

We mainly think Christ died to take us to heaven, but the message of Hebrews 10 is that he died to take us to the Holy Place.

The Jewish tabernacle had an inner sacred place called the Holy Place. It was the place where God made his presence most strongly felt. In Exodus 25:22 God said, “THERE I will meet with you”. The purpose of the blood of Jesus is to bring us into this DIRECT MEETING with God! The purpose of the blood is to bring us into the full enjoyment of God’s presence, by getting rid of everything that hampers and hinders us from living confidently near God!

Verse 19 says, “We have confidence to enter the holy place” by the blood of Jesus! And since we have that assurance, “let us draw near!”.

Jesus died so that we could LIVE near God, NOW! NOT so that we could pray once in awhile, or worship a couple of times a week, not so that we could have an occasional spiritual experience where we feel close to God. Jesus died so that we could LIVE, in our hearts, right near to God, right now. Of course Jesus died to bring us to heaven someday, but heaven is mainly going to be a full completion of the experience of meeting God in the “Holy Place”, that we have now.

We will go to heaven ONCE when we die. But EVERY DAY we are to enter the Holy Place! Entering this place of God’s presence is an invisible thing that we do in our hearts...but it is as real as walking in the door of your house! We direct our hearts toward God, with full assurance that the blood of Jesus has opened the door for us. And we go in, and live by faith, near to God, in the Holy Place.

For us to really understand what Jesus did for us, we must understand what “being near God” means, what it feels like, and how it affects us. The scripture is full of expressions of what this experience is like and just how good it is!

David said, “One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life”. He had found a place of living where he experienced the Lord. It was a place of confidence, free from fear, full of pleasure, and he said, “This is the one thing I want in life! And I never want to leave this place!” He wasn’t talking about a literal house, he was talking about an experience in his heart with God.

The one place in life that has it all is when your heart is near to God. When you are near God, and there is no tinge of condemnation or fear, when there is no shadow of doubt about his love and acceptance and desire for you, when you have full assurance of faith that God is with you and for you, and delights in you, life is good!!!

Matt Redman used Psalm 84 to express this pleasure in God.

“How lovely is Your dwelling place O Lord Almighty

For my soul longs and even faints for You

For here my heart is satisfied within Your presence

I sing beneath the shadow of Your wings. Better is one day in your courts than thousands elsewhere.” We sing that here!

Is our experience of God perfect at all times? No! We get overtaken by thoughts and emotions and fears at times. But once we have tasted living with God, we develop this passion for him and we LONG to go there and stay there. We say, as in Psalm 63 “My soul

thirsts for you and my flesh longs for you”. My own experience is that I am either enjoying God immensely or when I am not, I long for that, and seek to direct my heart back to the presence of God.

Psalm 63 goes on to explain why we do that...

“Because Your loving-kindness is better than life” That’s why!
And because of that we say, “My lips will praise You. So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips”.... (I think of you on my bed and meditate on you in the night watches) “For You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.”

These are real experiences of the heart they are talking about. These were people without cars and big screen TVs, but they were JUST like us, seeking that thing in their hearts, we call joy, or satisfaction, or security. And they testify that they found all this near God. Even at night in bed and everywhere else we live life, we can be near God!

Francis Havergal expressed that in a hymn.

“Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.

And we sing that song here at church:

There's nothing worth more that will ever come close
No thing can compare, You're our living hope, Your presence, Lord

Paul wrote “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him

we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God (we exult, boast)!

All these writers tell us what it is like to be near God. It is something so precious it can hardly put it into words!

What does all this have to do with Hebrews 10? Everything! Hebrews 10 bulldozes all the stuff away, in our conscience and hearts, that keep us from living life with God! The blood of Jesus gets rid of the one thing that hampers and hinders us from living confidently near God! That one thing that would keep us from this experience of God is consciousness of sins! Even one shadow of doubt about our status with God can ruin all this! We need something that does not only partially remove our awareness of sin some of the time, WE NEED A PERFECT CONSCIENCE.

Sam Storms said, “The single overriding and most debilitating factor that threatens to undermine everything in our Christian lives and in our relationship with God is the failure to understand, embrace and enjoy the full and final forgiveness of our sins”.

Andrew Murray said we need “a conscience fully cleansed, with the guilt of sin removed to an infinite distance”. We need a conscience that “can look up to God without a shadow of a cloud”.

This kind of conscience before God comes from having a perfect Priest who did a perfect work to cleanse our conscience and to keep it cleansed forever. It is not perfect because WE are perfect and without sin or fault, but because of HIS work is perfect to cleanse our conscience.

This chapter begins by telling us the sacrifices under the law, were never God's final answer! They were only a shadow or a reflection of the real blessing to come. They were like looking at pictures of a new car in a brochure, Christ was like that new car getting parked in your driveway with the keys in it. Christ is the REAL sacrifice with REAL results for us!

Verse 1 The sacrifices under the law "can never make perfect those who draw near". But Christ did! Hebrews 9:9 Those sacrifices "cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper". But Christ did! Verse 14 says Christ by a single offering has "perfected" (or made perfect) for all time those who are being sanctified".

Verse 2 If the sacrifices under the law HAD made us perfect, "would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any CONSCIOUSNESS of sins?" The old sacrifices would have stopped immediately if they were able to make the worshipers perfect AND remove consciousness of sin. But those sacrifices didn't do that! The people DID still have consciousness of sins! In fact verse 3 says, in those sacrifices there was a constant REMINDER of sins every year".

The contrast is that Christ DID make us perfect, cleansing us, and removing our consciousness of sin before God. In the infinitely better blessing we have through Jesus, there is no more reminder of our sins, God himself promising to NOT remember our sins again.

