

Hebrews

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[0 : 0 0] Here is our quote of the day, and it comes from the pen of C.S. Lewis. It is pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began.

In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. As long as you are proud, you cannot know God.

A proud man is always looking down on things and people. And of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.

And Henry David Thoreau said, as you simplify your life, the laws of the universe will be simpler. Solitude will not be solitude. Poverty will not be poverty, nor weakness weakness.

Simplified lives. And today is a day and age when lives are probably more complex and complicated and often unenjoyed more than any other. So, good words of advice.

[1 : 0 7] We are in Hebrews chapter 10. And if you will note from the page that you have, which is 1086 and 87 down in the corner, we see that the writer is continuing to contrast the Lord Jesus with the priest who existed throughout the tenure of the Mosaic priesthood.

And by way of contrast, in verse 12, he says, but this man, speaking of course of our Lord Jesus, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God.

This is Hebrews 10. This is Hebrews 10.12. And the reason he did, of course, was because his job was finished. He sat down. And the point has been made that in the tabernacle, as well as in the temple, when it was permanent structure built later, all of the items of furniture in the temple and in the tabernacle were for ministry service, but there were no chairs there.

No seats. No place for the high priest or the other priest to sit down. And the reason is simple. Because their task was never completed. And the contrast is that of the Lord Jesus, that when he had offered himself as a sacrifice for sins forever, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, implying, of course, that the task was completed.

And he took his seat beside his father. And from henceforth, verse 13, till his enemies be made his footstool. And that, too, is from an Old Testament reference in the Psalms, where the father is speaking to the son, and he invites him to take a seat by his side, until I make your enemies your footstool.

[3 : 1 2] And, of course, the footstool depicts the idea of suppression, and that the one who has their feet on the footstool has control of the situation, and the footstool and everything under it is at the service of the one who is in charge.

And that, of course, will be Christ. So, we read that by one offering, verse 14, he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, that is, those who are set apart.

And this perfection forever is a done thing. It is over and finished and complete. There is nothing else of the transaction that needs to be cared for.

It is as complete as it can possibly be. And that's the meaning of the idea that he hath perfected forever. Some other translations render that. William says, For by that one sacrifice he has made perfect for all time.

Basic English says, Because by one offering he has made complete forever. And qualified to approach God. Goodspeed renders it. The Amplified says he has forever completely cleansed and perfected them that are sanctified.

[4 : 31] That refers to the official position that you enjoy in Christ, and it has nothing to do with your practice or your behavior.

It has everything to do with your position. And if you are in Christ, you are complete in him, as Paul wrote to the Colossians. That means you lack nothing that God could possibly expect from you, because Christ has become your complete, entire Savior, and he has saved you to the uttermost.

And that means not a speck of anything left to be done. That is your official capacity before the Lord. And it is, of course, all on the basis of grace.

Nothing about that position is something you have coming. Nothing about that position is anything you have deserved or earned. It is provided as a gift.

And what can we say? Just praise be unto God. That is, that is, that is, and that, that aspect, guys, that grace gift of salvation is the principal thing that separates biblical Christianity from every other belief system in the world.

[5 : 53] None of them, absolutely none of them, whether they are large or small, operate on the basis of grace. They are all committed to the idea of human merit and human desert.

And, of course, none of them can tell you how much is enough. How good do you have to be? How few sins do you have to commit? How many can you get away with?

None of them have any answers to those questions. And biblical Christianity, with Jesus Christ at the helm, comes in and wipes the whole slate clean and leaves you absolutely spotless.

Sins cleansed as white as snow. That is your position. We are as accepted before God as is Jesus Christ himself, because we possess his righteousness, not ours.

And, again, I want to emphasize this is our position. It's not our practice. In our practice, we all fall short. We all have the capacity and the ability to sin.

[7 : 00] We all have the ability to do stupid, sinful things. That does not impact our position, because that is what Christ accomplished. So, we have much room for improvement in our behavior, in our walk with the Lord, in our maturity, and in our development.

