

# Perfect and Forgiven

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]      Enough of the shenanigans. Again, my name is Jesse. Good morning. All those guys and gals that can't be here, maybe because they're sick or they're on deployment, such a privilege that we get to be a church serving in a Marine town and where Navy guys are as well.

And I'm glad that you guys are listening and able to listen online. We are continuing in our Hebrew series. Let me just say, before we get into it, last week, I read a very long passage without warning you all, right?

I could see it on your faces when I got to verse 17. You guys were like, is this guy going to keep on going until he hits the end of the whole Bible? Anyway, sorry about that. I should have given us some warning.

So here's my warning for today. We are covering another long passage. We're going to be in Hebrews 10, but we're reading 18 verses, not 20. I think we covered 28 last time. So it's not as long as last week.

So let's get right to it in verse 1 of Hebrews 10. For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come, instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

[ 1 : 1 2 ]      Otherwise, they would not have ceased to be offered since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year, for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

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. When he said above, You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings, these 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. And by that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

And every priest stands daily at his office, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

[ 2 : 3 7 ]      For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us.

For after saying, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds. After he said that, then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. This is God's word. So, I don't know if you guys remember, maybe you weren't here, but anyways, a few weeks back, we touched on our longing for things to be made perfect, right?

We live in a broken world. We live in a place where we realize things aren't as they ought to be. And so, we have this innate desire to want to see this world fixed and made right.

And we put our hope in those things that, you know, we can do it. But there isn't just a quest for us to change the world. That quest for perfection that we're looking for, that's also personal.

[ 3 : 50 ] Like, we long to be better than we are. And this quest for perfection is as old as time. This is what we've been doing since Adam and Eve first sinned.

We've realized, like, man, we know we aren't who we should be. And so, we've been trying to figure out how to make that right. And so, one of the ways they did that thousands of years ago was in the law, which it says in verse 1 was but of a shadow of good things to come.

But it said that, man, they made these sacrifices with bulls and goats, and they offered them continually, but it couldn't make perfect those who draw near.

Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins. But in these sacrifices, the very act of having to make a sacrifice is a reminder of sins every single year, for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Now, there's a lot here. And let me just say that it's a little more difficult for us to connect with this because we don't worship the same way. We don't pursue perfection the same way they did back then.

[ 5 : 04 ] We're not going out and offering sacrifices of bulls and goats anymore. But, man, we do try to figure out how to make ourselves better, how to make ourselves perfect, right? We spend money on motivational speakers and spiritual guides and psychologists.

We buy the latest guru's books and pay for sessions to hear people's wisdom on how to improve ourselves, right? But here's the thing. We never stop doing that.

I mean, there's going to be another book written on how to improve yourself. Probably there will be hundreds of them this year. If you go and you, like, do a search on Amazon, I'm sure, guaranteed you'll find tens of thousands of titles of books in that genre.

So what's the issue? Is it simply that we just haven't stumbled onto the right wisdom? Like the right person hasn't figured out the right understanding of things that kind of cracks the code of why we're so broken and messed up?

That, man, once they get it, he can give us all that information and we can just follow that and get fixed? Or is it like just finding the right program? Maybe somebody could build this perfect program that we can just fit our lives into and then, voila, we come out just like perfect people?

[ 6 : 19 ] Or is it just like figuring out what are the right principles for life we need to live by, you know? Is it eight rules or 12 rules or 20 rules or like what are these, what are we looking for?

What do we need? But then there's another thing of like, okay, don't try to fix yourself. You're not the problem. Actually, you know what the real problem is?

The problem isn't inside you. It's out there. That's another prevailing narrative we have in our day and age. You're okay. What's keeping you from reaching your full potential is everything outside of you.

And so your purpose is now to overcome those things and figure out what they are so you could shed them and cut them off and get them out of your life. But these verses that we've read are saying something very different to us.

It's saying the real issue isn't outside of us. The real issue is inside of us. It's our sin. Now, when we think about sin, the essence of sin is just not measuring up. It's not hitting the mark.

[ 7 : 21 ] And everyone, everywhere, feels this deep inside of them. Like there's this thing, this nagging sense of, I know I'm not who I should be.

I've done things that I will regret for the rest of my life. And no matter how good we try to be or how much we try to escape this feeling, man, it still haunts us.

And for many of us, we probably live haunted by our past, right? Those thoughts, those emotions that bubble up from time to time of shame and guilt and regret. That's what verse 2 is calling a consciousness of sins.

