

Hebrews

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Date: 03 December 2016

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[0 : 0 0] If you will look at your scripture sheet, we are on page 2D, and the point that has been made by the writer of Hebrews has to do with setting forth the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is going to be a major theme throughout this entire epistle.

We would remind you that this is one of the earlier documents. It is inconceivable that this could have been written any time after 70 AD, which has to do with the destruction of the Jewish temple, because the writer of Hebrews makes reference so many times to the sacrifices, the service, the temple, the priests, etc.

It is inconceivable that the temple could have been destroyed in 70 AD, and the entire facet of Jewish worship down the tubes, and for the writer of Hebrews never to have mentioned that.

So, I am confident that we can safely dig the epistle to the Hebrews well before 70 AD. And this is still in that time frame when the majority of those who believe in the person of Jesus Christ were not Gentiles, but Jews.

It wasn't until some years after death, burial, and resurrection of Christ that non-Jews actually came to faith.

[1 : 3 1] The earliest believers were Jews. And it would probably not be correct to call them Christians, but we would call them believing Jews or believing Hebrews.

And you're aware that the term Christian didn't even really come into being until about Acts chapter 13, when they were called Christians first at Antioch.

So, the entire burden of this great document is designed to set forth the supremacy of the person of Jesus Christ and describe worth and value everything to him.

And that becomes the focal point of the whole thing. And we see that at the beginning here of our text for 2D, which is verse 9 of chapter 2, speaking about Christ tasting death for every man.

That means he experienced it. It's a word that is used to connote the idea of experiencing something. Christ experienced death for every man without exception.

[2 : 4 3] And the point that we elaborated on, I think the last time, had to do with the universality of redemption. And we made a distinction between redemption and salvation.

And I'm confident that the scriptures teach that the scope, the scope, the breadth, the depth, the involvement, the expanse that was involved in the sin of Adam was equally met in the redemptive work of Christ.

As in Adam, all die. Who? All. Everybody. No exceptions. All humanity. Even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive.

Who? How many? Same all. We do not have a right to say, well, the first all means all, second all means some. No, no. The law of language and the law of hermeneutics insists that the second all comport with the first all.

And this means that we have a universal redemption in that each individual born into the world is born redeemed.

[4 : 08] They are covered by the finished work of Christ. And this, by the way, points out the rationale, I believe, for the salvation of innocence, or babies, if you will, because they have not reached an age of accountability.

And we're not going to go there unless you really want to. And if you do, why, we will. But in Romans chapter 7, the Apostle Paul is referring to himself when he says that he was alive once without the law.

What does that mean? What in the world is he talking about?

He's talking about he was alive once without the law. That is, when he was born. But when he reached an age where he became responsible to God for himself and his own choices, and for lack of a better term, we call that the age of accountability, and the Bible does not describe any specific age when that is reached.

I rather suspect that it may be different for different people, because some are exposed to different truths and different concepts at an earlier age than others.

[5 : 37] They may come to an awareness of their own responsibility earlier than others. Some may reach the age of accountability at the tender age of three or four. And some may not until they're teenagers.

It all depends on a whole host of things. But my point is, God knows when that is. For each individual, even though we don't, he knows when each of us become accountable. And Paul says, sin revived, and I died.

And as you read that, it just looks like some kind of double talk. But he's talking about he was born redeemed, and when he came to the age of accountability, whereby he sinned of his own volition, he became estranged from God in the same way that Adam and Eve had.

He lost his innocence. And he needed to be regenerated, born again, which either happened on the road to Damascus, or it happened in the house of Ananias on the street called Straight, whichever.

But as a result, Paul became regenerated. And that became the basis, of course, for his new life and his whole ministry. And Christ, I don't understand.

[6 : 51] Of course, you know, some are committed to a real solid Calvinist position. And I must confess that as a younger man, I was too, because I just could not, I could not, I could not countenance the idea of possibly contradicting great theological minds like Augustine or John Calvin and Spurgeon, who's one of my heroes.

And these men were into five-point Calvinism, the tulip and everything. And I just fell into lockstep with it. And not only that, but it was a real controversial item when I was at Cedarville at the time.

And many of the faculty were into five-point Calvinism and everything. And I embraced the whole thing, and I taught it. I didn't ever, excuse me, I never did teach the five points.

And I know, I know pure Calvinists are of the opinion, if you're not a five-pointer, you're not a Calvinist at all, period. But I never could get into, I never could get into limited atonement or particular redemption simply because the scriptures just militate against it too much, that Christ died for the sins of the world, as in Adam all die, and so Christ shall all be made alive.

And I just never could get into that. So I had the embarrassing responsibility about two years ago, maybe three years ago, at Grace apologizing to my congregation for having taught that a number of years ago and that I now have to reverse myself.

[8 : 35] And sometimes you just have to eat humble pie, but after a while you get used to it. So anyway, when it says that Christ takes the death for every man, I believe that means exactly what it says.

Christ died for the sins of the world. God so loved the world. That includes every single human being, which essentially means every human being is capable of salvation.

