

Hebrews Chapter 10 v 1 - 18

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Date: 06 December 2015

Preacher: Peter Robinson

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Hebrews chapter 10, beginning at verse 1. Here is God's word and he has given it to us for our blessing and our help.

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves. For this reason, it can never by the same sacrifices, repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

[2 : 01] If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshippers would have been cleansed once for all and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.

But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said, Sacrifice an offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.

With burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, here I am. It is written about me in the scroll. I have come to do your will, O God.

First, he said, sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them, although the law required them to be made.

[2 : 58] Then he said, here I am. I have come to do your will. He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Day after day, every priest stands and performs his religious duties. Again and again, he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time, he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, because by one sacrifice, he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First, he says, this is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord.

I will put my laws in their hearts and will write them on their minds. Then he adds, their lawless, sorry, their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.

[4 : 08] And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin. Going to come to a time of prayer.

There's many needs around our world that need to be praying for. Many of you have seen on the news the floods over in Carlisle and Cumbria. Just two years ago, of course, there was terrible floods here, weren't there, in Whitby.

And it takes a long time to recover from. Let's pray for them. Let's continue to pray for the situation in Syria now that Britain has become engaged in conflict there.

Let's pray for those refugees that are stuck on the border between Greece and Macedonia. There's many of them having to live outside in these conditions. And just closer to home, please, would you pray for our John.

He, as you know, broke his arm early in the year and has metal rods running through his arm. He's having an operation tomorrow to have those removed as long as there's room in the theatre and there's a bed for him.

[5 : 09] So, appreciate your prayer that that would go well and all would go safely too. So, let us come to our God in prayer. Let's bring these needs and others to him. Let's pray together.

Oh, Lord, our God, you are the God of this world in the sense that you are the one who made it and you are the one who provides for it. You're the one who cares for it.

You're the one who is indeed at work in this world. And as we've been thinking already, you are not the God who stands, as it were, aloof, who stands separated from your world, but the God who has stepped into the world in the person of Jesus Christ and the God who is engaged and is engaged in your world in every aspect and area.

Lord, we know that you are involved and concerned and engaged in all that goes on, whether it be wars, whether it be death, whether it be illness, whether it be celebrations and joys, whether it be new birth and life.

Lord, we thank you that every individual person, every one of the seven billion people who live on this planet are known to you, including ourselves. But we especially want to pray for those who are in great difficulty at this time.

[6 : 28] We think of our own nation. We think of the county of Cumbria and particularly Carlisle and Keswick and Cockermouth and around those areas which have known such flooding these last few days. And we pray, praise you and thank you that as far as we know there have been no fatalities and deaths, and we pray that would continue.

Carpets and furniture can be replaced. We do pray for those who are maybe homeless at this time that you would be close to them, that you would help those who are seeking to remove the water.

We pray, Lord, for there to be, even in spite of all that's gone on, a blessed Christmas for these folk. And we pray that, again, that floodwaters would subside now and that, Lord, there would be peace.

We do pray again, Lord, for those of the armed services who are engaged in conflict, particularly thinking of Syria. We ask you to protect and watch over those servicemen and women.

We ask again, Lord, that you would please have mercy upon this nation of Syria. And we pray, Lord, that this terrible civil war may come to an end, that those who seek to bring evil would be overthrown, and that, Lord, righteousness may be established.

[7 : 44] We pray for great wisdom to the leaders of the nations of this world who are in discussion and conversation over these things. We pray they may have one mind and heart in it all.

We again pray for the forces of evil in ISIS and Daesh and in Boko Haram. Lord, we pray, O Lord, that you would keep them at bay and that rather they might be overwhelmingly defeated.

We pray again for those who have been driven from their homes, who are refugees on the border with Greece and in many different parts of Europe at this time, some having to live in the open air without shelter, many of them children and families.

Our hearts go out to them, but, Lord, we know that you love them and care for them. And we thank you for those who have put themselves out in so many ways to care for them and to provide for them. And we pray you would bless their endeavors and efforts.

And we pray for safe passage for these people to a country and to a home where they may be resettled. We pray, Lord, for the needs of our own fellowship. Pray for John as he goes into hospital tomorrow.

[8 : 48] Pray that he may be able to have the operation. It may not be delayed. That it would go well and that you would keep him and heal him. And we pray for others as well, Lord, facing illness and facing struggling bodies.

We pray, Lord, again, that in every area, in every way, you would give us the strength we need to face each day and circumstance. We pray for ourselves as we come to your word now.