But your position cannot be improved upon. And, really, all spiritual growth, all spiritual growth is about nothing more than making your practice come closer and closer to your position.

None of us have to worry about arriving. As I've often said, nobody has ever mistaken me for Jesus Christ yet. Don't expect anyone to, because we are all in process.

Every one of us is under construction. So, we have room to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. But you do not grow in your position, because it's fixed.

Roger? I was in an office with my wife last week, I guess it was, and I picked up the National Geographic. And they had an article on the different people around the world that say that Jesus Christ.

[8 : 11] The guy in Africa, and everywhere. I mean, it's just amazing. Yeah. And then the people who thank God have said, you're the one. Yeah. Yeah. Amen. They're not reading the Bible.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Any other thoughts or comments before we move on to this position thing? This is really important. And, by the way, guys, it ought to be obvious that it is the awareness and the assurance of the position that you have that alone provides the basis for stability, for security, for serenity, for contentment, knowing that, have I done enough?

Well, no, you haven't done enough. But you don't have to do enough, and you can't do enough. Your position is in Christ. And that's what provides the anchor of the soul.

It is what God has done for you in Christ, not what you have done for God. What you have done for God is simply a consequence or a result out of gratitude for what He's done for you.

But it is in no way payment. It is just an expression of thankfulness and gratitude. So, let's move on. Verse 15.

[9 : 28] Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us, for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them.

After those days, saith the Lord. Let's turn now to our new sheet, which would be page 1088. Continuation of that.

That's a new sheet, by the way. This is the covenant that I will make with them. And who are the them?

Well, it's not the Christian church. It's those to whom this whole epistle is addressed. It is the Jewish nation. Covenant that I will make with them.

After those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their hearts. And in their minds will I write them.

[10 : 43] Mixed up on my pages here. I've got to get back to my old numbering system. 1088. 1088. 1088. 1088. Yeah. Upper left hand. Yeah.

Okay. I will put my laws into their hearts. And in their minds will I write them. And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

And this boldness, by the way, is the exact opposite of timidity or lack of assurance. We can go before him with boldness.

The word is, the idea is confidence. We don't go before him quaking and quivering and in fear, but we go before him with boldness. And the principle, of course, is the same for believers today as it was for them because this is one of those cross dispensational truths.

[11 : 52] And then verse 20, by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.

You recall the veil in the temple that was torn from top to bottom. That veil, that curtain that separated the holy place from the most holy place, meant that it constituted a barrier.

And beyond that curtain, only the high priest could go once a year, not without blood, or to atone for his sins and for the sins of the people. And that was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

It was a process that went on year after year after year. And when God tore that temple, curtain, from top to bottom, that was during the earthquake.

And when Christ was on the cross and said, it is finished, we read in three of the Gospels, I believe it is, the Synoptics, that the veil was torn in top from the top to the bottom. And that was a very graphic way, as much as God saying, I'm done with this.

[13 : 08] And a new veil, a new veil has taken the place of that old curtain. The new veil is the body of Christ. Which means, we now come to God, because on the other side of that veil, that's where the Ark of the Covenant was.

That's where God said he would meet with his people. And now, with the veil torn, the way of access is open, and Christ himself, figuratively speaking, his body, has become the veil.

And now the idea is, you come to God through Christ. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

There's one God, and one mediator, between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. So he himself, in his person, becomes the new and living way.

And this is precisely what Christ was referring to, when he talked about the cup that he was going to drink, and the bread that he was going to eat and partake of, represented his body, his flesh, and his blood.

[14 : 17] And, verse 21, And having a high priest, over the house of God, let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled, from an evil conscience.

And some translate that, Coney Bear says, As our hearts have been sprinkled with the stain of an evil conscience. Sprinkled clean, Moffat renders it, from a bad conscience.