We know that salvation is realized only when the individual appropriates the corporate work of Christ and personalizes it through individual faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the corporate application of Christ's death becomes personal to the individual, and that is his salvation. So it is the fact that Christ died for everyone that makes everyone savable, but we know it doesn't mean everyone is saved.

For it became him. It was fitting for him. Verse 10. It was appropriate for whom are all things, and by whom are all things.

[9 : 50] And this reminds me of the passage in Romans chapter 10. In bringing many sons to glory, and the many we cannot assign a number to.

I just say that it's an unpronounceable number. In bringing many sons into glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect or complete or entire through sufferings in that Christ's full orb experience included the necessity of suffering.

And he was made like unto us in every point. And in order for him to be a total, a complete kind of redeemer, he had to experience everything that humanity has to endure.

And principally, that includes suffering. That includes pain. That includes agony. And I'm confident we can say no one experienced that on the level that our Lord Jesus Christ did.

And that's part of the price that he paid. He is made complete or a total Savior through sufferings.

[11 : 20] For both he that sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one. And this points out the uniqueness of the position that we have in Christ, whereby we are made accepted in the Beloved.

And it is the Apostle Paul who uses the term so very frequently, in Christ, in Christ, in him, in him. And nobody else uses that term exactly like that.

John makes reference to it a couple of times from the words of the Lord Jesus himself. But nobody literally wears this term out like the Apostle Paul.

And the reason being, this concept of being in Christ did not exist before Christ ascended, went to heaven, and committed unto Paul this new revelation that is referred to as the mystery.

This concept did not exist before. In other words, the body of Christ, the spiritual body of Christ, did not come into being until after death, burial, and resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

[12 : 42] So, the whole concept of all believers being in union with him was not a reality until Christ revealed it to the Apostle Paul.

Because the thing that is really stunning about this is that the body of Christ is not just for Gentiles, even though Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles.

It's for Gentiles and Jews. Fellows, that is so new and so different that Paul had great difficulty selling it, particularly to his fellow countrymen, who could just not countenance the idea of Jews and Gentiles being on the same plane and that middle wall of partition being broken down.

Joe? Because he's speaking to these Jews that are kind of riding the fence right now. That's true. That's true. He's speaking to these Jews because they're riding the fence right now. Many of them are. Many of them are.

We related to you that there are three categories of Hebrews in this epistle, and Paul is going to address all of them. One, and perhaps the most common, that this epistle will be addressed to, are Jews who have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[14 : 01] They simply need confirmation, encouragement, staying power to hang in there because they're going to undergo persecution. And Paul is writing this in part to fortify them.

And then there are Jews who are vacillating, who one day think that Jesus maybe is the Messiah, the next day they're not so sure. And they vacillate between their opinions.

And then, of course, there are some Jews, to whom this will be addressed, who are convinced that Jesus was not the Messiah at all, and they flatly reject it. So all three categories are going to be addressed one time or another in this epistle.

And we continue now with verse 11. He, both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified. And the word sanctified means set apart.

The word sanctified is used the first time in the Bible, is in Genesis 2. So it might be Genesis 1.

[15 : 10] But anyway, it's in relating to the seventh day. And it says that God sanctified the seventh day. And all that means is, God made the seventh day special from the six days of creation.

Because on the six days, they were all creation days. But the seventh day is not a creation day. It is a cessation day. It's going to be different.

So he sets apart the seventh day from the previous six. And the word that is used is sanctified. And it literally means to set apart. All believers in Jesus Christ are sanctified.

That means at the point of salvation, it is as if God reached down into humanity and found you in this whole group of the human race and plucked you out of humanity, lifted you up and out and brought you over here and set you down in a whole new sphere that is called the body of Christ where all other believers are.

And you are now set apart. You are sanctified in Christ Jesus. In fact, the word saint comes from the same meaning.

[16 : 35] Holy ones. It is correct to say that when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you have not only been sanctified, you have been sanctified.

Sanctified. You are a saint in the Lord Jesus Christ. In that, you are one who is set aside, set apart for something special. And that is, you belong to Him.

So this is a beautiful word that is used many times in the New Testament. And it has to do with anything that is taken out of the ordinary or the mundane and set aside for something special.

The Old Testament even refers to the utensils in the temple that the priests used. The labors and the spoons and the vessels and all those things are called sanctified vessels.

That means they were set aside for specific use in the temple. And they were special. They couldn't be used anywhere else in any ordinary way. So that's meaning for sanctified and in verse 11 it ties in with this.

[17 : 38] For which cause he, Christ, is not ashamed to call them brethren. That is because we belong to Him. And the New English Bible says, and that is why the Son does not shrink from calling men His brothers.

Boy, you talk about a title. A title that is so richly undeserved is that to realize that you are a brother of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You are an heir of God and you are a joint heir with Christ. It's really good ordinarily to be an heir of anything but when the one bequeathing it is God the Father we are a very special caliber.

I tell you we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Say, I will declare thy name unto my brethren in the midst of the church.

