

**HEBREWS 10:1-18**

PASTOR DAVID SAYLOR

**RESULTS OF CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE****Introduction: What Happens When We Turn Our Eyes Upon Jesus?**

In a little while we will sing the song, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." I would like us to turn our eyes upon Jesus especially in verse 14 of Hebrews 10. (The rest will help illuminate the meaning in this verse).

Before I read it to you, let me warn you that happens when we turn and see the Lord.

When Peter turned his eyes on the power and grace of Jesus in **Luke 5:8**, "*When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"*" Isn't that an interesting response to the Lord's gracious power?

So you guys should know that it's a risky thing to do. It's a wonderful thing to do, if you're willing to do it, to open your eyes and set your eyes on Christ his word. But you might just end up on your face feeling dirty and worthless and ugly.

My conviction is that this is a wonderful thing to happen. Because most people, even in the church, and I include myself here, are in a deadly world of oblivion to the danger of sins and God's wrath and anger against us because of our sin.

Most of us go through life a lot more scared that that blinking light is *after us*. "Oh thank God, it's only an ambulance!" We have much more heart palpitations over the blinking light of the policeman then override said.

Most of us are more afraid of hearing the doctor gives a bad report, like cancer. We're far more afraid of that and we are with the great physician to have a problem with us and our sin.

Several times in the book of Hebrews we are warned about the anger of God against those who turn from him in their sin. For example, **Hebrews 3:10-11**, "*That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.'*"<sup>11</sup> *So I declared in my wrath, 'They shall never enter my rest.'* "

To be blind or oblivious to this wrath of God against sinners is incredibly dangerous. It's like not being able to smell the gas leak gathering around the pilot light of your water heater, ready to blow your house and you to smithereens.

And the reason it is so dangerous is that, if you are blind to this reality of God's wrath, you won't take steps to find a remedy for sin and an escape from God's anger.

So let's Turn Our Eyes On Jesus. This is not an experience to be avoided, but to be cherished. O that God would do it this morning, as we turn our eyes on Jesus! Because when it happens, the Lord gives relief. And I'll show you the remedy before were done.

**I. GLIMPING THE LORD IN HEBREWS 10:14**

One great glimpse at the Lord Jesus is given in **Hebrews 10:14**. So let's focus on that verse this morning: "*because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*" Now let's do some very preliminary clarification of the words themselves.

The word "*sacrifice/offering*" refers to the death of Christ, the offering of his own body in death on the cross. You can see that **in verse 10**: "*And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*"

And the tenses of the words "perfect" and "holy/sanctified" are extremely important.

The first verb, *perfect*, almost every version gets exactly right. It's something like "*he has made perfect*". That's right. Perfect active indicative verb. It's over. *He has perfected*. It's done and it's for all time.

But when you get to the second verb, some translations (NASB, KJV, RSV) say "*those who are sanctified/made holy.*" That's not quite right.. Then it could also look, in English, as if the sanctifying is also complete. They "are (now, already) sanctified." But that is not what the tense in the original Greek means. It is the present tense and signifies an ongoing process.

It's something that is *being done*, not done. The process of sanctifying is continuing now in their lives. And this is going to be very important in understanding what this verse is teaching.

So, they *have been perfected* (it's finished) and they *are being sanctified* or *made holy* (it's a process that is happening, but not over).

## II. REPEATED ANIMAL SACRIFICES WERE NOT ONCE-FOR-ALL

Now let's step back and see this verse in context. The 13 verses that precede this verse in chapter 10 are a complicated argument and I'm not going into all of it, but I think we can sum up the main point easily.

The main point is, the Old Testament law prescribed repeated animal sacrifices for sin. *And in doing so the Lord made clear that in the very prescription the inadequacy of the prescription.* Because, had those sacrifices been adequate to cover my sin, they would stop. But the fact that they've got to do it again and again and again, year after year, and day by day, well, yesterday's sacrifices are no good for today's sins. God meant it to be that way. He meant the inadequacy of the law to be manifest in the law.

**Verses 1-2:** *"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. (Making perfect is what v.14 is all about.)<sup>2</sup> If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.*

So the point is clear: the prescribed repetition of sacrifices for sin in the Old Testament Law was a built-in testimony to their inadequacy. They did not perfect the people. They did not deal with sin decisively, finally, once for all.

