

Sermon Transcript

04.26.2026

Hebrews 10:5-10

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- Good morning. Please open to Hebrews 10. We'll be looking at vss. 5-10 this morning.
- As you turn there, let's talk about movies.
- Anyone seen any good movies lately?
- I saw Project Hail Mary recently which I thought was really good. No nudity or foul language. Just good clean fun.
- But what makes a good movie?
- Obviously some of it is up to individual taste. For instance, I can't stand musicals or pretentious Oscar bait, so there is certainly some subjectivity to it, but there are also some objective factors that just about everyone would agree goes into making a great film.
- Things like a compelling narrative, characters that you actually care about, meaningful conflict, and all kinds of technical things like acting, directing, cinematography, soundtrack and what not.
- But one of my non-negotiables is resolution. Not all movies need happy endings, but they do need an ending. I can't stand when you watch a movie and there's just no real resolution at all. When the credits roll and you're thinking, what just happened and is that it? I don't mind movies with open ended endings like Inception or something, but I'm not a fan of artsy movies where nothing really happens. I want at least some sort of resolution.
- And one of the types of resolution that I find most appealing is one in which there's self-sacrifice. Try as our post-Christian postmodern civilization might to erase Christian influence from popular culture, our stories are still haunted by this gospel theme. Like Christ Himself, the themes of self-denial and altruism keep resurrecting in our cinematic experiences. As Romans tells us, certain universal truths are written on the hearts of men and they have to actively work to suppress them. And I think that's generally true with the theme of sacrifice and selflessness.
- When you think of self-sacrifice in cinema, you think of William Wallace embracing death for the sake of Scotland, Maximus dying for Rome, Frodo and Sam risking everything to destroy the ring, Tony Stark sacrificing himself to kill Thanos, Jonathan Kent allowing himself to be taken in a tornado to protect the identity of his son, Jack giving Rose the door, Katniss volunteering as tribute in the place of her sister, Sydney giving himself for Darnay in A Tale of Two Cities, Aslan laying down his life for Edmund, the 54th Massachusetts regiment storming the beach in Glory, Major Heyward dying to protect Cora and Hawkeye in Last of the Mohicans, Batman taking the blame for Harvey's crimes, Creasy sacrificing himself for Pita in Man on Fire, Bruce Willis saving Ben Affleck and the world in Armageddon, Obi Wan allowing Vader to strike him down in order to buy time for Luke and to be joined with the force, and so forth.
- Sorry for the spoilers...I'm sure you've been waiting 30 years for the perfect opportunity to watch Braveheart or Titanic this weekend and I've joined ruined it.
- What makes these types of stories so inspiring and epic is the voluntary nature of the sacrifice.
- We talked about this a bit last week when we said that one of the reasons that the blood of bulls and goats couldn't atone for sin was that there was no volitional aspect.
- No goat ever volunteered as tribute. No bull ever raised his hoof for the sake of Israel. No sheep ever signed up to be slaughtered.

