

Sunday October 1st sermon: "No More Sacrifice for Sin! The God of All Comforts (Pt 35)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,  
by John Pittman Hey

Hebrews 10:14-18; Matthew 9:9-13

God comforts us by the oath He made to Christ, appointing Him our high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 10 informs us that the reason Christ sat down, is because by His one sacrifice for our sin, He has forever perfected His people from their sin.

Perfection means our sins have been taken away by Christ's blood, forgiven and cleansed, and we have been declared righteous for Jesus' sake!

If animal sacrifices could have made us perfect, then they would be discontinued.

But now, by the blood of Jesus, we who trust in Him have been perfected forever!

Now in Hebrews 10:18, the writer completes his argument and ties it all up with a neat bow. He calls as his final witness the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament.

The Holy Ghost is witness to the fact that Christ perfects all His people by one offering on the cross. That text is found in Jeremiah 31, where the Spirit disclosed the New Covenant for God's people.

God's people had broken the old covenant of salvation by law keeping. Therefore, the Holy Ghost promised that one day, God would perfect His people Himself.

God would do so by bringing in His new and better covenant, by which He promised to forgive His people's sins, and remember them against us no more!

Hebrews has previously cited this passage from Jeremiah with its New Covenant promises, of which Christ is the great high priest, and the Perfecter of His sinful people, by His bloody sacrifice in our place and for our crimes against God.

Of course, our Lord Jesus made the same connection as Hebrews later would, that by His blood, He executes and enacts the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sins.

The writer of Hebrews is careful to tie up the argument he advanced early in chapter 10: the continuance of animal sacrifices means our sins are still remembered by God against us.

Indeed, the old covenant promised a remembrance of sin, when it instituted the animal sacrifices that had to be offered repeatedly.

But now Christ's sacrifice takes away all remembrance of the sin of His people, just as the Holy Ghost and Christ had promised!

Therefore, the promise of the New Covenant, that God would not remember our sins against us anymore, is fulfilled by Christ's sacrifice.

What the old covenant could never do, God promised to accomplish by His New Covenant in Christ.

Finally, in Hebrews 10:18, the writer ties up the last strand of his glorious proof: we know animal sacrifices never took away sin, because if they had, the offerings would have ceased being made.

Now, he declares, that where sins are truly forgiven by the sacrifice of Christ, there can be no more offering for sin!

This is why Christ was so kind to poor sinners during His ministry, and why He so urgently preached the Gospel to those sinners.

God was remembering the sins of those poor tax collectors and sinners that Jesus ate with. Christ knew their only hope was His mighty power to cleanse their sins by His sacrifice!

But the self-righteous Pharisees condemned Jesus for meeting with sinners!

They never considered that God was remembering their sins against them also, even though they were punctilious to offer the animal sacrifices, which could never take away their sins.

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their lack of mercy for overt sinners like the tax collectors, even as He proved they themselves were also sinners, if for no other reason, than their lack of mercy!

God would have mercy rather than sacrifice. The mercy of Christ's sacrifice would one day very soon overthrow the animal sacrifices. Jesus' conduct actually modeled the truth found in Hebrews, that only His offering can truly forgive sins forever.

All the Pharisees could offer were worthless animal sacrifices to those poor sinners, and demands that they work harder to obey the law, and then the inevitable sneer, that of course, sinners couldn't keep that law.

All the while, they themselves were breaking the law, by their lack of mercy toward the people they looked down upon.

Christ offers not just obvious sinners, but self-righteous ones as well, His Gospel call: repent and trust in Him!

Christ preached, come to Me, all you sinners, trust in Me, and I will give you My rest, and forgiveness forever.

At the Lord's Table, we celebrate the awful price Christ paid to save us from our sins: "this is My body broken for you; this is My blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the forgiveness of sins."

What comfort we possess, because God solemnly declared Christ to be our high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek!