

The sacrifice of the Lamb

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[0 : 00] Good morning to all of you. Let us pray. Father God, as we open up your word, speak to us.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in your sight. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

In this church, there are young people, there are elderly people and there are middle-aged groups. How do you know you are in the middle-aged group? How can you tell? You can tell by your look. You can tell by your age.

You can also tell when you have a growing nostalgia. A growing nostalgia. You long for the good old days. You talk more and more about the good old days.

[0 : 59] So young men and young women, when you find yourself talking more and more about the good old days, you are beginning to enter into the middle-aged group.

The book of Hebrews is written to Jewish Christians who are thinking of the good old days. They are thinking about the good old days not because they are middle-aged, but because they are facing difficult times.

They are being persecuted for believing in Jesus. They are tempted to go back to the good old days, to the Old Testament way of doing things.

Believing in Jesus has brought them difficulties and persecutions. Believing in Jesus has brought them troubles. Life is more comfortable.

Life is more familiar in the good old days. So the book of Hebrews is written to encourage these Christians to remain faithful to Jesus Christ.

[2 : 09] Why? Why go back to the old ways when we have a better way in Jesus? In the previous chapters, the writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that we are no longer in the good old days because Jesus has already come.

We are no longer living in the Old Testament era. Jesus has come. And Jesus is so much better than the good old days.

So far, the book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus is better than the prophets. Jesus is better than the angels. Jesus is better than Moses or Joshua.

Jesus is better than Aaron. Hebrews 10 verses 1 to 18, our sermon text today, talks about the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The writer has already mentioned that Jesus is a better sacrifice in Hebrews 7 and Hebrews 9. But here in chapter 10, he is explaining it in more detail how Jesus is a better sacrifice than the Old Testament sacrifice.

[3 : 27] What is the greatest problem of mankind now? Is it a pandemic? Is it terrorism? Is it war?

The economy? Corruption? No. These of course are big problems. But they are not the greatest problem.

According to the Bible. Sin. Sin. Sin is and always has been man's greatest problem ever since the fall of Adam and Eve.

No matter what a person believes in. No matter what kind of worldview or philosophy a person believes in.

If it cannot deal with sin. If the worldview cannot deal with sin. If the philosophy cannot deal with sin. It has no permanent value.

[4 : 23] Hebrews 10 tells us about the better sacrifice that can deal permanently with sin. This better sacrifice is the perfect solution to the problem of sin.

From verse 1 to 4, the writer tells us about the need for a better sacrifice. Then from verses 5 to 10, the provision of the better sacrifice.

And lastly, from verses 11 to 18, the all-sufficiency of the better sacrifice. The need for a better sacrifice.

Why are the Old Testament sacrifices inferior? Why are they inferior? Firstly, because these sacrifices can never make one perfect.

Verse 1b says, It can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

[5 : 33] The sacrifices cannot make us perfect. They cannot cleanse us from our sin. They cannot give us a clean conscience. If they could make us perfect, they would not have to be offered endlessly year after year.

How frustrating! Offering sacrifices endlessly year after year can be very frustrating. It's a bit like decluttering your house.

Every year, you try to clean up and throw away things. Spring cleaning your house. But 12 months later, you discover you have so many things still.

And you need to declutter again. And 12 months after that, same story. Offering these sacrifices is a bit like that.

They cannot cleanse our guilty conscience. Sin still piles up in the homes of our hearts. If these sacrifices could not make us perfect, why did God command them to make these sacrifices in the first place?

[6 : 45] Why did God establish the laws for animal sacrifices? Why? Because these sacrifices act as a reminder of our sins, and they point to the good things to come.

These sacrifices are a reminder of sins. Verse 3 and 4. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Impossible. Such a strong word. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to remove sins.

It can only remind people of their sins. Sacrifices cannot remove sins. It can only act as a reminder. It reminds people that their sins are not done away with. It reminds people that animal is not a permanent solution to our sins.

[7 : 49] Then also, those sacrifices were only a shadow. Verse 1. The law, including the sacrifices, is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves.

There's nothing wrong with a shadow. But a shadow lacks substance. A shadow is not the real thing. When you look at a shadow, you can get some idea of what the shadow represents.

For example, when you look at my shadow, you can get a rough idea of how my body looks like. But the shadow is not the reality. And the shadow cannot become the reality.

After all, my shadow is not me. And my shadow cannot become me. The shadow can only point to the realities.

And what are these realities, according to Hebrews 10? They are the good things that are coming. And what are these good things? Forgiveness of sins.

[9 : 00] Perfect standing before God. Our eternal inheritance. And where can you find these good things? In a better sacrifice.

All these good things are wrapped up in a better sacrifice. Yes, there's a need for a better sacrifice. But the good news is that God has provided for us a better sacrifice.

The provision of the better sacrifice. Look again at verse 5. Verse 5. When Christ came into the world, Christ came into the world.

Remember verse 1? The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming. When we compare verse 1 and verse 5, we can conclude that Christ is the embodiment of the good things that are coming.

