

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon title: Christ Brought New Life to a Mundane World, Hebrews 10:1-18

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INTRODUCTION: Two weeks ago, I talked about the crucifixion. I talked about how it happened before the foundation of the earth and how it happened in human time 2,000 years ago. In the last two weeks, I preached this message at another church, and after the service, I sat on the front row while someone gave announcements. A man came and sat next to me. He said I confused some people because it sounded like I was preaching about two crucifixions. He wanted me to stand up and clarify what I said. I looked at another man sitting next to me and asked him if he understood what I said, and he said yes. He told me the man who spoke to me was easily confused. He understood there was only one crucifixion and the one that happened before the earth was created and the one that happened 2,000 years ago were one and the same. I decided I had been true to the scriptures and did not go back to the pulpit to clarify anything.

Sometimes the truth of the Bible may confuse us. We have this rational mind that thinks in chronological time and order. If we are confused by scripture, then we need ask for the Holy Spirit to open our minds and help us understand. We also need to fully understand the way God works is completely outside and above the way man works. I believe so many people have this image of God, like old Father Time with a long beard, sitting in a chair rocking back and forth, listening to a clock tick.

And, sometimes the truth of the Bible may anger us. Through the years, I've had a few people tell me they didn't like a particular sermon. That's OK. I've heard sermons I didn't care for. I've been known to fall asleep at time or two during a boring sermon. In fact, I've told Susan to wake me up when it was over or to nudge me if I started snoring. I heard of a man one once who fell asleep every Sunday, and one Sunday the pastor said, "Isn't that right, Brother _____?" And, then a startled man stood and said the closing prayer.

Being bored or falling asleep is one thing, but being angered is another. You know, the scripture is not really here to be our friend. The scripture is not a charm for us to manipulate however we want.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 4:12 says, ¹² *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

We've talked about how much of the Old Testament was a shadow of things to come, and Chapter 10 continues that theme. Today, we are looking at three main points:

1. We have a reminder of the limitations of the Law.
2. We have the unlimited work of Christ.
3. Christ does away with the mundane.

First, WE HAVE A REMINDER OF THE LIMITATIONS OF THE LAW.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:1-4 ¹*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.* ²*Otherwise, 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.* ³*But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.* ⁴*It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*

EXPLANATION: Each time a person sinned, an animal sacrifice was needed. That was pretty costly when you think about it. And, as I've taught you, there was the Day of Atonement, a special day of sacrifice to cover sins which had been forgotten and to restore the entire nation as a whole.

But, as the scripture said, the sacrifices didn't really forgive sins. They just put them off until another time. If they had truly forgiven sins, then it would not have been necessary to do it over and over again.

The word "perfect" in verse 1 means "complete." The people were never "complete" with the Old Testament sacrifices.

Now, I want to put an image in your mind in order to introduce the next scripture. When the sacrificial system was instituted, it had deep meaning. It meant there was a way to forgiveness, a way where a person's sins could be rolled forward to another day, to be paid for by a Messiah someday.

ILLUSTRATION: New things are always interesting and exciting to us. How many of you were excited about your new car until after a few months of making payments. I knew a family who bought a house they could not afford. As soon as they moved in, they had people come to see their home, but they struggled to make their first house payment.

And, how many times has something new been exciting to us until something else takes its place?

EXPLANATION: Now, imagine this...after years and years of sacrifices, many people became immune to its meaning. To them, it was just another hum-drum day of sacrifices. Ok, we've sinned, so we must go to the priest and have a sacrifice because the Law requires it. Ho-hum...yawn...someday a Messiah will come and set us free of all this. But, aren't we proud of ourselves for following the rules.

So, first we have the reminder of the limitations of the law, then—

Second, WE HAVE THE UNLIMITED WORK OF CHRIST.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:5-10 ⁵ *Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me;"* ⁶ *with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.*

⁷ *Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.'* ⁸ *First he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them"—though they were offered in accordance with the law.* ⁹ *Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will."* *He sets aside the first to establish the second.* ¹⁰ *And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

EXPLANATION: Jesus' desire to do the will of God settled the matter forever. And, as a follower of Jesus Christ, we are called to a life of obedience. Why? Because of what he has done for us!

The sacrificial system was not intended to create an industry of raising animals as sacrifices. And, you know, that's what happened. In the New Testament, when Jesus entered the temple, the animal sacrifice industry was corrupt, and Jesus ran these people out of the temple. An industry was created around raising animals as sacrifices.

“Ok, let's get forgiven of our sins. Let's go buy an animal and take it to the priest. It doesn't matter if it's lame.” The people had become so detached from the ceremony it no longer meant anything to them. They just went through the motions. The people said, “We are just following the Law.” The Law to them had become merely a checklist.

I asked Terry to sing that famous Keith Green song, *To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice*, because of its significance with this passage of scripture.

The purpose of the Law was to encourage people to obey God rather than sin.

Think about it. If a person sinned less, then they would have sacrificed less.

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION: In a discussion with King Saul, Samuel said, *“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams”* (I Samuel 15:22).

Seeking forgiveness from God is good, but obeying him from the beginning is better!

APPLICATION: Let me put a contemporary spin on this. You are completely wrong if you feel you are satisfying God by checking off your mental list that you have entered the building on Sundays and Wednesdays. If you feel you are satisfying God just by going through the motions and there is no meaning to you of any of this, you are as guilty as those Old Testament people who thought God was satisfied merely because they kept the letter of the Law.

So, first we have:

- The reminder of the limitations of the law,
- Second, we have the unlimited work of Christ, and—

Third, CHRIST DOES AWAY WITH THE MUNDANE.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:11-18 ¹¹ *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. ¹² But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. ¹⁴ For by one sacrifice he has made perfect [which means “complete”] forever those who are being made holy.*

¹⁵ *The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: ¹⁶ “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.” ¹⁷ Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.*

EXPLANATION: Jesus died one time, on one cross, as the one time sacrifice for sin.

ILLUSTRATION: This week, I saw in the news where a man was executed for crimes committed many years ago. Through the years, his lawyers filed extensions, and his execution was put off until there was simply nothing more to argue.

FURTHER EXPLANATION: Let’s look at this from a spiritual perspective. If we could look over a vast amount of time, we would see a people going to the priest and participating in an animal sacrifice, rolling their sins forward until forgiveness at another time. We would see this for generations. Each time, we’d see a people really hoping that someday this Messiah would really come. If we were looking over this world timeline, we’d see Jesus enter the world. Let’s suppose Jesus never died on the cross. If not, then those people would be just like the criminal whose time had run out. Their sins were rolled forward, and their deaths were put off until there was a price to be paid— with no Savior to pay the price.

But, Jesus died on the cross and instead of facing an eternity without forgiveness. Now, those Old Testament people were pardoned.

It’s the same for us. Our sins are taken back to that cross, and through the cross on Calvary, we are pardoned.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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