- But it is exactly this aspect of Christ's death that the author focuses on in our text today. Christ's will perfectly aligned with the Father's will. Christ didn't merely die for us, but He willingly, voluntarily, did so. He laid down His life as we'll see in vss. 5-10.
 - So let's pray and then we'll dive in together.
 - Self, others, me.
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- Christ is better. That's the message of Hebrews. Better than the angels and Moses and the Sabbath rest and land provided in the days of Joshua.
 - Better than the Levitical priests and Aaronic high priests. His sacrifice is better than what they sacrificed. His sanctuary is better than the tabernacle.
 - We are almost 40 sermons into the book so by now this should be a familiar refrain. If you're just now joining us, you're jumping into the middle of a conversation that has been happening for the past year.
 - I can't possibly catch you up entirely, but I can hopefully give you enough context that you won't be lost this morning.
 - We'll start with the setting which is that the book of Hebrews is written to a group of 1st century Jews who had been converted to Christianity. They were Hebrew Christians so that's why the book is called Hebrews.
 - As you may expect, conversion from Judaism was frowned upon by many of their fellow Israelites. Although Rome would later persecute Christians most of the initial early church opposition was at the hands of those who were zealous for the Jewish law and traditions.
 - So these Jewish Christians are being persecuted & there's a temptation that accompanies the suffering. That temptation is described in the book as falling away or drifting. The thought is that if they'll just return to the synagogue, return to Moses, return to the law, the suffering will stop.
 - But the author writes this book to show that the hope that is offered by turning back is shallow and hollow. Indeed, it's a shadow.
 - The author makes this point by means of something called typology which is the study of types from the Greek typos meaning pattern or example.
 - The idea is that God has embedded certain pictures or patterns in the Old Covenant which anticipate and foreshadow the New Covenant. There are parallels between the covenants marked by both correspondence and escalation.
 - By correspondence, we mean that there is similarity. There is a genuine analogy. If you happen to notice that Jesus is like Joseph or like Adam or like David or like the Passover lamb or like the temple in certain ways, that isn't coincidental.
 - But there is also escalation, meaning that the new isn't merely like the old, but better. Yes, there is a similarity between Jesus and the tabernacle, but He's a better, more permanent, more effective tabernacle and so forth.
 - And we've seen how typology permeates the pages of Hebrews.
 - For example, chapter 7 compared and contrasted Christ and the Levitical and Aaronic priests.
 - And chapter 8 compared and contrasted the new covenant with the Mosaic covenant.
 - And chapter 9 used the illustration of the tabernacle to demonstrate Christ's more effective and final sacrifice.
 - In each example this is similarity and dissimilarity, correspondence and escalation.
 - As we've talked about before, the rhetorical point in drawing this out should be fairly obvious.
 - If Christ is better...better not only to the whole, but even to each individual part of the Mosaic law and covenant and Levitical system, if Christ is superior to each and every aspect and to the whole thing, then why would you ever drift, why fall away, why go back?

- This reminds me of the game would you rather. What makes the game interesting is if both answers are approximately equally appealing or unappealing.
- The game wouldn't be quite as fun if someone asked something like:
- Would you rather have 10 million dollars a year for the next 10 years or file for bankruptcy, lose everything and become homeless and destitute? Would you rather have to drink out of a toilet or have dinner at a Michelin starred restaurant? Would you rather get hugged by your child or punched in the neck by a stranger?
- Well, that's about how silly it is to ask, would you rather have Jesus, and all His permanent glory and efficiency and supremacy, or the insufficient, inadequate, inefficient, imperfect religion known as Judaism?
- If that seems like a difficult choice, its because you don't really understand the terms. That's how overwhelmingly superior Christ is.
- So rather than fall away, we should draw near. That's the command we've seen that functions like an inclusio in the book of Hebrews. What's an inclusio?
- That's a literary device that frames a section with bookends of similar material. It says, this unit of material between the bookends belongs together and is all contributing to the same idea.
- So we read something very similar in chapters 4 and 10:
- In chapter 4, we read
 - *Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)*
- And we'll read something similar later in chapter 10
 - *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 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. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (Hebrews 10:19-23)*
- Notice the similarity of these bookends: hold fast and draw near and in confidence.
- So rather than falling away, we should hold fast and draw near and do so with assurance. We read that in chapter 4 and chapter 10. But how can we draw near?
- In the tabernacle you couldn't draw near. There was a big do not enter, trespassers will be killed sign in the form of curtains and cherubim protecting the presence of God. The entire edifice of the tabernacle communicated the inaccessibility of God. So if you couldn't draw near under the conditions of the old covenant, how can we now draw near?
- Well, that's what the inclusio tells us, that's what chapters 4-10 are all about. Christ's supremacy. Christ's superiority. He is a better priest who has offered a better sacrifice to inaugurate a better covenant built on better promises and that thus gives us a better hope and better confidence so that what was forbidden in the old is encouraged in the new.
- In chapter 7, we saw why we needed a new priesthood. In chapter 8, why we needed a new covenant. In chapter 9, a new tabernacle. But last week we saw why we needed a new sacrifice.
- Namely, the blood of bulls and goats couldn't atone. Human sin demands human blood.
- As we read last week, rather than removing sin, the Levitical sacrifices served as reminders of sin.

