

A Finished Work

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 26 November 2023

Preacher: Rev. Ben Johnstone

- [0 : 0 0] Now we're going to be looking at two verses or three or four verses in Hebrews 10. I wonder if we could just leave the verses that we read, ticksy up on the screen and that would give a wee bit more underlining I hope, for that.
- Hebrews 10, 1 to 18, the ones that we read a wee bit earlier. Well, let me, it's going to be verses 10, 11 and following, so maybe half a wee bit, if that would be fine.
- Right, well let me put it this way. Absorbing the letter to the Hebrews pays dividends. It holds up for Lord Jesus.
- It holds him up, we might say, without disrespect, I hope. It holds him up big time. Just remember, for example, how Hebrews begins.
- In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.
- [1 : 1 2] And then who is that Son whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He made the universe? The Son is the Image and so God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word.
- Holding Jesus high, we might well sing that mission, praise line, His name is higher. And by holding up the Lord and what He has done, it is intended to give Christians encouragement.
- Hebrews, as a whole, Hebrews is for the Christians encouragement and who of us does not need such. Remember, for example, chapter 11, that great hall of fame of those who had found God faithful and had been witnesses to His faithfulness in all sets of circumstances.
- And we know what chapter 12 says with its connecting, therefore, having set out those who had found God faithful.
- He says, therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race that set before us.
- [2 : 4 5] Again, not disrespectfully, but we are being told, when you have it tough as a Christian, and particularly when you are maybe sometimes tempted to give up or go back, trust in, look to, remember them and God's faithfulness to them, those in Hebrews 11, the Old Testament saints, if you like, and press on with the race of being a Christian that is yours now.
- And look to Jesus, remember how tough it was for Him, so tough. And it was as if the writer, it is as if the writer to the Hebrews is saying to us, in effect, I'm going to set out for you just how complete and perfect what He has done, Christ has done and is, so that you can see that you can trust Him and so that you will trust Him for all the race of the Christian life ahead.
- Hebrews is for the Christians encouragement. Indeed, someone suggested it could be called a book of better things, and it certainly does take us on from the less than perfect and adequate ways that God's people had available to them, to come to Him to the absolutely perfect way we have in Jesus now.

And so, for salvation, yes, it's in Him completely. And for everything, we have in Christ as Christians all God's glorious riches, Paul to the Philippians 419, and can therefore, Paul to the Philippians 413, do all things in Him, by virtue of our relationship with Him, from being in our relationship with Him, in whom who strengthens us, who it could be said, induce us with dynamite.

Hebrews, the letter, the book of better things for our encouragement. So, we come to the centre of what our Lord Jesus has done for us at and on the cross.

[5 : 23] And to this one section are cluster of verses in Hebrews chapter 10, and particularly verses 11 to 17, and more particularly verses 11 and 12.

And as we come to these 10, these chapter 10 verses, this is what we shall say, to see and be grasped by what they tell us. See first, the tremendous thing that they state, and see second, one tremendous implication they lead to, one tremendous thing that they state, and one tremendous implication that they lead to.

So, one tremendous thing that they state, particularly verses 11 and 10, 11 and 12. Well, we can see of course they state several things, but this, there is one thing that overwhelmingly stands out.

And that's the contrast, you say contrast, what contrast? We could say between the old and the new, between the Old Testament ways of doing things in the worship, and the new of things, how things are now with Christ having come.

And yes, it's that, that contrast, but sharpen it up. The contrast is between standing and sitting.

[6 : 50] Standing. How often do we hear it said of something, of someone? He or she is always doing something.

They never stand still. If it's not one thing they're seeing to, it's another. In the summer, once the weeds are pulled out, the grass needs cutting.

Once the winter's come, the grass needs tidying. Once the rows get salty, the car needs washing. Once the car is washed, the kids have to be collected from school.

Once they get home, the tea needs to be ready before they go out again to whatever they have on that night. And we are exhausted almost at the very thought of it.

The rows are on their feet. This has to be done. Then that, and then that, and then that. Do you know someone like that? Or just looking in a mirror.

[7 : 58] And just see how many times in verse 11, using the way it does, says just that of the Old Testament ways of worship, and how they had to deal with God, how it was all done.

Notice the words the writer uses, and I'm quoting from the NIV, but on the screen it will be similar. In verse 10, day after day, every single day it went on.

Again and again he offers the same sacrifices, plural. The old way, on and on, repetitively, again and again.

