

Hebrews is about raising high the supremacy of Jesus Christ! We don't know for sure who the human author is, but we do know for sure that the Holy Spirit is the divine Author. He is speaking and so we should perk up and listen to what he has to say. Christians facing suffering... [outlined in Hebrews 10] And they are wondering, is it worth it? It would be easier for our family if we just... We would have more friends if... we would have more financial opportunities if we... we would fit in with our neighbors and co-workers better if...

And they began to "drift" from what they heard (the gospel) and the One who first spoke it (the Lord Himself). They began to neglect the great salvation accomplished for them by Jesus. This is why there is a stiff warning. Last week's text, verses 1-4 say that we need to be very careful to pay attention to what we have heard (the gospel). Because God was just to punish the Israelites who received the message given by angels (Mt. Sinai) and were disobedient to it. If that is true, how shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation he has achieved for us. Though we don't face the same problems they did, there is still the temptation to drift. Drifting is what just happens if we are not careful... if we are not vigilant (Proverbs 4:23). That was last week's text.

Verses 1-4 are clearly a warning. Well, these verses today are the other side of the warning. These verses are meant to help us be anchored or re-anchored. Here we see that Jesus is the perfect Savior and we see what this great salvation includes. For all who trust in him, you will find him to be a perfect, sufficient Savior. He has NO deficiency. Jesus is our Perfect Savior. And these verses show us five facets of his saving work which all point to the perfection of Christ himself. Let me mention them and then unpack each:

1. Substitute who died for us
2. Founder of our salvation who has gone before us
3. Brother, who gathers a family to Himself
4. Present Savior in our midst
5. Restores us for a future of reigning

Jesus is our Substitute. (verse 9)

Jesus is a perfect Savior who is our Substitute. Verse 9 says Jesus was,

... crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Let's first see who Jesus is the substitute for. We see the word "everyone" here. There are two ways all of us use the word everyone. We can use it to refer to every single person without exception. Or everyone in the group that is being addressed. Let me give you an example. If I say, "Alright kids, everyone in the car." I don't mean every single person in the world, or Ankeny, or my neighborhood. I mean everyone that I am speaking to, namely my kids. I don't believe the author is saying that Jesus tasted death for everyone who has ever lived or will live. Rather, he is saying everyone who has or ever will believe in Christ. I think the context makes this very clear. Everyone includes the "many sons" that he brings to glory (verse 10), "those who are sanctified" (verse 11), those he calls "brothers" (verse 11-12), and those who are called "children of God" (verse 13). Let me just boil it down for you today. If you are in Christ through faith, you are included in the "everyone" that Jesus tasted death for.

Now what does it mean that he tasted death? Tasted - a hebrew metaphor that does not mean "to sample" like a taste test, but "to partake fully". Here's the most important point I want to make here. Jesus fully partook of death *FOR* his people. The word for here means "in behalf of" or "in the place of". In other words Jesus tasted death on your behalf, in your place. And here's why this matters. Ezekiel 18:20 says, "the soul that sins shall die." Romans 6:23 says "the wages of sin is death..." And not just physical death, though that is included. But spiritual death or "perishing" referred to in John 3:16. You and I have sinned. And prior to believing in Jesus, we were condemned, with a sentence of death hung around our neck. The covenant curse of death had been pronounced over us. But Jesus, our Substitute, tasted death for me... and for you. He died the death I deserve. He drank the cup of death and curse and the wrath of God that was reserved for me. Here's how an old hymns puts it:

Death and curse were in our cup, O Christ twas full for Thee! But Thou hast drained the last dark drop, tis empty now for me. That bitter cup, love drank it up. Now blessings draught for me.

And so in a very real sense, we will never die, right because he tasted death for us. Of course, these bodies will waste away... they *are* wasting away and will continue to do so. But Paul says that if Christians are away from their bodies, they are at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5). Marcie's dad/Lonna's mom. He tasted death for us. Jesus Christ, our perfect Savior died the death we deserve, bearing God's wrath and curse because of our sins. Since Christ is our Substitute, there is a glorious swap. He took what I earned, namely death. And I get what he alone earned, namely life and peace with God. And so now we understand the words of Jesus in John 8:51, "*Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death,*" because he took our place as our substitute! What a perfect Savior!

Jesus is the Founder of our Salvation who has gone before us (verse 10)

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

He's the founder of our salvation. The Founder of our salvation: literally means captain or pioneer - one who blazes a trail for others to follow. The word archegos - a great word. **It always means somebody who does something that somebody else can enter into.** He is the pioneer or captain of our salvation who has blazed a trail, and we by faith enter into.

The question is, where is he leading? Where is our captain taking us? Where does he blaze a trail to? Let's follow what the author says because he will make it very clear. Verse 10 says, it was "fitting" that God should make the Founder of our salvation perfect through suffering. What does it mean that Jesus was "made perfect" through suffering? Well, it does NOT mean that he was flawed or morally deficient. In fact, later in Hebrews, Christ's sinless life is clearly affirmed. Here's what this means. Through his suffering and death Christ was made the perfect Pioneer of our great salvation. He was perfectly fitted to be our Savior... and it was through suffering. He needed to suffer.