This has the idea of the removal of guilt. No believer has any justification for living under a shadow of guilt.

The basis for removal of guilt is forgiveness. And when we come to him, in confession and admission of our sin, and of our guilt, we repent of our sin.

That means, we don't justify it, we don't explain it, we admit it. We confess it. We acknowledge it. And, in doing that, we are cleansed of our sin.

[15 : 34] And that cleansing removes guilt. It does not, as I've often said in the past, it does not remove consequences that come from our sinful actions.

But it does mean that we no longer have to bear the guilt for it. And guilt, guilt is emotional pain that we feel when we know we have done wrong.

And in admitting that we have done wrong, that is a huge breakthrough. Because so often we want to deny it, excuse it, justify it, explain it, or something else. But, like the old songwriter says, It's not my brother, not my sister, but it's me, oh Lord.

It's standing in the need of prayer. We acknowledge it. And when we do, we confess our sin. And he is faithful. He is reliable. He is dependable. To forgive us our sin.

And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That becomes the basis for the removal of guilt. And it also becomes the basis for peace with God.

[16 : 37] Because we know we have been forgiven. Do you deserve to be forgiven? Of course not. We don't deserve anything. But the forgiveness is on the basis of grace too.

Forgiveness is available because Christ has paid the price for it. So it's a beautiful, beautiful concept. So, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

On the basis of everything that has gone before, we have every reason to hold fast, to be steady with it, without wavering. Maintain the confession of our hope unshaken.

This, again, provides that rock solid kind of stability. The assurance that allows us to keep on keeping on and with good reason. For he, verse 23, For he is faithful that promise.

God would not know how to go about breaking a promise. He would not know how to go about lying. He is the faithful God who is in every respect to be believed.

[17 : 40] And, verse 24, Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another.

This is a principle that, by the way, is, again, cross-dispensational. I trust you guys understand what we're talking about here, with things that are spoken of and are true, as they are directed to the Hebrews, to the audience on the receiving end of this, and those things that are what I call cross-dispensational.

These are abiding spiritual principles, and they are valid in every dispensation and every administration, and it doesn't make any difference when it is. Like the faithfulness of God.

Is that just for Jews? Well, of course not. That's for humanity. God is the faithful God, and He's faithful in every venue. So, there are things that apply to every dispensation, and this is one of them.

The principle of community in the body. We are designed by God to need each other.

[18 : 54] And we ought not to have this lone ranger mentality, I don't need anybody or anything. Well, some people may feel that way. They may feel utterly self-sufficient, but I can promise you this, that is a totally unbiblical way to look at yourself and to look at life, because God has built in us a sense and a need of community.

We need to be available to each other. And the idea of being a Christian hermit is about as unscriptural as anything can be, because, as one of the Proverbs talks about, iron sharpens iron.

And it simply conveys the principle that men are made better men by men, by consorting with and fellowshiping with the right kind of people who build you up, who build you up, and who edify you, and who minister to you, and those to whom you can minister.

We are designed to need each other. And you get that in this kind of setting. The Jews had it in the synagogue setting, and they still do. And believers today, in the church age, we are to find this in the local assembly, where we come together, and we provide mutual encouragement, enlightenment, and come alongside and help lift one another's burdens, and we hold each other accountable.

This is a principle that is often lost sight of, particularly in today's culture. But it is a very valid concept. And Paul wrote about this principle in Romans 15, when he said, I am confident that you are able also to confront one another.

[20 : 51] And that means if and when we see a brother doing something that is completely out of line, and just contrary to the biblical values that he supposedly endorses, and it could possibly bring reproach upon that local assembly or on the body, we owe it to them.

We owe it to them. To go to them, not in a condemning, judgmental, critical way, but say, hey, what about this? What's going on here? I saw thus and so, or I heard thus and so, and I'd like some feedback on this.

What's going on? That's just caring for one another. It's not being nosy. It's not being a busy body. It is looking out for one another. And our relationship is supposed to be such that we can do that without resentment, without being offended.