We want to see Jesus. We want to be those who see something more of who he is and what he's done for us in coming into the world. And I ask that you would open our eyes, our hearts, our minds.

Our hearts, Lord, we pray, to hear and receive your word. For we ask it in his name. And we bring all our prayers to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

As we find Christmas is approaching rapidly, of course, our minds, yes, turn to the preparations of what needs to be made practically in the way of what we will eat and where we will visit and what we will buy and all those sort of things.

[9 : 58] But as believers, of course, our minds are turning to those events recorded of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels. But not only there, also turning, as is the case in our midweek Bible studies, to those passages in the Old Testament which look forward to and are fulfilled by the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew, of course, does that very helpfully for us in his Gospel, in chapters 1 and 2, he tells us these things took place to fulfill what the Lord had said to the prophet, or this is what the prophet has written, or what was said happened to the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled.

Again and again, quoting from various parts of the prophets in the Old Testament. And as you go through the rest of Matthew, you find again and again, he refers to and points to the fact that the whole of Jesus' life, his death and resurrection, his ministry, everything, was the culmination of many thousands of years of God's promises to his Old Testament people, Israel.

And then when you go out from the Gospel records into the New Testament letters, again and again you find that the writers there, including quotations, references to Old Testament books to prove that what had happened in the life and death of Christ and what was happening following his resurrection was exactly as God had promised, as God has planned, and exactly as God had taught his people many thousands of years and hundreds of years before.

And so what we're going to do this morning and then in the next couple of Sunday mornings is we're going to think about passages in the New Testament which reflect upon the coming of Christ as fulfillment of the Old Testament.

[11 : 54] And for that reason, we read from Hebrews 10 and if you've got your Bibles there, Hebrews 10, first 18 verses will be helpful to you. One of the things that the NIV does and many translations do which is helpful is that they set out quotations from the Old Testament in a different way to the rest of the text.

So you've got there in verse 5, therefore when Christ came into the world, he said, and we've got a quotation there from Psalm 40 which goes through the end of verse 7 and then later on verse 16 as well which quotes from Jeremiah, verse 17, Jeremiah 2.

So if you've got your Bible there, many of you will have footnotes which will tell you that these verses, verses 6 to 8 of Psalm 40 are what is quoted and repeated by the writers of the Hebrews.

And in that Psalm, David is talking about that truth, that principle throughout the Bible that God's delight is in those who love him, those who are devoted to him.

God is more concerned about our hearts than he is about outward religion, outward things that we do. And even the law that he gave concerning sacrifices which his people were to carry out, even they are not the delight of his heart.

[13 : 15] The writer of the Hebrews tells us that in verse 8. First he said, sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them, although the Lord required them to be made.

For many people, the idea that Christianity or faith is about what we do rather than what we feel, if I can put it that way, is commonplace. But the reality is that God wants a heart which is submitted to him, a heart which is set upon him.

And the writer takes these verses from Psalm 40 where David is expressing his own devotion to the Lord and he shows that these verses apply directly to and find fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ only.

And they show us that the reason that Jesus came into the world, the reason that he left heaven, the reason that he came to be a man and God in the person of Jesus Christ, the reason that he came and lived in this world 33 or so years, the reason that he went to the cross and died, the reason he rose again was all that he might do God's will.

The reason he came was to do God's will. Christmas is about Christ coming to do the will of God. And we cannot fail to recognize, of course, the genuine and deep heart devotion that Christ had to his heavenly Father and therefore his devotion to do God the Father's will.

[14 : 48] It's something that Jesus himself spoke of several occasions. Once when he had been at the well in Samaria talking with a woman, a woman, some of his disciples came back and wanted to give him food to eat and he said to them, my food is to do the will of him who sent me.

He was more preoccupied with pleasing God and obeying God and doing God's will than he was with the necessities of life, even food and drink. He goes on and says later on in John chapter 6, the same sort of thing.

His reason for coming into the world. For I have come down from heaven, he said. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

Let us never underestimate the determination, the commitment of our Lord Jesus Christ to obey God the Father. It was a total commitment, total obedience, a total desire to do God's will without a moment's wavering, without a millisecond of doubt.

All his life was given over to that. We see, of course, when we come to Christmas, when we come to celebrating the birth of Christ, we see in his willingness to obey the Father and to do the Father's will, he made himself intrinsically weak.

[16 : 15] He humbled himself and took on the form of a human being. He entered into true and complete human nature in every way apart from sin. Because of his submission, because he wanted to do what God wanted, he became a human being.