Again, where does Jesus, the Pioneer lead? Well verse 10 says he is bringing "many sons to glory". But verse 11 is the key: "*For [because] he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin [Father].*"

Here is where our Pioneer has blazed the trail to... here's the destination. The Father! God! And by faith in his finished work, what he accomplished through suffering and death, we are able to follow him there; we are able to come to God as our Father. Matthew 27:51 - The veil torn upon his death. Hebrews 10:19-22. Jesus is the Pioneer who has gone before us and cleared the way by which we draw near to God. He is a perfect Savior!

Jesus is a Brother who gathers a family to himself (verses 10-13)

There is tons of familial language in these verses. The point is clear; Jesus is filling the Father's house with many sons and daughters. Verse 10 says the Father, through Jesus, is bringing many sons to glory. Verse 11 says, he who sanctifies (Jesus) and those who are sanctified (us) have the same Father. Of course Jesus is the eternally begotten Son of the Father. We are adopted sons and daughters of God, born again by the Spirit into his family! Verse 12 is Jesus speaking, quoting Psalm 22, "I will tell of your name (Father's) to my brothers." And verse 13 says - again Jesus speaking, quoting Isaiah 8:18, "I and the children God has given to me." So Jesus has come to gather a family to himself and fill the Father's house!

But there is one phrase that hit me this week like a cool, fresh Rocky Mountain breeze. I think because it emphatically highlights *grace*. Verse 11 says, "*He is not ashamed to call them brothers*" (verse 11). He is not ashamed to call you his brother, his sister. He knows everything about you (quirks, weaknesses, temptations, and sins), and still is not ashamed to call you his brother! He does not blush and turn red at the mention of you and think: "Yeah, she is my sister. Well, uh, yes Josh is my brother." If you are one of the many sons being brought to glory, he is thrilled to call you brother with all your flaws. Even though you have very clearly not arrived at perfection yet! And praise God he is sanctifying us in order that we might look just like our big brother (Romans 8:29)! What a perfect Savior!

Jesus is a present Savior in our midst (verse 12)

Verse 12, quoting Psalm 22:22, Jesus our perfect Savior says, "*In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise.*" In the OT, the congregation was the gathered people of Israel to worship. The Greek word here is "ekklesia", from which the word church comes. The church is the people of Christ who gather together to draw near to God in worship.

When we are together in the name of Jesus and draw near to God together, there is something pretty big happening in the unseen realm. May God give us eyes of faith to see. Jesus is in our midst. But notice what this says he is doing: "*In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise.*" He is singing! Singing praises to God. I praise God for our worship team (name). Our worship leaders Luke and Alissa! But I've got to tell you, what would it be like if we had the eyes of faith to see that Jesus is our worship leader every time we gather on the Lord's day. This verse hit me this week and I felt like Jacob ("The Lord was here and I didn't even know it. How awesome is this place!"). Sometimes we think, wrongly, that worship is like priming the pump to try to get God to come visit us. He is here. And he is more zealous to sing praises than anyone here!

Jesus leads the chorus of praise to God the Father! He loves the glory of the Father! John Calvin, commenting on this verse said, "*This teaching is the very strongest encouragement to us to bring yet more fervent zeal to the praise of God, when we hear that Christ leads our praise and is the Chief Conductor of our hymns.*" He's a present Savior in our midst, leading our praise. What a perfect Savior!

Restores us for future dominion (verses 5-9)

God destined man to rule the earth as his deputy. But Adam relinquished this when he sinned and through his sin all of mankind was ruined by sin and death. But Christ has earned for us the right to reign the “world to come” with him. Through his death and subsequent resurrection and exaltation he has earned for us this right to reign. This is what verses 5-9 draw out. [Read and step through]. The quotation is from Psalm 8 and show God’s destiny for man. But the author of Hebrews clearly says, “We don’t all of the earth subject to man.” (examples). BUT we do see Him, namely Jesus...

And now Jesus the representative, came to repair those lost and ruined by sin. And he did this by suffering and dying for us. And by being crowned with glory and honor through his resurrection and ascension. And now *in Christ*, our destiny to reign and rule over creation has been reestablished in the death and resurrection of the Son of God. And it is the “world to come” (verse 5) that is in view. Here’s what Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:12, “*If we endure, we will also reign with him...*” When you think of eternity, eternal life, what comes to mind?

When I was a child, the thought that entered my mind was that eternal life would be a disembodied, ghostly church service that never ended on the clouds. Listen to Revelation 22:3-5 describing eternal life for believers:

No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

There is something deep in us that longs for this; a perfect world. Everything that is accursed gone forever. This is our eternal destiny - reigning with Christ as his deputies! This is what Christ has accomplished and will complete at his second coming!

A PERFECT SAVIOR... ANCHOR YOUR SOUL TO HIM

So we see what our perfect Savior has done in the past - died for us in our place as our substitute and has blazed a trail to God. We see what our perfect Savior is doing now - gathering a family of brothers and sisters to himself to fill the Father’s house and he’s in the midst of us as the chief worship leader. And we see what he will do in the future - perfectly restores us for future of reigning.

So don’t drift. You can drift because things are really hard. And you can drift because things are pretty darn easy. Either way, the answer is the same. Pay closer attention to the message of your perfect Savior! Hold onto Him. Anchor yourself in Him. Don’t be careless when it comes to Christ and the gospel. Don’t neglect such a great salvation. Stir up your faith and help to stir one another up to faith and love and good works all the way to the end. And this is why it is so important to be dynamically connected to the congregation... the ekklesia of God - the church.

If you have drifted... the Lord Jesus is here today that you may anchor yourself in him! Come to him... trust him... rejoice in him... treasure Him!