Then the writer refers to **Psalms 40** (in verses 5-8) and shows that already in the Old Testament itself, it is plain that the sacrifices and offerings of animals were not God's main plan for dealing with sin, because, as **verse 4** says, *"It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."* God knew that from the beginning when he commanded that bulls and goats be offered. They were "shadows," as **verse 1** says. The main plan was always Christ. That is what all the shadows were pointing to. So at the end of **verse 9** it says, *"He sets aside the first in order to establish the second."* The first will of God was that there be an age of shadows, a kind of 2,000 year lesson book to prepare us to understand what Christ really did for us on the cross.

## III. GREAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTS

The great difference between what Christ did and what the priests of the Old Testament did is summed up briefly in **verses 11 and 12**: *<sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.*

Notice the contrasts: many priests vs. Christ as our one High Priest; many sacrifices vs. the one sacrifice of himself; repeated offerings vs. one offering for all time; and one you might have missed: notice that (verse 11) *"every priest stands daily;"* but when Christ has made his single sacrifice he (verse 12) *"sat down at the right hand of God."*

The sitting of Christ at God's right hand means at least three things here:

One is that the work is done. He does not "stand daily" to offer sacrifices for sin. The one sacrifice of himself was perfectly complete.

Second, it means that God is satisfied with the sacrifice. God honors Christ with the seat at his right hand to show how fully he is satisfied with the debt paid for sin. This is a great picture to encourage us that our sins are fully dealt with.

Third, it means that all his enemies will be defeated. That's what **verse 13** stresses: He is *"Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool"*. In other words, everything Christ died to accomplish will be accomplished. No enemy can hinder his work in the end. The atonement was utterly complete; the Father was utterly satisfied; and all the enemies will fall utterly before the reigning Christ in heaven.

## IV. RESULTS IN YOUR LIFE OF CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE

Now we come to our focus in **verse 14**: *"because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."* Turn your eyes upon Jesus here and see two brief points about Jesus that relate directly to your/my life today.

### WHAT is this Perfection?

First notice that Christ has perfected his people, and it is already complete. <sup>14</sup> *because by one sacrifice*

*he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.* He "has" done it. And he has done it "*forever.*" The perfecting of his people is complete and it is complete forever. That's clearly what it says.

Now you've got to ask, "Do I never sin? Do I never get sick? Do I never raise my voice to my spouse or children in a sinful way? Do I never make mathematical errors in school?" And then we've got to ask ourselves "What is this perfected stuff anyway?" When he says "*he has made perfect forever*" what does he mean? The answer is given in the next verses (15-18).

The writer explains what he means by quoting his favorite passage in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 31 again, which is on the New Covenant. And he makes a beeline to the last sentence of the New Covenant, found here in **v.17** and he goes further into it in **v.18**.

**Verses 17-18** <sup>17</sup> *Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."* <sup>18</sup> *And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin".*

So he explains our present, completed perfection in terms of *forgiveness*, namely, that in the New Covenant which Christ has sealed by his blood, there is total forgiveness for all our sins.

Christ's people are perfected now in the sense that God puts away all our sin (9:26), forgives them, and never brings them to mind again as a ground of condemnation. In this sense we stand before him perfect. When he looks on us he does not impute any of our sins against us, past, present or future. He does not count our sins against us.

### WHO Has Christ Perfected?

Who is included among the perfected? The striking thing about text is that it makes crystal clear that the death of Jesus and his perfecting work is designed and effectual for a certain group of people - not everybody. Who is it then? Who has Christ perfected? And the answer is given in the next phase of **v.14**: Christ has perfected for all time *those who are being made holy*.

The idea of perfection and holiness are not all that different in this author's mind. So, to help you grasp the amazing point here, let me present to you a "seeming" contradiction that you may be missing.

Since the meaning is so similar, you can put **v.14** like this: *he has perfected forever those who are now*

*being perfected.* Or you could say (and the writer does say as much in verse 10): *he has made holy forever those who are now being made holy.*

(Note that in v.10, he says we *have been made holy* (this is the same, perfect tense, signifying completed action) as here in v.14)

What's going on here? It seems like a contradiction. Which is it? Are we perfected, or are we being made perfect or holy or sanctified? And the answer is yes.

Ask yourself this question: Can I walk out of here this morning, knowing my past, knowing the sins of my youth, knowing how I treated my wife, knowing that I cheated on my income tax for the last five years, knowing that I have pornography somewhere on my computer. Can I walk out of here today and say, without lying, "I'm perfect."?