They were never off their feet. They were standing. And the new way, with Christ having come, with the Lord Jesus having done what He has done, the contrast, He was sitting.

These Old Testament priests, still going on with these Old Testament ways and practices, were standing. But this priest, our Lord Jesus Christ, was sitting.

[9 : 19] See it, verse 12, when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sin, he sat down at the right hand of God.

The priests were standing, and in contrast, marked contrast, sharp contrast, he was sitting. Verse 12, he sat down.

Listen to this, Christ offered but a single sacrifice of absolute worth, so that now he only has to rest and be seated.

And the being seated position, being synonymous in the Orient, was being unoccupied. Our Lord unoccupied now.

He was no more occupied now with excruciating and literally painstaking work of dealing with our sin. He sat down, them standing, him sitting.

[10 : 23] Now, of course, literally the priests were standing, sure, doing all their business in the temple. Literally, equally, of course, the Lord wasn't sitting, but in both, their standing and him sitting, there's a tremendous truth being stated.

We'll see what him sitting means in a moment, but in both, sitting and standing, there is a tremendous truth being stated.

You say, is there? What is there? What's being stated here that's so tremendous and important? Well, on the one hand, with the priests, their sacrifices weren't up to the jaw.

Back in verse 3, here's what we read. But these sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.

Animal sacrifices, instituted by God for the duration, certainly confirming that a death has to be died, but not up to the job, inadequate.

[11 : 46] A brute beast by its very nature is unqualified to serve as a substitute for man, the crown of God's glory, imperfect, the old way, not up to the job.

And think about this. There was also this Old Testament way of doing it. There's also this and mainly this, there was repetition, not up to the job, but also repetition.

Every day, again and again, the same sacrifices, and you get it in 727, day after day, and in 926 regularly, and 925 too, again and again and every year, repetition.

And think about this. Repetition conflicts with finality. An action that is final does not tolerate repetition.

And conversely, an action that is constantly repeated thereby show itself to be inconclusive. And that's right, isn't it? If a job needs repeated, it's not been done right, and you have to get the plumber or the joiner to come back and finish it.

[13 : 21] But if a job has been done rightly and finally finished, you don't need it repeated. But repetition conflicts with finality.

And there was, there had been repetition going on in the temple every day of the year and every year of the centuries.

That stated be here. But how is that tremendous? That's not tremendous. Sacrifices never up to the job, never able to secure real forgiveness for anyone, always needing to be repeated.

No, but when you see and highlight, as we've said, the contrast, it's immensely and absolutely tremendous.

Just see it. Verse 11, their sacrifices went on day after day.

[14 : 28] Verse 12, Jesus offered his sacrifice for all time. Verse 11, when they offered the same, while they offered the same sacrifices, verse 12, he offered one sacrifice for sin.

Verse 11, they stood. Verse 12, he sat down. And I like this, a seated priest is the guarantee of a finished work and an accepted sacrifice.

And that's what's tremendous, a finished work and an accepted, accepted by God, sacrifice. The tremendous truth that stated.

Taking us back, leading us this evening, right to the cross where the work was finished. And the sacrifice, this sacrifice of his one and only and sent for this very purpose, son, was accepted as absolutely enough and sufficient by God his Father.

And for whom? For whom? For every sinner who sees it and accepts that that once and for all and one and only sacrifice was for me.

[15 : 57] That's the one tremendous, the overwhelmingly tremendous thing that these verses state. And now to what tremendous implications did they lead to?

This is where the rubber hits the road. Well I'll put it like this, the tremendous implications that they lead to, it implies, though it means that we don't need any add-ons.

Now we're not talking about adding on accident insurance if we hire a car. We're not talking about adding on extra baggage allowances on a flight to New Zealand or Australia or an upgrade.

We're not talking about adding metallic paint if we have the choice when we're buying a car. We are talking about people and including Christian people who think, who have all the while assumed that, I have to be good as well before God will really forgive me.

I have to try harder to be what a Christian should be before I can really call myself one. I have to adopt a certain type of prescribed church lifestyle before I can become a Christian.

[17 : 25] I hope I'm a Christian, but I need to be a wee bit more worthy, a worthy one first before I can be sure I am.

Oh of course Jesus is the main thing, has died to pay for sin, but there has to be these kind of things first before I can say, well maybe God will accept me now.

I need to add these kind of things on. But do you see what you're saying if you're thinking like that?