Christ is the realities represented by the shadow. Jesus Christ came. He came to bring good news for His people.

[10 : 08] Jesus saw our deplorable state. He looked down from heaven and saw our misery. He saw our bondage to sin.

He had compassion for us. And He wanted to redeem us. He wanted to save us. That's why Jesus said these words in verses 5 to 7.

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, my God. Now, where do these words in verses 5 to 7 come from?

It actually comes from Psalms 40, verses 6 to 8, written by King David. King David says, Ultimately, ultimately, offering sacrifices in itself is of no use.

[11:19] What really pleases God is our heartfelt devotion, not the empty rituals. And so, when Jesus says these verses, when Jesus quotes these verses, when Jesus mentions these verses, He is giving us the reason why He came.

It isn't to do empty rituals. It is to do the will of God. Jesus came to do the will of God the Father. What is the will of God the Father? Look at verses 9 to 10. Then He said, Here I am. I have come to do your will.

He set 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.

The will of God is to sacrifice His one and only Son so that we may be made holy, so that we may be made perfect.

[12:28] The reason Jesus came is to take away the sin of the world. No other God ever came to take away the sin of the world.

No other God ever came to save sinners. Only Jesus. Only Jesus. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, John said, John pointing to Jesus, and John said, Look!

Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.

But behold Jesus! Look at Jesus! Look! Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It is God's will to lay on Jesus all our sins, to bear the burden of our sins.

It is God's will to make Him an offering and sacrifice for sin. He sets aside the flesh, He sets aside the first to establish the second.

[13:44] Jesus did away with the sacrifice of animals. He replaced them by sacrificing His body, by sacrificing Himself.

Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. He is perfect because He is fully God and fully man. He has the same nature as man and He has the nature as the Son of God.

Jesus can do what we cannot do. He perfectly obeys the will of God. He gives His entire life in obedience to God even to the point of death.

Death on a cross. Unlike the bulls and goats, Jesus' sacrifice is voluntary. He willingly lays down His life to become our sacrifice.

Jesus is the perfect sacrifice because He satisfies the justice of God to punish sin so that we can become righteous in God's sight.

[14:57] Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. He is the ultimate expression of God's love for us. God the Father loves us so much that He gave His one and only Son to us.

He says, He will do it. No matter how you look at the sacrifice of Jesus, no matter from which angle you look at it, you will find that the sacrifice of Jesus is perfect and is always so much superior to the Old Testament sacrifices.

only the sacrifice of Jesus can take away sin forever. Only the sacrifice of Jesus can cleanse our conscience.

Only the sacrifice of Jesus can make us holy in God's sight. I want to make one further point here. The Son of God took on flesh to die in our place. The righteous one, Jesus, died for the unrighteous sinners like us.

[16:07] Charles Spurgeon said this, The doctrine, this doctrine is one of the surest proofs of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Who would or could have thought of the just ruler dying for the unjust rebel? Would any of you have thought about the just king dying for the unjust rebel if you have not read this in the Bible?

If this story is not in the Bible, who among us would have cooked up this kind of story? None of us would have cooked up a story of the righteous king dying for evil.

evil man unless the story is true. Let's think more deeply about this for a moment. The story of the righteous king dying for the unjust rebels would not have been written unless it had really happened and it had indeed happened.

sin This brings me to my third point. The all-sufficiency of the better sacrifice. The sacrifice of Jesus was a single sacrifice.

[17 : 28] Verse 12 The priest had offered all time one sacrifice for sins. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were many and they were often repeated.

There were sin offerings, there were guilt offerings, there were burn offerings, and they were repeated. But Jesus Christ offered a single sacrifice for all sins and for all time.

The sacrifice of Jesus was a completed sacrifice. Verse 12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

He sat down at the right hand of God. The reason he could sit down is because his sacrificial work was completed.

In the Old Testament, the priest in the temple never sat down. There were no chairs in the temple. There were altars and tables but no chairs.

[18 : 32] The priests of the temple were always standing. There was always something to do in the temple. But Jesus was a priest who sat down.

He sat down because his work was completed. He sat down at the right hand of God, the place of greatest glory. The sacrifice of Jesus was a victorious sacrifice.

verse 13. Since that time, he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. To the world, the cross is not a symbol of victory.

To the world, the cross is a symbol of defeat. It is a symbol of death. To hang on a cross is to suffer defeat and agonizing death. Yet, we see that Jesus was able to turn defeat into victory.

Jesus rose from the dead to conquer death. The cross has become a great victory, but the totality of the victory has not yet been realized.

[19 : 43] We are still waiting for the time when the enemies of Christ realize their final defeat. This promise is pictured in graphic terms.

A day is coming when his enemies shall be made a footstool for his feet. His enemies shall be made a footstool for his feet. In the ancient world, the conquerors would put their feet on the necks of their enemies as a symbol of victory.

It was a picture of complete victory. If you can put your feet on the necks of your enemies, you have complete victory over your enemies.

When Jesus returns, he will overcome every enemy and establish his righteous kingdom. Those who put their trust in Jesus, those who put their trust in him need not fear.