The answer to that question may be "yes"- but here's how you can know whether you can do that.

This text is not a contradiction. What this text means is that you can know that you stand perfect in the eyes of your heavenly Father IF you are moving away from your present imperfection toward more and more holiness by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are you right now among the number who knows that you're a sinner? And because of the Law having been written in your heart, maybe at this very moment for the first time, because of the Law being written on your heart, you hate your sin. And out of that hatred for it, like Peter, falling down on the ground before Jesus, feeling the ugliness of his sin, you find yourself hearing the word of the Lord "*fear not Peter for now and you will be a fisher of men*" and you feel the gracious hand of God lifting you up and turning you away from your sin setting you on this process found right here in this verse called "*being made holy.*"

The evidence that you are perfect in the eyes of God *now*, is not whether you are a perfect person now, it's whether you hate your sin and if you are on a trajectory of good. Growing holiness. And you are trusting God by faith.

The reason I can say "by faith", even though it's not right here, is because I've read the rest of the book. In chapters 10, 11, 12, 13 it's all about how you get sanctified, and it's not by works.

For example, in Hebrews 11:24ff it tells us that Moses BY FAITH did not regard the treasures of Egypt something to be held onto, but he looked to the

reward and by faith, embracing all that God had for him in the future – he could say “No” to the fleeting pleasures of sin.

So the means by which we become sanctified is faith being satisfied with the superior pleasures of God, severing the root of the sin, so now, little by little, you're going to go home and put a block on your computer keeping you from what you shouldn't be exposed to. You going to stop cheating on your taxes, you're going to stop disrespecting your parents.

You're not going to do that anymore, because God showed up this morning and wrote his Law on your heart, and now, right now, many of you, turning your eyes on Jesus, are disgusted at your sin. You feel ugly and, that's good. This is the true and realistic faith that saves. It is not the boast of the strong. It is the cry of the weak in need of a Savior.

Let me say this again, because it is full of encouragement for imperfect sinners like us, and full of motivation for holiness. *This verse means that you can have assurance that you stand perfected and complete in the eyes of your heavenly Father, forever, not because you are perfect now, but because you are "being sanctified", "being made holy", that, by faith in God's promises, you are moving away from your lingering imperfection toward more and more holiness.* (See Hebrews 10:32-35; 11:24-26 etc. for examples of how faith in future grace sanctifies.)

### **CONCLUSION: Does Your Faith Make You Eager to Make Progress in Holiness?**

Would you bow your head and close your eyes.

Today we have turned our eyes on Jesus and his amazing all-sufficient sacrifice and what it accomplishes in us, for us, to us. Jesus, the One everything God ever did was pointing to – all the Old Testament sacrifices which could never atone for sin, but were shadows pointing to the ONE REALITY.

Everything points you and me to come to the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ and to turn to Him in faith and trust. If you see Him as he truly is, you will see his holiness and beauty; and your unholiness will be exposed. You will see yourself as a sinner and unworthy. But if you will come to him, he will lift you up.

Will you come to Christ today? Right where you are. The faith that saves is a faith that says (and you can say it with me in prayer...), *"Christ, I have sinned. But I hate my sin. For you are writing your*

*law on my heart, and I long to do it Your Way. And so I hate the sin that I still do, and the sinful thoughts that I still contemplate. And in this hatred of my sin, I turn from them and I turn to you in faith. Make me what I could never make myself. Perfect me in your holiness and help me to become more like you.*

*And Lord, in my meager advancements in holiness I rejoice that, according to your promise in Hebrews 10:14, I have been perfected for all time by a single offering, your precious self."*

There is one clear reason in this very verse for knowing that is not the case. What is it? It's the last phrase. Who are the people that have been perfected for all time? It is those who *"are being made holy."* This is why the tense is so important. Now *"those who are being made holy"* are not yet fully sanctified in the sense of committing no more sin. Otherwise they would not need to go on being made holy (or sanctified). So here we have the shocking combination: the very people who "have been perfected" are the ones who "are being sanctified." Besides, you can also remember from chapters 5 and 6, that these Christians he is writing to are anything but perfect. For example, in **5:11** he says, *"You have become dull of hearing."* So we may safely say that "perfected" does not mean that we are sinlessly perfect in this life.

**Well what does it mean? The answer is given in the next verses (15-18).**