mean to you, to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ? How does the communion meal communicate that to you?
3. God speaks to us of his Lamb that would be sacrificed for our sins, Isaiah 53. Read the story of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22:1-14. What stands out to you? What was God communicating to Abraham? What does it communicate to you?
4. In Exodus 12, God explains the Passover meal. Again, a lamb is used to illustrate God's atonement for Israel. The Apostle Paul makes a direct connection between the Passover lamb and Jesus, saying, "For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed." (1 Corinthians 5:7) Even John the baptizer, upon seeing Christ, says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) Is it important that the Lamb of God is also the Son of God, His Firstborn? How does this draw these texts together? How does that affect your view of the Table?
5. Jesus does more for us than atone for our sins. Because he is the Son of God, the Beloved, the One with whom God is well-pleased, he is the One who truly belongs. His atonement cleanses us from sin, but his status enhances our relationship with God. He offers us more than atonement. What does his status give us? Galatians 4:4-7. How does the communion table communicate that level of belonging? Think about Jesus teaching in John 6 concerning ingesting bread from heaven.
6. As you think about God's salvation, the end (goal) being our sonship/daughtership with His Son Jesus, does that affect your thinking about what God has given you and called you to?
7. What did you learn today and what steps can you take to grow in the grace available to you from God?