We ought to take comfort in the fact that somebody cares enough about me to call me out on this. And there's nothing wrong with that. Admittedly, it's a lost art, and when and if it is done, it's a very delicate thing to do, and we ought not to go to anybody with a superiority attitude or a condemning attitude, but a caring, compassionate attitude.

Do we love one enough, one another, to hold one another responsible and accountable? You know, we do this in a family situation.

[22 : 21] We say, well, yeah, but a parent to a child, that's a responsibility. You're supposed to hold your children accountable. Yeah, right. And we're also supposed to hold each other accountable.

Like I said, it's a lost art. It is seldom done because the tendency today is to just shrug your shoulders, look the other way, and say, oh, it's none of my business. It's none of my business.

Well, it is your business if they are engaging in some kind of open behavior that brings reproach on the name of that church or on the name of Christ.

You owe it to them to go to them and call them out on it. And like I said, it needs to be done in a nonjudgmental but a compassionate, caring way.

And that's the thing that makes community valuable when you care enough to confront. Any questions or comments about that delicate situation? Dan? I don't know if that's a view or it's hard for me to do stuff like that.

[23 : 22] Well, it's very difficult. Absolutely. Because the tenant, you're right, man. Sure, nobody's saying it's easy. But, you know, and how we usually cop out by not doing something like that?

I say, well, none of us is perfect. And, you know, I need to take care of my own backyard before I go to somebody else. Well, nobody is saying you have to be perfect to do that.

We actually, we are just one sinner confronting another sinner about some kind of open or obvious sin that ought not to be tolerated. And nobody is saying, I'm coming to you and calling you out on this because I am so righteous.

I have no way of, I have no idea how you could do these things because I could never do that. That's a pomposity kind of way of looking at it. Nobody's talking about that at all.

Pat? I think that's how you can tell a really good friend. Even before I was saved when I was in the process of being an alcoholic, a very good friend of mine called me on this and said, you're messing your whole life up.

[24 : 24] Yeah. So, to me, that's when you know you have a really good friend. Thank you. Thank you, brother. That's a point well taken. Does somebody care enough about you to come to you about that and hold you accountable?

I do. Yes? To expand on pets, you are rude. When somebody criticizes me, it's out of love. Always. If they didn't care about me, they wouldn't even bother wishing you were up.

Absolutely. You're right. Absolutely. It's a, actually it's a, it should be a comforting thing to know that people do care about you enough to hold you in check.

And it's a valuable concept. And like I said, it's, it's, it's a lost art today. It's not, not going on much. So, this forsaking, the assembling of ourselves together, uh, do you, do you, do you, do you have to go to church?

No, you don't have to. Can you, can you not go to church and still go to heaven? Oh, of course. Absolutely. But you're missing out on one of the principal blessings that God has provided in that body.

[25 : 29] Yes. And that is the assembling of ourselves together. Yes. And in that corporate setting, there are things that can be accomplished and experienced that are not possible for a lone ranger to, to experience.

That's right. And some, some might look upon this as a sense of, well, that, that actually indicates that, that you have areas of weakness. Exactly.

You think you don't? We all do. We all do. And I remember talking to a group one time and they, they weren't very up on, you know, church people or whatnot.

This was some years ago and I said, I said, a lot of people have this church thing completely wrong. You would be surprised how many people outside the church think, well, as people who are in church every Sunday, they, they, they, they think they've got it all together.

They're the real religious ones and they never do anything wrong and they, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. People in a church setting on a weekly basis who make themselves available to each other are acknowledging they do not have it all together.

[26 : 41] They are just like everybody else and they are seeking to draw some strength and give some strength to those who are there with mutual encouragement and we don't go to church because we've got it all together and there, we're going to go there and show it all.

It's nothing like that. In fact, it's a complete opposite. Those who are in church are people who are willing to acknowledge they are needy and they are not self-sufficient.