- Indeed as verse 4 said,
 - *For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* (Hebrews 10:4)
- The problem wasn't sacrifice, but the object and subject of the sacrifice. We'll see that as we explore vss. 5-10 this morning. Let's start in 5-7.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.' " (Hebrews 10:5-7)

- Let's begin by looking at that phrase when Christ came into the world.
- You see hints there of Christ's preexistence. This fits with the overarching Christology that we've seen in the book of Heb. Remember the main argument of chapter 1 was Christ's superiority to the angels. And one of the primary evidences of that superiority was Christ's eternity.
- The angels were created, but the Son is eternal because the Son is Creator.
- For example, chapter 1:8 says:
 - *But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever..."* (Hebrews 1:8)
 - *"You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end."* (Hebrews 1:10-12)
- As we talked about then, the Son is eternal and thus shares in the attributes of God and is therefore God. So the Son has always existed.
- But there was a time in which He came into the world. We call this His incarnation. When the eternal Son of God took on flesh, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. John speaks of this when He says that the Word became flesh.
- So that's when He comes into the world. And when He comes into the world, He comes with a mission. And that mission involves an obedience that is in contrast to the sacrificial system. And that obedience is summed up in a quotation of a Psalm.
- Now, this is interesting given that the author quotes a Psalm as if it were spoken by Christ.
- We've already seen this phenomenon a few times in Hebrews where the author will quote some OT passage and say as God says or as the Son says or something. That's not a problem if we bear in mind the Christian understanding of dual authorship. By dual authorship, we mean that all Scripture has two authors, the human author and the divine author.
- As 2 Pt says, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the HS in writing Scripture.
- In other words, when asked who wrote Rom, its appropriate to say Paul, but also appropriate to say God. And when it comes to the Pss, its appropriate to say that David wrote a particular passage, or the sons of Asaph or whomever, but also appropriate to say that God spoke it.
- And that's the case with this passage which is from Psalm 40:6-8. In the OT it reads like this:
 - *In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."* (Psalm 40:6-8)
- Now, you'll notice a few differences between the text of Ps 40 and the quotation in Hebrews, but most of them can be explained simply by considering the differences in the Hebrew text and the LXX, the Greek translation of the OT.

- The main difference is between the phrase “a body you have prepared for me” here in Hebrews and “you have given me an open ear” in Psalm 40, but that difference is explained both by the fact that Hebrews seems to be following various Greek manuscripts of the Psalm mentioning a body and also by the idea of synecdoche.
 - What is synecdoche? Well, it’s a figure of speech in which a part represents the whole. For instance, all hands on deck doesn’t mean to cut off your hand & throw it on the boat. Or if someone sees your car & says nice wheels, they probably aren’t referring just to your rims. The hand represents the whole man and the wheels represents the entire vehicle.
- So an ear here represents the inner man, the ability to hear and heed the word of the Lord. And by extension, the ear can represent the entire body. After all, if David praised God for an open ear, how much more would Christ, the new and better David, proclaim total obedience of not only the ear, but also the eyes, throat, feet, hands, etc.? In other words, the whole body.
- Now, speaking of David, that’s another thing to pick up on.
- People sometimes get confused when a Davidic psalm is applied to Jesus because they aren’t thinking typologically. They’re thinking far too literally.
- They think in either/or categories. This psalm is either about David or about Jesus. But that’s not the way we should read Davidic psalms.
- Instead, we can read it typologically and see that it applies initially to David, but then there is a future fuller fulfillment in Christ.
- I mention this because if you keep reading the Psalm you’ll see this in vs. 12
 - *For evils have encompassed me beyond number; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head; my heart fails me.* (Psalm 40:12)
- You see the problem? We’ve just said that vss. 6-8 apply to Jesus, but now vs 12 speaks of the author being overwhelmed by sin.
- But this isn’t inconsistent. This is the way in which the new reads the old. We read it with new covenant lenses.
- We’ve already in fact seen this kind of thing in Hebrews. In chapter 1, we saw the author quote 2 Samuel 7 which says this:
 - *When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.* (2 Samuel 7:12–15)
- Notice the line I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. The author of Hebrews says that refers ultimately to Christ. And yet, the very next line speaks of committing iniquity which can’t refer to Him. So we see that there is an initial fulfillment of this in David’s son Solomon, but there is a fuller fulfillment in Christ. There is an immediate fulfillment in Solomon, but an eschatological fulfillment in Christ.
- So, as it relates to Psalm 40, we can say that Christ is the true and better David and as the true and better David, He had all of the virtues of David, but none of the vice, all of the strengths, none of the weaknesses. David delighted to do God’s will to a degree, but Christ was the perfect representation of that so there is nothing wrong with seeing that Christ fulfilled vss. 6-8 while not identifying him with vs. 12 and David’s failures.
- Now, I’m taking time to cover this because of how central this way of reading is to the NT.