This is what Hebrews, the writer of Hebrews, says just a bit earlier on in chapter 2. For this reason, he, that's Jesus, had to be made like his brothers, that's those who would come to faith in him, in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, that he might make atonement for the sins of his people.

Jesus himself was so committed to do God's will that though he is God, he took upon himself our humanity. But of course, the great culmination of that, the great goal of his taking on our humanity, the great goal of his submitting himself to the Father's will was that he might go to the cross and die.

And when the Paul writes to Philippians, he tells us of Jesus, humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He was obedient up to death, willingly going and sacrificing himself in our place.

Now, sometimes people may look at this and say, well, that's not right. Why should Jesus be, as if I can put it that way, ordered by his Father to do these things? Why should he do these things? Did he do them out of a duty?

[17 : 52] He did them because like a soldier obeying his supreme officer. No, that's not how we're to understand the obedience of Jesus. The obedience of Jesus and his desire to God's will comes out of a perfect love for the Father.

The perfect love for the Father. One of the titles that we find that comes out again and again in the Old Testament concerning Jesus is of him being the servant of the Lord.

That's how Isaiah describes him particularly. But let us not think because he made himself the servant of the Lord, it was done, as I say, as a master over his servant. Rather, it was he willingly gave himself.

He wasn't less divine than God the Father. He wasn't less superior to God the Father. He was one with the Father. That was something which the Jews recognized all too clearly and for that reason they tried to kill him on several occasions.

No, in every way he was one with the Father. Philippians 2, that same passage which leads up to him being obedient to death begins by saying, Jesus Christ who being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped or used to his own advantage but made himself nothing.

[19 : 13] God the Father did not make him human. He himself made himself taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness. He was not forced or coerced to come into this world as the servant of God and the saviour of sinners.

His submission was freely given out of a heart of love yes for us but supremely for his heavenly Father. And the evidence of that the evidence that Jesus came willingly is witnessed most strikingly when we consider the garden of Gethsemane.

That evening before the Lord Jesus died when he took his disciples to Gethsemane we're told a garden where he often went to pray and leaving them to one side he went by himself.

He says to them in Mark 14 my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch. And going a little farther he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour that's the hour the time of his death and suffering might pass from him.

Abba Father he prayed everything is possible for you take this cup from me. Jesus is wrestling in that sense with himself and wrestling in prayer but we know the outcome of that prayer when he says take this cup from me yet not what I will but what you will.

[20 : 47] Those words that Jesus speaks show to us that he must be equal with the Father because there's a battle in one sense between two equal wills of equal importance of equal strength.

When there is a weaker will it is overcome by the stronger will but where there are two wills that are the same and of equal authority and power then there is this clash that takes place and it takes place here and so we find that Jesus equal with God the Father having every right at that moment to say no I will not go to the cross no I will not suffer and die no I will not bear the sins of my people he said yes I will because I know that's what you want Father and I know that it's my will as well.

So Jesus Christ came and was born to do God's will. If that's the case then we need to ask of course what was God's will that Jesus came to do?

What was God's will that Jesus came to fulfill to obey? What is it that he wholeheartedly submitted himself to to please God the Father?

We have it here don't we in this Hebrews passage this is the whole sense of what the writer is telling us Jesus came to be and give himself as a sacrifice there we're told verse 5 of Hebrews 10 Jesus Christ came into the world he said sacrifice an offering you did not desire but a body you prepared for me with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased then I said here am I it is written about me in the scroll and so we read then on to verse 10 by that will I've come to do your will we've been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ all through the Old Testament we find sacrifices were given to God they had to be given to God sometimes they were given as a way of saying thank you to God because of some rescue or preservation or something that he'd done sometimes they were given as an act of worship a giving of ourselves and of things to him but especially the sacrifices of animals were given to cleanse from the guilt of sin sometimes we find that hard to understand why did

[23 : 11] God command these things why did God require animal sacrifices well since we sin against God our sin is breaking God's law and because we break God's law a penalty must be paid for the breaking of that law just as in any modern day court if you break a law and you are arrested and brought before the court and you're found guilty of that crime then a sentence is passed it may be a sentence which is a fine maybe a sentence which is community work it may be a sentence which is imprisonment you see when a person you and I when a person sins against God there is only one penalty because the severity of the sin is against God it means that the penalty must be death and under the Old Testament law God made a way for a guilty person to have that penalty of death paid for by an animal instead of themselves the animal was sacrificed and given to God on behalf of the person who sinned well the question would be why did God want such a grisly thing why did he want such a horrendous offering killing of an animal well because