And the point here isn't just remembering the mistakes you've made. It's not just that kind of awareness, oh, yeah, I blew it. It's actually the awareness that these sins are being held against you.

That's a different kind of weight to carry. Here's an example. So let's say I kind of like recall a spat with my wife Haley we had years ago.

[ 8 : 21 ] But it's something, you know, we've already worked through. We have repented to each other. We've forgiven each other. We're on the other side of it. So that memory of that moment isn't heavy on my soul anymore, right?

That sin isn't being held against me. But what about the sin I'm hiding from her right now, right? Or the ones that she hasn't forgiven yet?

Man, I'm still under the weight of that unforgiven sin. I would be. And that's a heavy burden to bear. And here's the thing. There's nothing in my power to get out from under that.

I don't have like a men in black eraser stick where I'm just, Haley, look into this for a second. Yeah, sweet. You forgot everything I did that was wrong. It doesn't work that way. The solution isn't to have our sins forgotten.

And this passage of Hebrews is telling us an important truth. Sin can't be forgotten, but they can be forgiven. And forgiveness, guys, forgiveness is a powerful, powerful thing.

[ 9 : 21 ] It means that what you've done is not held against you anymore. So we might ask ourselves, well, if it's just about forgiveness, then why don't I just forgive myself? Boom, it's done.

So every time I make a mistake or offend someone, I'm just like, step into it. Now, just forgive yourself. Cool, you're okay. And wouldn't that be a lot easier than waiting for others to forgive us?

And actually, this is kind of prevailing wisdom out there. Like we're told all the time, you know what your biggest issue is? Man, you just haven't forgiven yourself yet. You need to forgive yourself.

But deep down, as good as that sounds, deep down, we know that really doesn't work. So there's this scene in the show Breaking Bad that gets to the heart of this.

And so I'm like, I'm really conflicted about using a scene from Breaking Bad as a preacher. I'm just like, is this an okay thing to do? But anyways, here we go. Because I think it explains this very well. So in that show, there's this character, Jesse.

[ 10 : 17 ] No relation, just a different guy. This character, Jesse, he's a drug dealer. And like before, he was just kind of small time. But then he gets caught up. He gets caught up in like this big thing and connected to the mafia and stuff.

And I mean, he's in it, right? And he gets to this point where it's like he has to kill a guy. And that is not who he is. He's just like, man, I was just hoping to make some money on the side slinging drugs.

And now he's like, kill the guy. And his soul is tormented. He's like, oh my gosh, I can't believe I did that. I don't know what to do. He feels guilt. There is like darkness on him.

And so he just gets out of Dodge and he goes and he spends some money and gets into like real expensive therapy. And so they're sitting around in this group therapy session.

And the therapist is kind of like trying to figure out his story and why he's here. And so he says, okay, okay, let me explain it this way. And he said, man, I had this dog, but it was a problem dog.

[ 11 : 18 ] And I had to put it down. And so all the people in the group, oh, so was the dog like biting people? And no. Oh, was the dog like really sick and suffering?

So you had to put him? No. I just had to put him down. And he's like, that's what I'm suffering with. I just can't forgive myself for doing that. And the therapist says like, oh, man, you have to forgive yourself.

You can't change the past. Stop punishing yourself. It's not going to change anything. But the group members are sitting around going like, man, this guy's jacked up. He just killed a dog for no reason.

Like an innocent dog. And they're like, man, that wasn't okay. I mean, they're verbalizing this in the group session. Like what you did was bad. And the group therapist tries to jump in and save the situation and tell everyone, whoa, whoa, whoa, guys, we're not here to judge.

Don't judge him, you know. And then Jesse at this point kind of just explodes emotionally. He's like, why not? Why not? Am I just supposed to accept myself and forgive myself no matter how many dogs I put down?

[ 12 : 24 ] That makes no sense. And that's what this scene does. It exposes this flimsy notion that we can forgive ourselves because our souls don't allow us to do that.

Because even after we do forgive ourselves, we don't feel forgiven. And the reason we don't feel forgiven is because we aren't. See, in that episode of Breaking Bad, the group therapist actually has a partial truth.

Punishing yourself for your sins accomplishes nothing. That gets you nowhere. That's right. Trying to pay for our sins is a pointless exercise. But so is trying to forgive our own sins.

Because who forgives, who forgives us is the most important part of being forgiven. See, it's not just our awareness of sin that's the problem. It's God's awareness that matters most.

There is nothing we can do that will cause God to ignore our sin. And that is what is at the heart of the gospel. God forgives by acknowledging our sin and punishing our sin.