Why? Because they have been made perfect forever. we have perfect standing before God because of the finished work of Christ.

[20 : 57] How do we know personally, how do we know personally that we have this perfect standing before God? We can know because of the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the Word.

verses 15 to 17 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 I will write them on their minds. Then He adds, There are sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.

We are now given another testimony to the truth of the completed sacrifice of Christ. It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

This does not refer to some tingling feeling, some strange feeling. It refers to the testimony of the Spirit as given in the pages of the Old Testament.

[22 : 02] Do you want to hear what the Spirit is saying? Do you want to know what the Spirit is saying? Go and read the scriptures. Go and read the Bible. The passage that is mentioned here is from the book of Jeremiah.

It is a passage about the new covenant. The new covenant has an internal application. Verse 16. I will put my laws in their hearts and I will write them on their minds.

To understand this verse better, we can go to 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verses 1 to 3. Here Paul is speaking. Are we beginning to commend ourselves again?

Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone.

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.

[23 : 14] The Old Covenant is external. The Old Covenant is external. It is written on tablets of stone. It tells us how we ought to live.

It tells us how we ought to love, but it does not empower us to do it. The New Covenant is different. It works inside us.

It works internally. It empowers us. It involves the Holy Spirit working inside us, transforming us to be more and more like Jesus Christ.

This is the meaning of the Spirit writing His laws in our hearts and in our minds. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says this, And the Lord who is the Spirit make us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image.

The new covenant means that sins have been forgotten. Verse 17 He then says there are sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.

[24:27] It is one thing to forgive a wrongdoing. It is another thing to forget the wrongdoing. Haven't we heard people saying I can forgive but I cannot forget.

God is different. He can forgive and He can forget. We have a promise of both forgiveness and forgetfulness.

God says it will be as though I have forgotten your sin altogether. It is not that God is having a case of dementia nor is He having a bad memory.

He does not remember our sins means He is not holding our sins against us. He will act towards us as if He had indeed forgotten our sins.

Someone has said God throws our sins into the depths of the sea and then He plants a sign that says no fishing.

[25:34] No fishing. The new covenant means we need no further sacrifice for sin. Verse 18 And when these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

We don't need to make a sacrifice for sin when that sin has been forgiven. You don't need to try to get someone to forgive you if that forgiveness has already been granted.

God has ever felt you are not good enough to approach God? Have you been trying in vain to be holy enough?

Have you been trying in vain to be spiritual enough to come into His presence? There is good news here for you. Forgiveness has already been given in Christ Jesus.

God accepts you, not the way you are, but the way Christ is. When you put your trust in God, He accepts you because of what Christ has done for you on the cross.

[26:47] Whatever needs to be done for us to come to God has already been done by our Lord Jesus Christ. He has finished His work for us.

We just have to put our trust in the finished work of Christ. The all sufficient sacrifice. One Christian psychiatrist said this, The trouble with psychiatry is that it can only deal with symptoms.

A psychiatrist can remove a patient's feelings of guilt, but he cannot remove the guilt. The Christian good news is this, when a sinner puts his trust in Jesus Christ.

His sins are all forgiven. The guilt is entirely removed, and the matter is completely settled forever. I want to conclude with this story.

Hudson Taylor, the founder of China Inland Mission. Hudson Taylor came from a godly Christian family, but he himself was not a Christian in his early teens.

[28:02] One day, when Hudson Taylor was 17 years old, he read a Christian booklet. As he was reading, he was captivated by some words in this booklet.

It is about the finished work of Christ. He asked himself, why did the writer say, it is finished? What is finished? Immediately, the answer came to his mind.

Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ has finished paying for all my sins. What is there left for me to do? There was nothing in the world to be done but to fall down on my knees and accept this Savior and his salvation to praise him forever.

He immediately knelt down and asked Jesus to become his Savior and Lord. When he was 22 years old, he went to China as a missionary to preach about the finished work of Christ, the perfect sacrifice.

Lord Jesus has finished his work on the cross for you. There's nothing left for you to make.

[29:19] There's nothing left for you to do to make you acceptable to God. All that needs to be done has already been done by Jesus.

Like Hudson Taylor, you just need to come to Jesus and ask him to be your Savior and Lord. You can say this prayer, Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and I ask you for your forgiveness.

I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior.
In your name. Amen. If this prayer expresses the desire of your heart, then please connect with us or talk to your Christian friend.

We want to help you to know our Lord Jesus better. And today, if you are a Christian, then be reminded and be comforted by this.

[30 : 27] You have been perfected forever by the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You don't have to earn your way into the presence of God by good works.

Every time you sin, you don't have to cleanse yourself by trying to offer modern sacrifices like doing more charity work or trying to be extra good for the next few days.

You only need to come to Jesus who provides true cleansing. Jesus provides true cleansing because he is the better sacrifice.

You don't need to offer any more sacrifice for your sins but you can offer a sacrifice of praise. You can offer a sacrifice of praise because Jesus has done it all.

Praise him. Praise the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen.