**Sacred Cows**

**Part 5 of 6**

**“Can God Qualify the Disqualified?”**

**Psalm 103:4**

***“He (the Lord) continues to redeem your life from the pit, and He continuously surrounds you with gracious love and compassion.”***

I remind you again that in this series I’m putting the microscope on some of the terminology we use. I’m convinced that some of the subtle nuances in what people have told us about our God, our world, and ourselves have misled us. The words we use to describe something are important. Sometimes they subliminally communicate ideas to us that stick in our minds, whether they’re true or not. The use of fuzzy words and phrases results in fuzzy thinking, which leads to misdirected perceptions.

In this series, I’ve been “clearing the fuzziness” by calling sacred cows out to make the point that there’s been a widespread dilution of the truth. When it comes to the gospel, diluted truth is polluted truth, and polluted truth is no gospel at all.

Some people will say that I’m making a big deal over nothing, arguing that my observations are nothing more than a matter of semantics. My response is that it’s “only semantics” to those who don’t see a difference between what I’m saying and the way it’s commonly said. Words do mean something, and when ideas are put into words in such a way that they lead to or reinforce erroneous notions, it’s appropriate to challenge the use of those words. Too much is at stake to risk faulty communication about the truth.

So, on that note, another one of the most dangerous sacred cows in the body of Christ today is the belief that…

***Sacred Cow #5***

***Our sins can disqualify us from being used by God.***

In this series, we’ve been looking at many truths about the true identity we have because of Christ. We’ve seen that we’ve been forgiven, adopted, justified, reconciled, sanctified, and so much more. But as new creatures in Christ, we still have the capacity to sin. We all are capable of being tempted and weakened to where we can commit any sin. That’s why it’s important to learn how to depend on the indwelling Christ as our source for living.

The people who say they never sin are deceiving themselves, or they’re blatantly telling a lie. Nobody in this world lives a sinless and perfect life. The good news is that no sin you or I can ever commit is able to undo the work of Christ! We may sin in awful ways, but we remain forgiven, adopted, justified, reconciled, and sanctified. 2 Timothy 2:13 says the Lord is faithful even if we’re unfaithful.

It’s important to hold on to the truths the Scriptures teach us, or in times of personal failure we’ll be ripe for a slide into total despair. Sadly, judgmental Christians and erroneous teaching often drive those who have failed to deeper despair rather than encouraging them toward hope and restoration. The sacred cow we’re considering this weekend fits in this category.

Consider three New Covenant truths that will put this sacred cow out of its misery:

***1. Jesus is GREATER than your greatest sin.***

Romans 5:20 says that “*grace abounds over sin.*”

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, *"He [God] made Him [Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*

***2. Jesus is GREATER than your foolish choices.***

Hebrews 11:7 – Noah was a faithful man who built the ark. But no sooner had he come off the ark, you see him falling down drunk.

Hebrews 11:8-19 – Abraham, Israel’s greatest patriarch, gave into fear and lied in an attempt to pass off his wife as his sister, involving her in the deceptive scheme – and not once, but twice!

Hebrews 11:23-29 – The great Lawgiver of the old covenant, Moses, killed a man.

Hebrews 11:32-40 – Samson, the great hero and judge, and David, the king who was the “man after God’s own heart,” are on this list – even though they both committed immoralities and adultery by conspiring to bring about the death of Bathsheba’s husband as a cover-up.

Hebrews 11:31 – Most people would consider prostitution to be a great sin, and yet Rahab was used by the Lord to protect His people.

Hebrews 11:39 *“All these…gained approval through their faith.”*

Galatians 1:13, *“For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.”*

Acts 22:4, "*I persecuted this Way [Christians] to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons.”*

Mark 16:7, “*Go, tell His disciples* and Peter.”

Luke 24:33-34, *“And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, saying, ‘The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon.’”*

***3. Jesus’ qualification is GREATER than your disqualification.***

1 John 2:1-2, “*My little children, I am telling you this so that you will stay away from sin. But if you sin, there is someone to plead for you before the Father. His name is Jesus Christ, the one who is all that is good and who pleases God completely. He is the one who took God’s wrath against our sins upon himself and brought us into fellowship with God; and he is the forgiveness for our sins, and not only ours but all the world’s.”*

Galatians 6:8, *“The one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption…”*

Colossians 1:12, “*Do not let anyone…disqualify you for the prize”*