[ 13 : 29 ] And that's what this writer in Hebrews is getting at in verse 17 and 18. He says, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.

And where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering or punishment for sin. Now, the implication here isn't that God is simply going to force amnesia on himself with regards to our sin, right?

He's not wiping his memory clean and saying like, oh, I have no way to like recall that anymore. But there is only one way God can stop remembering, which is holding our sin against us.

And that is after his justice for that sin has been satisfied. And that only comes through the penalty for sin being paid. And so, when we step into that understanding, when we recognize that God has paid for that sin and punished that sin on his son, Jesus Christ, then when the accuser comes and brings up the past and says, oh, remember Jesse did this and that and that?

God looks at it and says, no, paid in full. Can't hold it against him, paid in full. That's what it means how God doesn't remember our sins anymore. He doesn't hold it against us anymore, right?

[ 14 : 47 ] But back then, the sacrificial system was all about God making a way to punish those sins. But those sacrifices, they weren't perfect.

They weren't complete. They had to keep being offered because people kept on sinning. So, here's the question for us. How could God make such a statement that he will stop remembering our sins?

Well, like I said, he offered himself. Jesus was the better sacrifice. In verse 12, That's a rich verse right there.

It says that by his single offering of himself, he has perfected us for all time. That should sound crazy to you and me.

It's probably a little hard to believe, right? And you're not the only one. We really struggle with this idea, right? How can you and I be perfect in God's eyes right now?

[ 16 : 06 ] It's not because of anything we've done. It's because of the sacrifice Jesus made. It was perfect, which means it was complete. It was final. It didn't leave anything else undone.

So, as far as our forgiveness goes, there is nothing we have to do in addition to what Jesus did. I just want to say, especially for those of us young in the faith or you guys that are just still trying to figure out the faith, I wish somebody would have told me this early on in my life.

Because when I was saved, my understanding was, okay, when I said, yeah, Jesus, I believe in you, save me first time, my understanding was all those sins up to that point were put on Jesus on the cross and then done away with.

But then every new sin I was stepping into in my life wasn't dealt with. So I'm like, oh, shoot, man, do I have to get saved again? But the Bible is telling us that all of our sins were put on Jesus.

All your sins, past, present, future, all of that were put on the cross, on Jesus, on that one time, and they were all punished. And what that should do is that gives you confidence as you look back. You say, uh, paid in full.

[ 17 : 19 ] And it also gives you confidence moving forward because it's not like we're trying to sin, but sometimes, you know, we slip and stub our toe and swear. Like that's our worst sin, I'm sure, right?

But as we move forward, and even when we do sin, we have this confidence knowing that, no, no, Jesus, that sin was also put on Jesus. And the next day, and the next day, and the next day, and so we can step in to that forgiveness.

And what that does, man, for all time, that settles the question for perfection for us. In Jesus' sacrifice, we are forgiven for all time, for all time.

Not some of the time, all time. Not the past, all time. Which means we've been made perfect. We can't add anything to that. But here's the other part of that.

It doesn't mean God's done working on us. At the end of that verse 14, right, it starts out with saying like he's perfected us for all time, but then it says, those who are being sanctified.

[ 18 : 19 ] Who are being sanctified. So, just after he said he's made us perfect, then he goes on to say we are being sanctified. It's an ongoing, ever-present tense thing that's happening to us.

Moment by moment, day by day. Which means this, God's forgiveness makes you perfect and keeps changing you too. So, let me try to explain it this way.

There's two words happening in these verses. And they're really interesting words, and I think the author is being very clever here and playing them off of each other. So, the first word that's translated into make perfect is the verb form of the Greek word telos.

Okay, hang in there. I'm not getting super geeky here, all right? But it's good to understand what this word means because telos meant it was this idea of your highest goal or your aim or purpose.

Whatever you were as a creature, you were created to be something, right? That's what that Greek word was understanding. And so, to be what you were created to be and to fulfill that perfectly was to reach your telos, to reach your highest aim and highest goal.

[ 19 : 27 ] Let me try to make it a little more relevant for us, okay? A watchmaker creates a watch. That watch's telos is this, to give the time and to give time accurately.

When it's doing that, it's achieving its telos. Now, if you were to take that watch and then attempt to use it as a hammer, what you are doing is not using it according to its telos, right?

That watch is going to really disappoint you as a hammer. It's going to do really well keeping time, but as a hammer, it's really going to stink. And what this author in Hebrews is telling us is to know and reach your telos means to be what you were created for.