- In Acts 2, when Peter addressed the people at Pentecost, he argued that David did not speak of himself when he wrote the words of Ps 16:8–11 even though the psalm was written in the first person. Ultimate fulfillment is only found by reading Ps 16 through the final fulfillment of Christ.
- And in Matthew & Mark, Jesus prays the words of Ps 42 in Gethsemane & Ps 22 from the cross. In Luke, He prays Ps 31. In John, Jesus quotes Pss 41 as applying to Judas' betrayal & His cleansing of the temple is seen as a fulfillment of Ps 69's zeal for the house of the Lord.
- So this is all over the place and we need to be able to spot it. There's a danger in reading the Davidic messianic Psalms as if they only refer to Jesus, but also a corresponding danger of reading them as if they don't refer to Him at all.
- And so back to Hebrews, the point in quoting this particular psalm is to contrast the inefficiency of sacrifices with the king's commitment to God's will.
- And this is particularly interesting in that it appears on David's lips given the way that his predecessor lost his kingdom.
- If you recall in 1 Samuel 15:23, Samuel tells Saul that God has rejected him from being king. As an explanation, look at the previous verse:
 - *And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22)*
- In the context, Saul had offered a sacrifice, but done so in disobedience to God's command.
- So David is held up as the anti-thesis of Saul. The one who delights in obedience rather than sacrifice. But obviously David is not the perfect demonstration as his life will eventually unravel with his own sin.
- So, again, we see how David is a partial fulfillment and Jesus is the better David, the ultimate example of a life lived in submission to God's will.
- And that obedience is contrasted with sacrifice.
- Now, in the original context, the problem wasn't necessarily the sacrifices themselves.
- We talked about this a bit last week. The prophets will often criticize the sacrifices of the people of Israel.
- Jesus takes up that mantle as well for instance in
 - *Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:13)*
 - *And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Matthew 12:7)*
- Both of those are quoting Hosea and last week we gave a number of similar prophetic announcements criticizing the sacrificial system. Now, in the context of the OT, the criticism was due to those sacrifices being offered insincerely.
- For example, in Psalm 51, we read this
 - *For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar. (Psalm 51:16–19)*
- Notice that David says that God doesn't delight in sacrifice, but seems to envision that if offered with a broken spirit and broken contrite heart, that the sacrificial system would be restored. In other words, the problem isn't the sacrifice, but the spirit in which it is offered.

- Well, Hebrews goes beyond that to show that the sacrifice itself is tainted because human sin needs human blood and because in order for a sacrifice to be substitutionary, it must be voluntary and animals could never willingly give themselves.
- The author's point is that not only Christ's ears, but His very body has been prepared by God with the ultimate expression of obedience being the sacrifice not of an animal, but of Himself.
- Let's keep going. Vss. 8-9.

When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. (Hebrews 10:8-9)

- We've talked before about how often Scripture uses the language of turning toward and turning away, faith and repentance, taking off and putting on, mortification and vivification.
- For instance, the Bible doesn't merely say that you should stop using certain words like foul speech and coarse joking and so forth, but it also says that you should start using other words like words of encouragement and words seasoned with salt.
- You take off certain words and put on other words.
- Or, Scripture doesn't just say to stop stealing, but also to start working. You take off laziness and theft and put on hard work and productivity.
- Or put off speaking falsehood and put on speaking the truth. Put off lustful passion, put on self-control.
- And we see this principle here as well. Something we cease doing and something we start doing. There will be a negative and positive command.
- The negative applies to sacrifices. God neither desires nor takes pleasure in sacrifices and so forth. Now, how can that be since God Himself commanded them?
- Well, because God commanded them as a means to an end. He never delighted in them in and of themselves. They were always intended to be signs and pictures. They were also provisional rather than permanent.
- God desired sacrifices for a particular time and purpose, but now that the purpose has come they have ceased to have that same meaning.
- For instance, think back to those days when you were potty training your child and you would tell them to let you know each time they needed to go to the bathroom. Your will was for them to tell you I need to go to the bathroom. But fast forward to when they are 16 or 36, what if each time your 40 year old son needed to use the bathroom he called you on the phone. What if he had an accident at the office because you didn't pick up his call. That would be strange. Why? Because the purpose of the command has been fulfilled and is therefore unnecessary now.
- That's how we should understand the OT sacrificial system. It wasn't bad, but neither was it ultimate or final.
- So that's the negative. And then the positive is "behold, I have come to do your will." Obedience.
- And not just any obedience, but perfect obedience. The untainted obedience of the Son.
- And the author of Hebrews says that this second positive rejoinder renders the first obsolete. You may not like the word obsolete, but that's a word that the author himself used in chapter 8:13.
 - *In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8:13)*