God had to impress upon us the severity of sin the destructive and terrible nature of sin in a way he wanted to put people off sinning when they knew what they had to do to clear and cleanse themselves of that sin afterwards it was meant to be a stop sign as it were against breaking God's commandments but as the Bible teaches us none of those sacrifices could actually remove a person's guilt it couldn't prevent them from sinning again and again that's why there's no end of them as the writer says here in verse 11 day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties again and again he offers the same sacrifices which can never take away sins it was a temporary measure that God put in place under the Old Testament until the coming of

Jesus into the world Jesus came to do God's perfect will which was to give his life as a once for all sacrifice for the sins of all his people those who were before he came and those since who put their faith in him as he writes here when this priest that's Jesus had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world has transformed this world changed our calendar it's changed our holidays it's changed the way that we look at the world and so many other things but the key to reason above all else that Jesus Christ came into the world was that he should be a willing sacrifice for sin that he should suffer and die for sin and because he has done that because he has done what

God wanted because he has fulfilled God's will because he has come into this world and died therefore there are certain things which are the repercussions of that incredible obedience conclusions that come consequences that come and the first of these is this that we are guaranteed forgiveness we are guaranteed forgiveness verses 17 and 18 then he adds their sins and lawless acts I'll remember no more and where these have been forgiven there is no longer any sacrifice for sin what the blood of those animals could never do for those who offered them that is cleanse them from their guilt Jesus has done for us by offering himself to God so it didn't matter how many sacrifices they brought how many years they brought these offerings again and again when you read some of the figures in the old testament they are astonishing figures tens of thousands in one day even sin they they were never going to solve the problem of people's sin before

God why because the sacrifice being offered was not the guilty party the sacrifice being given in the place of the sinner was not the sinner themselves see animals don't sin animals can't sin they've got no soul they've got no spirit and therefore they can't pay the spiritual cost of our sin the penalty of spiritual death not just physical death that's the problem with sin it doesn't just place upon us physical death that's why we must die physically because sin has corrupted and affected every part of our human nature but sin affects us spiritually cuts us off from God and makes us enemies of God places under God's wrath and places under the judgment spiritual judgment of eternal death which is hell that animal can't do that it can't pay for it can't pay for the physical it cannot pay for the spiritual only one who has a soul and a spirit can pay for and pay the debt which is spiritual and offer themselves as a spiritual sacrifice and the problem of course is this as well the priests who brought the offerings to present they themselves were sinners they were faulty people faulty men as the writer of

[29 : 00] Hebrews makes clear earlier on in chapter 5 he says that these priests had to offer sacrifices for their own sins so in two ways the sacrifices of the old testament were imperfect to deal with the people's sins and certainly imperfect to do with ours but when Jesus Christ came at Christmas and came in that person of Jesus Christ both God and man he solved those two problems first of all he solved that problem because he took on the life of a fully human person one with a soul so that at the cross he took upon himself the sin and the penalty for all his people one who was truly spiritual paid a spiritual price but of course he was utterly sinless he always did God's will he never committed a sin he is the only person who has ever lived done that no one has come close by a million miles as a son of

God he came free from sin and because as the son of God he had that inestimable that infinite value so that he could die for and take the place of a multitude a numberless number of people so again Hebrews in chapter 7 26 the writer makes that very plain such a high priest that's Jesus meets our need one who is holy blameless pure set apart from sinners exalted above the heavens unlike the other high priests he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people he sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself so we have got a perfect sacrifice and a perfect high priest to give the sacrifice therefore we have full forgiveness which Christ has done at the cross has accomplished for us complete forgiveness there is nothing more to add nothing more to do nothing more to give he's done it and nothing else comes close that leads us to this final accomplishment of the

Lord Jesus Christ in coming into the world to do God's will yes he has made a sacrifice for himself for sin he has guaranteed forgiveness for us but he's done something very very important as well that we miss often he has come to make us holy holy look at verse 10 verse 14 because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy what does that mean it means first of all that we are holy in God's sight when God looks upon you dear Christian who have put your faith in Christ who believed and trusted him to take your sins at the cross God counts you now as holy he does not treat you as a guilty sinner anymore our sin has been removed the penalty of our sin has been paid for as far as