So, basically, through Jesus' sacrifice, we've been telos'd, like verb, action. Like, that's what Christ has done to us. He's made us perfect. God has brought us back into our highest goal, our highest aim, and our highest purpose.

And while sin is the breaking of telos, forgiveness brings us back into it. It's a beautiful thing. But then there's this second word that's translated here, and that's being sanctified, which means to be set apart to God for His purpose.

[ 20 : 48 ] That word sanctification is kind of a, in the Hebrew, it also meant consecration as well. And so, when, you know, when God made the temple and He called His people out, there was a time of consecration.

So, everything that was in the temple was consecrated or set apart to be holy. So, if you were a fork that was used in the temple, you couldn't be used to do anything else.

Your job, as that fork, consecrated for temple use, was to do exactly what you're supposed to do in the temple for one thing and one thing only, and that was it. That's the idea we're getting at here of being sanctified, which is, funny enough, a very similar idea to that telos thing we've been talking about.

Because is there any higher aim that God has for us from creation than for us to be set apart for His holy purpose? See, the preacher is bringing us into this beautiful, powerful picture of forgiveness.

We've been definitively, completely, perfectly set apart to God for His purpose. And now, in one sense, it's a one-time work accomplished through Jesus' will.

[ 22 : 01 ] As it says in verse 9 and 10, Behold, I have come to do your will, and by that will have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

So, also, we are experiencing, in addition to that, this ongoing work of being set apart for God's purpose. And this is a daily transformation that happens.

It's the work, ongoing work of sanctification, which is the changing of our will into God's will. Like, the wills that we have in our lives that oppose God's will.

God is slowly working that out and changing us more and more. So, to be saved means a lifetime of becoming more like Jesus. And that means a lot of changes, right?

That means a lot of changes. And an obvious one from this passage is that, you know what? God's forgiveness teaches us how to forgive. Like, we, as we are being transformed, as we are being changed to be more like Jesus, we become more forgiving because that's what He's like.

[ 23 : 09 ] And here's the thing. God takes it very seriously whether or not we forgive. When Jesus taught us to pray, one of the lines is, forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Like, He wants us to see, like, man, forgiveness is important. Not just that God, we ask God to forgive us, but that we forgive others. And in case we miss the importance of this, a few verses down, Jesus says this in Matthew 6, 14.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Now, that sounds brutal. We think like, whoa, whoa, whoa, that seems very anti-gospel, very anti-grace. God's like, He always forgives my sins no matter what. What is up with this thing?

But what Jesus is teaching us here is that when we choose the path of unforgiveness, when we choose not to forgive, we are disagreeing with God.

[ 24 : 14 ] So if God forgave sin once for all through Jesus, who are you and I to know which sins He put on Jesus and which He didn't? And if we refuse to forgive people, there is a very likely chance that you and I are standing in opposition to God.

And if it's another Christian, there is a 100% chance that you are. And who are you and I to oppose God? And yet, when we don't forgive, that is exactly what we are doing.

Now, for many of us, we might have an objection. I was like, whoa, whoa, wait, what about this scenario? What if the person hasn't repented? Like, do I still have to forgive them?

Well, the answer to that is actually yes. You should forgive them in your heart before they even have to repent. But, and this is a very important qualifier here, they can't experience your forgiveness until they come and repent.

See, let me use my sons as an example. So, we have this thing, if they've disobeyed us, right? They need to come and they need to say, look us in the eyes and say, I am sorry for sinning against you this way.

[ 25 : 33 ] Will you please forgive me? And then we say, yes. Man, I forgive you. And there's restoration and there's hugs and there's all that good stuff. They get to it. What they're doing in that moment is they're stepping into our forgiveness.

I've forgiven them in my heart already. But until they repent, until they come to me in repentance, they're not experiencing my forgiveness over them. See the difference there? And the same thing happens with us and God.

When we come and repent, we are stepping into his forgiveness for our sins. We are experiencing that same thing. And yet, if we refuse, we are choosing to live outside of it.

If we refuse to repent and come to him, we are choosing not to step into his forgiveness. Now, another kind of difficult situation is sometimes people sin against us and don't know it.

And that means they just never come and repent. Like, who's going to repent for a sin they're not aware of that they committed, right? But, you know, there's sometimes in those scenarios we have to consider, well, what really happened?

[ 26 : 44 ] Was it a really small offense? Because not every offense that we pick up is really a sin against us. Sometimes it's just an offense that we need to overlook, the small little things.