- He renders obsolete. He does away with the first in order to establish the second. That word does away in Greek is a strong term for removal that is used in Greek literature for the abrogation of laws and so forth.
- In other words, God now prohibits what He had previously prescribed, at least as it relates to these sacrifices.
- He doesn't change His mind. He doesn't say, you know what, sacrifices were a mistake. He says, they have found their fulfillment in a better sacrifice. The substance has rendered the shadow unnecessary.
- The concern is God's will. The desire is to delight in and do God's will, but God's will is not found in the sacrifice of animals...God doesn't desire or delight in that ultimately. Those sacrifices were temporary and partial and incomplete.
- So, if God's will is not to be found in the Levitical sacrificial system, where is it found? How do we know the will of God?
- Well, its found in obedience. He doesn't delight in sacrifice, but He does delight in obedience.
- But not just any obedience will do. An obedience which is both like and unlike the sacrifice of animals. In context, one particular obedience is in view as we'll see in vs. 10.

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

- Before I try to expound that, I just want you to feel the weight of it. Or, from another perspective, the incredible lightness as it removes the weight. The weight of working, earning, offering our own sacrifices. This passage lays bare all of our attempts as self-righteousness.
- If you are in Christ, you have been sanctified, fully, perfectly, completely. Tetelestai, it is finished.
- Notice the verb we have been sanctified. In Greek that's in the perfect tense which might not mean much to you, but means a lot to exegetes because a perfect tense signifies a completed action with ongoing results.
- That's significant because it points to the complex nature of sanctification in Scripture.
- There is a sense in which scripture speaks of sanctification as being past, present, and future. It has been done, it is being done, and it will be done.
- We sometimes label these positional, progressive, and future sanctification.
- Positional sanctification means we have been sanctified, set apart. It is done. It is finished. That is a dominant theme of Scripture. In fact, this is interesting. If you were to ask most Christians whether sanctification is a process or a position, they would probably say process whereas in the Bible the emphasis is on your positional sanctification.
 - *To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours... (1 Corinthians 1:2)*
- You have not only reference to being sanctified in Christ, but also the title saints which is from the same Greek word. To be a saint is to be sanctified and that's true for all of God's people.
- Or later in 1 Corinthians we read this:
 - *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11)*
- So this is the dominant model of sanctification that Scripture upholds and though its less common, the Bible also speaks of progressive and future sanctification in other contexts.