God's law is concerned we are innocent apostle Paul used a wonderful word in his letters when he talked about us being justified justified somebody explained it in this way justified means just as if I never sinned so when God looks upon us yes he knows all about us he knows our sins he knows our failings but he chooses not to take them into account against us but to treat us as if we had never sinned treat us as if we are holy in his sight because that's what Christ has done for us removed every part of sin it means because we are holy now that we do not need to do anything to fulfill God's law by that I mean that Jesus has fulfilled all the requirements of what God wanted on our behalf you have of course as we know the commandments that go all the way through the Old Testament what God required and called for his people to do Jesus came to fulfill them to do them on our behalf so that there's nothing that we can do none of our religious activities none to us being more acceptable to

God we can't be more accepted than we are we can't be more forgiven than we are as we have it there at the end of verse 18 where these sins have been forgiven there's no longer any sacrifice for sin there's nothing that you and I can do to take away or to add to our standing before God but it means when we are holy and God accepts us in that way as holy in his sight it means as well that we have become his people we have been brought into this wonderful place where we belong to him to holy means to set something apart as holy means to set it apart for God's use uniquely so they did with the temple and all those other things that they had and God has done that by bringing us into a covenant with himself there in verse 15 the Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this first he says this is the covenant I will make with them after that time says the Lord put my law in their hearts write them on their minds

[34 : 40] God has brought us into this unbreakable friendship this union with himself the word covenant occurs again and again through the Bible Jesus himself came to bring the fulfillment of that in the new covenant bring all the covenants together into one so that we become holy we become God's people yes his children we become his possession we become united with him in a way that can never be removed sin separates us from God it pushes God away from us and us away from God but in Christ that sin has been removed and so the assurance dear friends that we have this morning as Christians is not only that we are forgiven no matter what our sins may be that we are accepted and received by God no matter how failing and faulty we are now but also the assurance that God will never leave us nor forsake us because he has made himself one with us and was one with him for all eternity nothing you can do nothing you can say can separate the love of

God in Christ towards you there's one last thing dear friends this more than anything else is the practical application of what we understand why Jesus came into this world to do God's will he came into the world to do God's will so that we as God's people may also do God's will Christ came to be obedient to the Father so that we who were disobedient to him may be obedient and submissive to his will from the whole of our hearts verse 16 second part I'll put my laws in their hearts I'll write them on their minds God when we become those who are born again of the spirit of God when we come into this living covenant and relationship with God when we know that Jesus Christ is our savior something happens and transforms us not only in the sight of

God but transforms us inwardly as well we are new creations we have received new birth God's laws become important to us what he wants becomes essential to us what he desires and delights in becomes our desire and delight we want to live our lives as those who are set apart from sin we want to live our lives as those who are set apart for God we see that his will is perfect and good and a delight to us not a burden or trouble or a pain and we keep his commandments and seek to keep them not again because of fear of displeasing him not again because of fear of punishment because we know it's all been taken at the cross we do it because we are devoted to him in love we see what he's done for us in Jesus we see what he's done for us in the cross and we cannot help but love him with a love which is practical and outworked and lived day by day we become those who reflect the very heart of

Jesus at Gethsemane and we say to him Lord not my will but yours be done in my life in every situation in every relationship in every circumstance Jesus Christ came into the world at Christmas to do the will of God so that in our lives the will of God might be done let's pray together we stand amazed Lord Jesus that you the very eternal God should come into this world and step into our humanity we're amazed oh

Lord that you should condescend to come down into the filth the mire the squalor the horror of this world and we know that you came not simply to observe not simply to experience what life is like for a human being but you came because it was the Father's will in fact it was yours and the Holy Spirit's too the triune God it was your plan and purpose that you should come into this world to rescue and to save sinners who are hell bound who are lost who are blind who are dead who are helpless who are pitiful and we know Lord it was through your coming through your obedience giving yourself not only to come into the world but especially with that one goal in mind to give yourself up to death it was only because of that we can stand before

[40 : 06] God this morning as forgiven sinners holy and accepted in his sight we thank you Lord Jesus that that is who we are not because of anything we have done or can do for ourselves but because you've done everything to keep and fulfill the will of God but Lord we thank you that you've set us free from slavery to sin you've set us free from disobedience and from evil hearts and lives that we might also delight in the will of God and in love follow and do his law so we pray please come into our hearts we know that we are not those people we know that we don't keep your law we don't love you with all our hearts and we aren't submitted to you in every area we know that there are areas and pockets of our lives where we said this is mine and you are not going to have it Lord oh please melt us mold us shape us fill us that our hearts may be reflective of the heart of Christ that says not my will but yours be done make our lives to be those that radiate the person of

Jesus Christ not just at Christmas time but all year long work in us and through us for we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ Amen