

## Hebrews 10B (2014)

- We're at the end of the heart of the letter
  - This middle section of the letter – Chapters 7-10 – form the writer's central argument
    - And let's be honest, it's a long, challenging section of pure Christian doctrine
    - It's the doctrine of the New Covenant: the sufficiency of Christ in all respects
    - His better Priesthood,
    - And the better tabernacle where He lives to make intercession
    - And a better sacrifice, by which, we are sanctified
  - These are weighty concepts, and there aren't many Christians who are willing to make the trip through so much doctrine and theology
    - Yet, it's the pinnacle of Christian maturity to be able to understand why we can rest in Christ
    - The Bible is very that we are to seek for spiritual maturity – not to be content with being babes in Christ
    - When the enemy is attacking, or false teachers are trying to fool us into forfeiting our hope in Christ, it's our knowledge of doctrine that will preserve our joy and confidence
    - The work to understand doctrine is certainly hard, but to the Christian who sets his mind on the work, the reward will be that much greater

An elderly lady who loved to travel the world visited a remote jungle area with a tour group, when they encountered some natives. She noticed one native gentleman wearing a unique looking necklace, and curious, she questioned him about it.

"What is it made of?" she asked. "Alligator's teeth," he replied.

"Oh, that's interesting," she said. "I suppose alligator teeth are as valuable to you as pearls are to us."

"Oh no," he objected. Anybody can open an oyster."

- Anyone can learn the Sunday school stories of our faith, but the real prize awaits those who can explain the foundational doctrines of our faith
  - Just as this writer is explaining why we need not seek for new sacrifices in our relationship with God
    - The one-time death of Christ on the cross is enough
    - So now, the writer sums up his teaching on the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice
    - And following his summary, we reach the fourth warning of the letter

[Heb. 10:10](#) By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

[Heb. 10:11](#) Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

[Heb. 10:12](#) but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

[Heb. 10:13](#) waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

[Heb. 10:14](#) For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

[Heb. 10:15](#) And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

[Heb. 10:16](#) "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:  
I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART,  
AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM,"

He then says,

[Heb. 10:17](#) "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS  
I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

[Heb. 10:18](#) Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

- The summary begins with v.10, which is a powerful refutation against any argument that works of any kind are required for our salvation
  - The writer says that by the perfect obedient will of Christ, we have been sanctified
    - Jesus obeyed the Father's will perfectly...Jesus never sinned

- So His perfection earned the right to be saved
- And then, that perfection was applied to sanctify us
- The word “sanctify” means to be set apart as holy, made acceptable to God
- And then, notice that all-important phrase at the end: once for all
  - The sacrifice of a perfect man in our place was done once and suffices for all
  - You can’t improve on perfection
  - You can pay more than 100%
- Here’s the logic you need to remember
  - If the sacrifice of a sinless man is enough to satisfy the Father’s wrath, then there is no value in additional sacrifices
  - But if we say Christ’s perfection was not enough to satisfy the Father, then we, being imperfect, have no hope to satisfy God whatsoever
  - Therefore, we can have confidence to rest entirely on the sacrifice of Christ for the sake of our sin
- One last time, the writer uses a comparison to the Old Testament Covenant to reinforce his point
  - He says consider the way priests were required to serve God in the earthly tabernacle
    - They stood in the tabernacle, working to make sacrifices all day long
    - They stood, because their work never ceased
    - There were no chairs in the tabernacle, so priests never sat
    - Their work was perpetual, because those sacrifices didn’t put an end to sin
  - But by the same token, if the New Testament sacrifice was only made once, then it tells us that the Lord was pleased by that sacrifice for all time

- When Christ died in our place, He was welcomed back into the Heavenly realm by the Father
  - And the Father permitted His Son to sit at His right hand
  - Sitting down signifies that His work of redemption is complete
  - Again, if the Father wasn't pleased by that one-time sacrifice, He wouldn't have allowed our High Priest to seat Himself
  - But the scriptures testify that Christ is finished in His work and is merely waiting for the Father to put all enemies under His feet
- Take special note of v.14, which is the climax of the writer's point
    - By one offering, the Father has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified
      - Let's read the verse backward
      - "Those who are being sanctified" refers to a group of people across history
      - Being sanctified is a present participle, which means it's a continuous action extending into the future
      - It means being set apart for holiness, being chosen by God to become sinless and perfect like He is
    - So the Father has a group of humanity He is bringing sanctification, holiness
      - It's stated as a present participle, because He's in the process of making this group perfect, even now
      - And that perfection will last for all time
      - It's a permanent, eternal sanctification
    - Finally, it was made possible by one offering, that is Christ
      - There is no other means by which you and I are being brought into perfection
      - Not by our own works, not by another's sacrifice or works
      - Not by our participation in religious ritual
      - But only by the sacrifice of Christ

- And once again, the plan of salvation was something announced in advance, by the prophets, even as the Old Covenant was still operating in Israel
  - The writer is quoting from Jeremiah 31 again in vs.16-17
    - The prophet said a New Covenant would come to Israel, and ultimately, to all the nations
    - And when the Lord gave that promise, He said this New Covenant would not be like the Old Covenant
  - How would it be different?
    - It was different because by this Covenant, the Lord would not remember sins
    - He would forget the sins of His people, all those who enter into the Covenant
  - And of course, if the New Covenant provides for a permanent forgiveness of sins, then we wouldn't expect to make any more sacrifices
    - As the writer says in v.18
    - The fact that the New Covenant does not specify sacrifices is further evidence that we have been forgiven of our sins
- With that, the writer has ended his teaching on the doctrines of the New Covenant, so now he's ready to bring an exhortation based on that teaching
  - His exhortation comes in the form of three "let us" invitations
    - The first is found in vs.19-22