And Proverbs 17.9 actually tells us to do that. Man, it's good to overlook an offense. But then there's sometimes where the offense is really serious and we're hurt and we're wounded by that.

And so, if that person is unaware that that's happened, then we need to go and tell them and make them aware of that sin that they committed. So they have an opportunity to repent and step into forgiveness.

Now, seems like a lot of work, right? All this forgiveness stuff seems like a lot of work. Well, it is, but it's worth it.

Because our relationship with God and our relationship with people are worth it. Because here's the thing, forgiveness sustains and deepens relationships. Our relationship with God starts with forgiveness.

[ 27 : 43 ] His forgiveness over our sin, our repentance to Him. And it continues in that same vein. We never stop repenting. He never stops forgiving us. But the same is true with our relationships with people.

You want a great marriage? You have to learn forgiveness. You have to practice forgiveness. You want long-lasting friendships? You have to learn forgiveness and you have to practice forgiveness.

Because here's the thing, we will sin against God and others, and others will sin against us. And here's the thing, guys, without forgiveness, every relationship is doomed to fail.

I was listening to a guy, Brad Hambrick. He's a counselor, a Christian counselor, and he was talking about marriage. And he said, you know, before, long before couples stop saying, I love you, they stop saying, please forgive me.

There is just a power and a necessity of what forgiveness means for our relationships. Where there is no forgiveness in relationships, it is doomed to fail.

[ 28 : 54 ] But on the other side, guys, let me tell you this. Having lived this out personally and having witnessed other Christian brothers and sisters give each other forgiveness and grace, it is one of the most beautiful things to be a part of and witness.

It doesn't make me want to love those people less. It actually deepens my respect and my love for them even more when I see that. And here's the thing.

Something powerful happens in that moment when we choose to forgive. Because what we are doing is we are tapping into and agreeing with the heart of the Father.

We are tapping into the divine grace and mercy of heaven. And it flows. We're welcoming it into that place. And God's, his presence flows into those places.

You could feel it. It's a beautiful thing. And we all want to experience more of God's presence in our lives. And here's the thing, guys. His presence flows to where forgiveness thrives.

[ 30 : 01 ] And so I want to encourage us. Man, let's be a church. Let's be believers, Christians that are so good at learning to forgive and practice forgiveness.

Because here's the reality. God's forgiven us this much. And he calls us to forgive people this much. We can do it. We can do it.

As the band comes up, how is God calling us to respond? So if you're here, you wouldn't call yourself a Christian yet.

Man, I want to say to you today, God is offering you his forgiveness right now. And he is saying, come, son or daughter, step into my forgiveness for you.

And what that means is you come and you repent of your sin. You acknowledge your sin before him. And you say, Lord, I have sinned against you, but I believe. I believe that my sin has been put on Jesus.



[ 31 : 05 ] It's been punished on him on the cross. The Bible says if you do that, you will be saved. And salvation is stepping into the forgiveness of God. And that is what is being offered to you today.

Man, do not leave without stepping into that amazing forgiveness. If you're here and you're a Christian, I want us to do this.

Before we take communion, I want us to examine our hearts right now. Is there any unforgiveness in your heart? Is there anyone or anything you need to repent to?

God, go and I want to encourage us, go and make that right. Even if it's today sometime, man, go and make that right. Because we need to stop opposing God.

Step into his forgiveness for yourself and his forgiveness for others. So right now, let's close our eyes. Let's take a few moments to just pray. Do business with God before we take communion.

[ 32 : 21 ] Let's pray.

Father, it's amazing to know your heart of forgiveness for us. But teach us, Lord. Teach us more about your forgiveness.

May it become a bigger reality in our own lives that we realize the beauty of stepping into your forgiveness for us. And help us to be good at forgiving others.

Pray that in your name. Amen. As we take communion, we're reminded of Jesus' body that was broken, his blood that was shed for our forgiveness.

And, you know, as we do this, I want us to recognize the fact, too, that we're not saved into me and Jesus and no one else. We're saved into a relationship with Jesus and to a relationship with God's people.

[ 33 : 54 ] Right? And as much as we need his forgiveness for ourselves, that forgiveness has to flow horizontally toward one another. Right? And this is our bonds of peace.

This is what tells us, man, you must forgive and you can forgive. Because every sin that you've committed, every sin I've committed, has been paid for.

Paid in full. We're not the accusers of the brethren. We get to stand with Jesus and amen the fact that it was paid in full.

Our resumes in heaven look like that. Isn't that amazing? So let's take this with great thankfulness together as the body of Christ.