Steinhofer "(How) is the blood of Jesus better than the blood of goats and bulls, if it cannot free us from the spirit of bondage and the evil conscience, If it cannot give us a full glad confidence before God?" (IE if we are not proclaiming that the blood of Jesus frees us

from the spirit of bondage and an evil conscience we are saying his blood is not better than bulls and goats. If we are not proclaiming the blood of Jesus gives us full glad confidence before God, we are saying his blood is no better than the old testament sacrifices. So we **MUST** boldly believe and preach to ourselves and others the full power of the blood of Jesus (as revealed to us here in this word)!

Andrew Murray: The blood has put away the thought of sin from God; He remembers it no more for ever. The blood puts away the thought of sin in me too, taking away the evil conscience that condemns me. The better things which the blood speaks in heaven, it speaks in my heart too; it lifts me into that heavenly sphere, that new state of life and (communion) with God, in which an end has been made of sin, and the soul is taken in to the full and perfect enjoyment of the love of God”.

This is high and holy stuff! These blessings are so good that most us probably do not believe them! I really think most of us are thinking, “Aware of sins? Conscious of sins? Of course! All the time! Aren’t we supposed to be?” “Perfected for all time. Who? Me? You’re kidding!” This scripture will challenge you to rethink how you think about your sin.

There are some incredible statements in the Bible about forgiveness. But no place gives us a bolder statement of perfect forgiveness, perfect cleansing of our conscience, and perfect relief from consciousness of our sins than Hebrews 9 and 10. It is the mountaintop of new covenant revelation about the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice and it’s impact on our hearts.

If you have confessed your sins over and over and still feel guilt and shame, if you never feel quite clean enough or good enough to live with God. Then this is the chapter for you!

What could possibly happen that would take care of our sins so completely to remove them from our conscience? The writer of Hebrews says it is because Christ came into the world!!! And he became a sacrifice so pleasing to God... that he settled the alienating impact of our sin, forever! Verse 5 “When Christ came into the world, he said, “You did not want sacrifices and offerings, but you prepared a body for me. In burnt offerings and sin offerings you NEVER took delight.”

All along God was preparing for Christ to come in a human body. In that body he lived a perfect life. He delighted to do God’s will. And the will of God was that the sacrifice of his body would take care of our sin problem completely, and forever! Verse 10 “And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

In verses 11-14 Christ’s work is contrasted with the priests’ offerings under the law) “And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.” The priests kept standing because they had to get up and do it all over again! “But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God... “For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.” The offering of Christ, did the job that needed to be done for you, so completely, so perfectly, that Christ has sat down!

When Satan tempts you to despair and tells you of the guilt within, all you need to do is remind him that Jesus is sitting down! When you come to God, all you need to know is that Jesus is sitting down. Jesus wouldn't be sitting down if there was one more thing he needed to do to, to perfect you, or cleanse your conscience, or remove the awareness of your sins before God. BUT he IS sitting down!

I was sitting in a coffee shop in Panora writing down these verses and thoughts and I just started crying and couldn't stop. Jesus is sitting down because he took care of ALL MY sins, perfectly and forever! IF your sins and failures loom up big before you, it is because you have not seen that Jesus is sitting down.

I do believe we need to have some sense of how much sin God has forgiven us. Jesus said, he who is forgiven much loves much! And the Bible says we are to confess or acknowledge when we sin. But on the basis of this passage, we are not to live in constant awareness or consciousness of our sins before God. We are supposed to live before God knowing we are perfectly clean by the blood of Christ.

We can come to God and sing to him and lift our hands to him, and say to him, "God, you are so good!" We can do that completely free from the burden of thinking about our sins and failures!

Francis Schaeffer in his book True Spirituality, called this "living moment by moment on the basis of the finished work of Christ". He said, "As soon as I become aware of a specific sin, I at once call that sin, sin and I consciously bring it under the blood of Christ". "I say 'thank you', and my conscience is at rest". Are you living moment by moment on the basis of the finished work of Christ?

The end result of the work of Christ for us, is that we have confidence to come to God, with full assurance of faith. We are not hindered from drawing near to God by anything! Verse 19

“Therefore we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus”. Verse 20 says we have confidence to enter by “the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh” (or through the offering of his body for our sins). And “since we have a great priest over the house of God, “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

This is the application! Draw near! NOT with fear, but with full assurance of faith! **DIRECT YOUR HEARTS TO GOD** with complete certainty about your status, knowing your hearts are washed clean, knowing your bodies washed with pure water. This language of ceremonial washing communicates the complete cleansing of our entire person, inside and out, by the blood of Christ. It is not just that God has cleaned up something inside of us. We have been washed, body, soul and spirit, from the guilt and shame of sin.

We have been invited into the Holy Place, without a shred of doubt about our full acceptance! “**EVERY DAY** we are to enter the Holy Place! Entering this place of God’s presence is an invisible thing that we do in our hearts...but it is as real as walking in the door of your house! We direct our heart toward God, with full assurance that the blood of Jesus has opened the door for us. And we go in, and live by faith, near to God, in the Holy Place.” This is something we are continually doing. And it never gets old because God is like a never ending river of delights!

May God awaken our hearts to this privilege. And may God stir our hearts to live in this place of communion with God and enjoyment of God. Let's be passionate about living in full enjoyment of God. And then let's be passionate about bringing other people into full enjoyment of God. That's what I want my life to be about!

Father, may we be a church full of people whose hearts are entering and remaining in the Holy Place of Your Presence. Open our eyes to the perfection, the completeness of the offering of Jesus for sin!