**Heb. 10:19** Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,

**Heb. 10:20** by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,

**Heb. 10:21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

**Heb. 10:22** let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

- This first exhortation is to worship Christ in confidence, that this is what pleases God
  - Worshipping Jesus brings you into the Holy of Holies

- By the blood that Christ carried into that place, you are welcome to approach the Father
- By Jesus' flesh sacrificed in our place, you have a way to move beyond the veil
- And with your High Priest seated at the Father's right hand, you have a representative winning favor for you
- So you may be standing in a little building in SW Austin or in another church or in your bedroom...
  - But when you direct your heart toward God in thanks and adoration, you are spiritually entering the Holiest place in all the Creation
  - You are literally standing before the Father and He is hearing you
  - And He is pleased with you, forgetting your sin and welcoming you into His presence
  - Because the sacrifice of Christ has assured you that audience
- Knowing all this, let us draw near to Christ
  - The phrase in Greek was commonly used to call a congregation to worship
    - The writer says that because of all that we see promised in the scriptures, we have every reason to engage in sincere and confident worship of Christ
    - All the prophecy lines up, all the facts are there
    - So let's not have doubts, let's not toy with thoughts of other ways to Heaven
    - Let's not give room for false teaching to confuse our understanding
  - Moreover, in v.22, he says our own experience tells us that these things are the truth
    - We experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit so that our conscience has been made clean
    - Unlike the Old Covenant, which never granted a clean conscience to the worshipper

- We know the feeling of having been made acceptable to God
- Finally, we made our profession of faith through a water baptism (the end of v.22)
  - We took a stand with Christ
  - So then, the writer says let's hold fast our confession

**Heb. 10:23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

- Now we reach the concern that led this writer to explain so much doctrine over the last three and a half chapters
  - He is concerned that some in this church are wavering in their confession
    - These are Christians who entered into the covenant by faith, but now they're wavering, doubting whether the New Covenant was truly sufficient to save them
    - As they wavered, some were choosing to return to the Old Covenant and to practicing sacrifices in the temple
  - The cause of their wavering was a lack of understanding of the doctrines of the New Covenant
    - Remember how the writer began the section in Chapter 6?
    - He said this group was not progressing in their knowledge, so they were still babes in Christ
    - They had need again for an explanation of basic doctrines of the faith
    - And now, we see just how serious that lack of understanding had become for their walk
    - They were in danger of retreating from a proper worship of Christ altogether
  - Don't miss this connection: if we fail to pursue spiritual maturity, we are bound to fall back into one trap or another of the enemy
    - We may fall prey to false worship in one form or another
    - We may become convinced that works are required

- We may stray so far that we are caught in a false religious system of some kind, as these believers were
  - Knowing doctrine is our defense
- This leads the writer to the final exhortation:

[Heb. 10:24](#) and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, [Heb. 10:25](#) not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

- This fight for the truth and against the schemes of the enemy isn't one we wage alone
  - The writer says we must consider ways to stimulate one another to love and good deeds
  - The power of a strong Christian community is to encourage us when we're hurting and discouraged and at our weakest
  - A healthy community of believers will prompt us to grow and challenge us to set aside our sin
  - And it becomes a reminder that we have found the truth and there is nothing we're missing
- Notice in v.25, the writer says some were forsaking the gathering, or assembling, together
  - He means that some believers in the Diaspora had given up on the Christian gathering altogether
  - More than likely, these had returned to worshipping at the temple under the Old Covenant, as they used to do prior to coming to faith in Christ
- Why did they return to an old system?
  - Because they failed to mature in their understanding of the New Covenant and the sufficiency of Christ
  - Because they fell out of the routine of assembling with other believers
  - And so muscle memory kicked in, and they fell back on what they knew

- The Lord has provided to us the regular assembly of believers as a means of encouraging us to grow and remain strong in our walk of faith
  - So we are expected to take advantage of that opportunity for our own benefit
    - What is the benefit?
    - As the writer says, it's because that day is drawing near
    - The day he's talking about is the day when the Lord claims us and brings us to our Heavenly home
  - When that day comes, we will receive our eternal judgment and assignment of reward
    - We want every believer to have the best judgment he or she can have
    - And so we stimulate one another to remain confident, engaged and committed so that we might receive the best reward possible
- But, we know not all believers will heed this advice
  - Some believers will be enticed into false worship or simply into abandoning any observance of any kind
    - Either because they become lazy of hearing
    - Or because they become entrapped by a false religion of human works and ritual
    - Or because they're enticed by materialism, careerism, personal wealth or destructive addictions
    - All these dangers risk diminishing our witness and eternal reward
    - Because of that reality, next week, we will study the fourth warning, beginning in v.26
      - If we continue not to draw near, not to remain confident
      - Not to stimulate one another to love and good deeds
      - What will be the consequence?
      - The writer spells that out

- This should leave us a bit sober, and result in more obedience to the Lord