



Sermon-Based Study Guide
Prepared by Rev. James R. Wilson, D. Min.
Good Shepherd Church - October 30, 2011

Sermon Title: It is Finished!

Sermon Text: Hebrews 10.11-18

Related Texts: John 19.28-30; Colossians 3.1-17;
Romans 8.1-5

I. Start It – Connecting With One Another

If you could take a backpack trip anywhere, where would you choose to go? What do you imagine it would be like to carry a heavy backpack over a long distance?

II. Introduction

"In Jesus Christ you are forgiven." It's the central point of Hebrews 9 and 10 and the preacher/author reinforces this point by emphasizing that this forgiveness has come through the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The provision was costly - "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." It cost the life of Jesus - the sacrifice without blemish that was capable of assuaging God's righteous judgment and acquitting (justifying) those who trust in Jesus. "In Jesus Christ you are forgiven." So don't turn back to the old system and its endless cycle of sacrifices repeated over and over. Now we see another very important implication.

III. Study the Text – Read Hebrews 10.11-18

- 1) As you look more closely at verses 11 - 14 what contrasts between the priest of verse 11 and "this priest" (Jesus) described in 12 - 14 are cited? What deficiencies does the author remind us of in verse 11? In contrast, what has Jesus accomplished (verse 12)?
- 2) What does the image of Jesus having "sat down at the right hand of God" (verse 12) suggest about his present activity, authority, and power? How does 1 Corinthians 15.24 - 28 help you understand the things described in verse 13?
- 3) As you think of verses 12 - 14 take a look at John's account of Jesus' death in John 19.28-30. When Jesus asserts "it is finished" (the word can mean "completed" or even "perfected" as we have seen it used throughout Hebrews) what do you think he has in mind? How does the "it" refer to the things cited in verses 12 - 14?
- 4) In verses 15 - 17 the author refers once again to Jeremiah 31.31-34. What do you think is meant by the phrases "I will put my laws in their hearts... write them on their minds?" Turn to Colossians 1.1-17. As you read through this passage look for ways in which this

actually happens within a person. What are the keys to having God's Law put into you inner person and written on your mind?

- 5) Hebrews 10.17 serves as a powerful reminder that God both forgives and forgets our sins. In this context, read through Romans 8.1 - 5. The promise is that we are forgiven and are not under the threat of God's condemnation. Why then do you think we still struggle with feelings of condemnation, unworthiness, or being unable to draw close to God? If we are truly forgiven, and if God has truly forgotten the sins of our past, what can we do to stop any patterns of on-going self-condemnation?

Note: Verse 18 reiterates the finality and perfection (or completeness) of Jesus' sacrifice for sin. It also reminds us that we are forgiven by means of the only truly effective provision - Jesus. Because this is so, the author might add, there is no turning back to the older covenant, to the priest who day after day offers the sacrifices for sin and guilt, to the incomplete system of the annual Day of Atonement, and to the ritual that only provided an external, ceremonial cleansing. And, because this is so, there seems to be no need for or wisdom in carrying the weight of our sin - it has been forgiven... it has been forgotten.

IV. Theological Reflection

In Jesus Christ you are forgiven. Your sins have been forgotten. It may seem strange to think of God being able to forget (check out Psalm 103.12 and Isaiah 43.25) and remove our sins so completely that there is no memory of them. That's the promise. With that promise comes a problem - we don't readily forget our sins (or those of others against us).

V. Apply It – Reflect and Respond

- 1) Picture yourself on a hike in the Sierra Nevada mountains carrying a heavy backpack. It's heavy because it's filled with rocks - each rock denotes a forgiven sin or a distorted message related to who you really are in Christ that you are still carrying around with you. You remember that in Jesus Christ you have been forgiven and that God has forgotten your past failures. So you stop beside a serene mountain lake, in the coolness of the shade of towering pines, strip off the backpack and begin to remove the rocks... What things are written on those rocks? As you remove them and look at the message written on them can you truly let go of them... allow them to tumble down the slope toward that lake... and no longer carry them in your pack?
- 2) You can live a life that is free from guilt and the distorted messages that were written on your heart and mind from experiences and voices of the past. You can be free from being weighted down with guilt and self-condemnation. Here are some things to remember:

God has forgiven me. Hebrews 7.25-28

God has purified me. Hebrews 9.14 and 10.10

God will not remember my sins. Hebrews 8.12

God will not bring any charge against me. Romans 8.33-34

God will not condemn me. Romans 8.1

God is making me new - writing the truth about me on my heart
and in my mind. Hebrews 10.15-17; Colossians 3.1-17