It's just the opposite. But, the world again is blinded by that God of this world in 2 Corinthians 4 and they just don't see it that way at all and that's part of the spiritual blindness.

Any other thoughts or comments on this? Yes. Absolutely. Yeah.

There's a real ministry there in that law. Okay. Any other thoughts, guys?

[27 : 50] I think there's a way to do that that packs it out as strength and caring. But, if someone comes up to you and calls you every name in the book, I don't think you're trying to help you.

You know, they're trying to paint it. But, there's a way of living and you get the strength from Jesus Christ to do that because it's one out of love, not out of dislike or anger or anything.

It's one out of complete luck. Yeah. Thank you. Yes, Pat? And don't misunderstand when that happens. Trust me, I didn't like it once. No.

No, no. Absolutely not. He knew I could. Yeah. He knew I could. Yeah. But, did our friendship remind you better? Yeah. Yeah. From the days it ever was.

That's another thing, Pat, that makes us reluctant to go to somebody. Well, they'll get angry. Yeah. You know, they won't appreciate it.

[28 : 55] And that makes us pull back. And we won't do it because of that. And we say, well, they wouldn't listen anyway. And we use these as excuses to cover our lack of responsibility.

And, and you're, you're right. The, the upcoming, upcoming in Hebrews is, now, no chastening is enjoyable for the moment.

No one likes chastening. No one likes to be rebuked. Yeah. But, afterward, it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.

And, that is, that, that principle of divine discipline is something that God has made available and He disciplines us and the word is He chastises us.

He child trains us. It isn't punishment. It's chastisement. It isn't punishment any more than when you rebuke your child or spank a child for behavior.

[30 : 00] You're doing that not because you hate the kid. You're doing it because you love him. And you want him to, to benefit from the correction. That's the whole purpose of correction.

And, and, and the writer of Hebrews says that it is never enjoyable when the correction is in process. Of course not. It hurts.

Painful. Just like a spanking. God takes you to the woodshed. And then He goes on to say, For what son is He whom the Father does not chasten?

If you do not endure chastening, of which all are partakers, then are you bastards and not sons.

God disciplines His own. He doesn't discipline unbelievers. They've got problems enough on their own. But it's the same principle that that when your children are growing up and playing with other kids in the neighborhood and a neighbor kid does something wrong or out of line, it's not your responsibility to discipline him because he's not your kid.

[31 : 12] It's his parents' responsibility. And that's exactly the spiritual principle that the writer of Hebrews is making, that God disciplines, he takes to the woodshed when he needs to, those children of his who need discipline.

And he does it because he loves you. He cares for you. And he's concerned about the way that you take. So, if you do not endure chastening, someone sails through life and says, I didn't get away with anything.

Well, that just proves that you don't have the right parentage because God will not allow you to do that. And sometimes taking to the woodshed isn't even sufficient.

Sometimes the Lord says, hey, that's enough. Come on. Come on home. That's called the sin unto death. And you just remove from the scene.

And there are issues involved with that that probably none of us understand. And sometimes we don't know that that's what's happened. But we can only guess. We don't know. Yeah.

[32 : 14] Sometimes I guess you could even separate a relationship when somebody can question you. If you're mad enough about it or whatever.

you know. Absolutely. relationships are jeopardized by that. And sometimes that's why that's another reason why you know we can come up with all kinds of excuses as to why I am not the one to go to them and talk to them about that.

Somebody else should do it. And we can come up with all kinds of excuses for not doing it. But really that's just a cop out on our part. And what we need to keep in mind and ask ourselves this. If that were me would I appreciate somebody caring enough about me to come to me and call me out?

Yeah, I think so. And none of us is above reproach. Any other thoughts or comments? Well, probably just as well because I think we've run out of content here.

We've got another page on the flip side of this. But thanks you guys for being here this morning. Appreciate your input.