- And there are dangers in emphasizing one to the neglect of others. We need to keep in mind that its true that we have been sanctified, we are being sanctified and we will be sanctified.
- And we see here in Hebrews 10 an emphasis on the positional aspect of sanctification. We have been sanctified. That is finished.
- But the perfect tense also hints at the progressive aspect. Again, a perfect tense signifies a completed action w/ ongoing results. In other words, because we have been sanctified, therefore we are being sanctified and will continue to be sanctified until we are eventually glorified.
- That's the idea.
- And since we have been sanctified, we can therefore draw near in confidence. We have been purified, cleansed. How?
- By Christ's will through the offering of His body. Unlike the high priests of Israel, Christ didn't bring the blood of another, but His own blood. He didn't sacrifice another to save Himself, He sacrificed Himself to save another.
- Last year we did a culture and theology on abortion and noted how abortion is the antithesis of the gospel. In abortion, a mother says, I will take your life so that I can preserve my own comfort and convenience. In the gospel, Christ says, I will lay down my life so you can have life and have it to the fullest. In abortion you sacrifice another for your own sake. In the gospel, Christ sacrifices Himself for others.
- And the same interplay exists in the sacrificial system. In the OT, a priest sacrifices another so that he may live whereas in the gospel, Christ sacrifices Himself so that others may live.
- And in doing so, He perfectly aligns His own will with the will of the Father. You may recall the words in the garden, not my will, but yours. As the eternal son of God, Christ shares in the 1 will of God, but as a man, Christ has another will and He subjects that one will to the will of His God.
- And that's the ultimate act of obedience.
- Remember what we talked about in Philippians 2 a year and a half ago:
 - *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)*
- Notice the relationship between His death and His obedience. His death is the ultimate picture of His obedience.
- As I'm thinking about this, I'm thinking of another movie involving self-sacrifice. This one is the Passion of the Christ.
- This past week I did a Q&A with the youth and young adults and they asked me my thoughts on images of Jesus. Some with a particular view of the 2nd commandment warning against images of God are against any and all depictions of Christ. My personal view is that I'm uncomfortable with Jesus bobbleheads and Jesus dolls and Jesus is my homeboy t-shirts, but I don't have a problem with a painting like the Last Supper or other tasteful depictions of Christ, but each person has a different conviction on that and each person must give an account for their own conscience.
- Anyway, this past Easter, I wanted my kids to watch The Passion of the Christ for the first time. Is that too gratuitously violent? Well, yeah. That's kinda the point I wanted them to understand. I don't want them to have a sterile, sanitized Sunday school picture of the cross. It was bloody & violent & gross. The more we sanitize it, the more we neutralize its potency & power to affect us.

- After the movie my kids said they never wanted to watch it again so I asked them if it gave them a greater sense of what Christ suffered and a greater sense of the depth and cost of His love and they said yes so that was my goal.
- Sometimes obedience is relatively easy. I've never been particularly tempted toward murder or bestiality so obeying God's prohibitions of those sins doesn't cost me that much.
- But not so with Christ's obedience. It cost Him His very life. Not only did He die but in one of the most painful and humiliating ways that you can imagine. He despised the shame and pain and laid down His body.
- And because it was offered up once for all, we are sanctified once for all.
- And that's really good news. The fact that Christ has come to do God's will is good news because I don't always delight to do God's will.
- That's what I find so stirring about this passage. Its a passage about obedience, but not your obedience or my obedience, but rather Christ's obedience. Your obedience will always be impartial and incomplete. Your obedience will be marked by disobedience and apathy.
- And yet even that apathy or indifference or even dislike of the will of God is covered by Christ's offering. Even my begrudging submission.
- Because Christ has perfectly obeyed, you are free and clean despite your imperfect obedience. You've been perfected, sanctified, purified, cleansed.
- There is nothing you can add or do. To add to it is to deny its efficiency and sufficiency.
- So yes, we should seek to imitate Christ in offering obedience to God, but that isn't the heart of the passage. The heart of the passage is that Christ has obeyed for your sake and in your place.
- So the application of this passage isn't to try harder, but rather to rest. To believe that you are in Christ and therefore you have been washed and clean and sanctified and there is now nothing that prevents you from drawing near in confidence.
- Let's pray.

Communion

- Fence table
- As we partake of communion, I want us to think about one of the implications of this text.
- Remember where it falls in the context of Hebrews. Between two calls to draw near with confidence.
- And yet how often do we instead cower in fear. We sin and so in shame we avoid coming to church, we avoid community, or maybe we even avoid communion. We feel too dirty to partake.
- That's like saying, I'm too dirty for a bath or too sick for a doctor. We don't come because of our obedience, but His. We don't come on the basis of our attempts to clean ourselves up, but on the basis of His finished work.
- We have been sanctified. It is finished.
- So as we taste and eat this morning, I want you to think of that.
- Think about your positional sanctification, think about your union with Christ, think about the objective nature of His work and the fact that His righteousness has been fully imputed to you.
- And as we partake, may we do so in confidence that we are loved, we are accepted, we are clean because of Christ.
- Take a second to contemplate that and we'll partake together.
- On the night...
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