You're saying, you're declaring he's not a complete saviour. What he's done is not enough, I have to add something on too.

I think if Jesus is plus anything, he's not enough, the plus is needed too. What he's done is not enough to forgive us fully, he has to be added too.

[18 : 30] There has to be add-ons. What I have to be and do as well first. So let me put it this way.

If this evening you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your saviour, the Bible says you are in Christ.

So when you read Romans 8 1, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, do you believe it?

That there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ. Condemnation from God now and on whatever you can remember and maybe remember with regret and even shame, what you did or were in the past and even this evening are still remembering and maybe that's why you have doubts as to whether you should come to communion when it comes around.

But if you know you are a believer, listen. The Bible says there is no condemnation now. Now it doesn't mean that you don't have to battle with temptation or deliberately avoid certain areas of temptation that are temptation for you.

[20 : 01] It doesn't mean that you don't have to take yourself in hand and turn away intentionally from and say no to what's wrong.

But too good to be true as it may sound as far as God is concerned you are not his enemy any longer.

You are forgiven now. You are one of his children now. There is no condemnation you need to dread now, now presently and in eternity for Jesus sat down and the seating position being synonymous with being unoccupied, the seated person being now unoccupied having no more to do.

Now of course Jesus has plenty to do like running the universe and always being alive and there to intercede for us but his work to save us, buy us back, pay for our sin completely is done.

When will we, we, not just you, we get that into our hearts? A seated priest is the guarantee of a finished work.

[21 : 29] Do you believe that? Do I believe that? David Livingston wrote in his journal during a particular, particular set of very trying circumstances namely hostile tribes owner going to attack in the morning and he thought as he writes in his journal that my plan for the welfare of this great region and this teeming population was going to be knocked on the head by his death.

And then his heart was drawn to read the last few verses in Matthew all authority says Jesus in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I've commanded you and surely I am with you to the very end of the age and David Livingston writes this is the word of a gentleman of the most sacred and strictest honor and there is an end of it.

We see we read Romans 8 1 now no condemnation for those who are in Christ it's too good to be true surely I can't be completely given surely God can't totally accept me but Romans 8 1 says what it says and here in verse 14 the very same by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy perfected someone writes the sacrifice of Christ has purified his people from moral defilement of sin and assure them this is lovely of a permanent maintenance in a right relationship with God a permanent maintenance in a right relationship with God that perfect relationship with God which is involved in the new covenant not yet perfect but having a new right relationship with God in knowing and belonging to Christ maintained for us wonderfully forever blessed assurance the word the words of a gentleman do we believe it do we agree with it will we accept it take to yourself this assurance to sin does not have to be paid for twice by him and by us and at Calvary it was paid for by him and once and for all and forever that's the tremendous truth that is stated in contrast with all that was not so up that was so not up to the job the blood of bulls and goats sacrificed by priest after priest not taking away sin these sacrifice offered was once for all time by a now seated priest and that means the work was done the great transaction was done the tremendous truth that is stated and the tremendous implication that leads from that there is now no condemnation for those who have it as their home address in Christ and so no need of any add-ons it doesn't mean that since we are forgiven we can do as we like of course not it means that we are new people permanently maintained in the right relationship with God and that means notice verse 16 that means that God's law is in our hearts in other words what he says and wills is what we want now with all our natures with all our hearts to light pole I do in my inner being I delight in the law the Lord inside is you me delighting in God's law as the old chorus says delighting only to be what he wants me to be every moment of every day and it means verse 17 God does not remember and so do anything about them our sins anymore their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more John Bunyan sinner thou thinkest that because of thy sins and infirmities

I cannot save thy soul but behold my son is by me and upon him I look and not on thee and will deal with thee according as I am pleased with him and that's enough that's more than sufficient be assured and stop adding things on maybe this needs to be said to finish with even to a even to folks at a free church evening service there was a girl in a family let's call her Mary and she was in her bedroom in the morning when her dad called from the bottom of the stair Mary your breakfast ready she shouted down I'm coming dad a few minutes later the same Mary your breakfast ready I'm coming dad another few minutes and Mary your breakfast ready I'm coming dad whereby dad shouted back to Mary Mary stop coming come is there anyone this evening who has been coming and coming and coming to Jesus the gloriously all sufficient

[28 : 20] Jesus but hasn't yet come oh but there's these add-on first no he has paid it all stop coming and this evening just come let us pray