This is the word assembly. It's ecclesia. It means congregation or assembly. I will sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him.

[18 : 55] And again, behold, I and the children which God hath given me. It is as if Christ is speaking here. For as much then as the children and we are all children in Christ doesn't make any difference what our chronological age is.

He's not talking about infants or babies or teenagers. He's talking about human beings and using the term children in the same sense that the Old Testament refers to the children of Israel.

It's talking about the whole population. For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself, that is Christ, took part of the same that through death He might destroy Him that had the power of death.

That is the devil. And death is referred to as the last enemy that shall be destroyed. I think I mentioned in our last session that Puritan writer John Owen in the 1600s delivered a powerful sermon.

I remember reading that sermon. I read it one time and recorded it for radio down in the Caribbean. I was reading it word for word as John Owen delivered it.

[20 : 19] I thought, man, as I recall, I think it took me about an hour and 20 minutes. And I thought, people back in that day sat on hard benches, some of them didn't even have a back on them, and listened to somebody preach for an hour and 20 minutes.

And today, they complain if you go over 20 minutes in an air condition with fuse that are padded. Well, wow, times really change, do they not? And anyway, John Owen preached this message called The Death of Death in the Death of Christ.

And that's one of many things our Lord accomplished then. Yes? I'm confused about the Catholic Church is the focus on saints.

For the focus on what? Saints. On saints? Oh, okay. Okay. Maybe they're Yeah, well, that's something that has grown out of Roman Catholic tradition like a lot of other things.

But the Bible makes it very clear. In fact, if you read Paul's epistles, he makes more use of it than anybody. And he addresses many of his letters like to the saints and faithful brethren at Philippi.

[21 : 52] And a saint is simply one who has been set apart by God. And I realize, and I would be the first to admit, that saints do not always behave in a saintly fashion.

Saints can sometimes behave in an ugly fashion, in a rather unsaintly way. But what needs to be understood is that sainthood is not determined by performance.

It is determined by position. And when you are in Christ, you have a position. And fellas, to be in Christ means, what Paul said in Ephesians means, one, it means to be accepted in the beloved.

What makes us accepted to God is that we are in Christ. And when you are in Christ, that means you have his official position before the Father.

That means you, in God's eyes, are as perfect and as acceptable as Jesus Christ is. Now, I realize that's quite a statement.

[23 : 15] But it is totally true and reinforced time and time again. And it is not based on behavior or performance. It is based on position. And it is not a position you have earned or deserved.

It is a position that was granted to you through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. and all believers are saints. I remember years ago when this class was meeting down in YMCA.

It is across from the post office. It is not even there anymore. It has been torn down. But we met in the patio room there and Paul Thomas was a teacher. And I will never forget Ronnie Blaze. Quite sure he is with the Lord then.

But he and another friend used to drive over from Dayton every Thursday morning. And this was back when this class met at 6.15. And they drove over every morning and Paul Thomas was teaching and he brought this material on being a saint in Christ.

And Ronnie Blaze really had trouble with that. And finally when he got it he was just rejoicing. You mean I really am a saint. Yes you really are. But sometimes I lose my temper.

[24 : 27] You know well you can lose your temper but you do not lose your sainthood. You know God did God did not save you and put you on probation. He saved you and he gave you salvation not probation.

And when he got a hold of that he came in a couple of weeks later and he said I got a new Bible I want to show you my new Bible. And I said okay. And I looked at his Bible and down in the corner he said Saint Saint Ronnie Blades.

And we all got a chuckle out of that. And from that time on he was called Saint Ronnie. But I realized that this is a heavy trip for people to buy.

But if you realize that positionally doctrinally theologically forensically if you are in Christ you stand in the perfection of Christ.

That is your position. Your walk doesn't measure up to that. None of us do. That's why you cannot grow in your position.

[25 : 42] Because your position is determined by the finished work of Christ and when he applies salvation to you he left nothing lacking. You got the full treatment. but because because in our humanity and with our old nature still intact we have a volition that is capable of doing things contrary to the will of God.

Contrary to common sense contrary to biblical truth we can really still do stupid things sinful things. And that's why in that area we have plenty of room for growth and maturity.

That's where you grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. You don't grow in your position. You do grow in your practice. You mature and you develop.

And spiritual growth guys spiritual growth is nothing more than bringing your position and your walk or your practice and your walk more and more in line with your position.

That's what spiritual growth is. It is being conformed to the image of Christ. someone has said if you are not more like Jesus Christ this year than you were last year you're not growing.

[27 : 09] Well that's pretty much the truth of it. And we all have room for growth and maturity and development. Remember the little pen that they used to pass out that said please be patient.

God is not finished with me yet. And we are all a work in progress. All of us is under construction and some of us have more room for growth than others.

Sometimes you grow just a little bit over a period of a year. And sometimes there may be things come into your life and you may experience things that will enable you to make a quantum leap in your spiritual growth and maturity and understanding.

And all it means guys is that day by day and year by year we should be more well pleasing to God than we have been in the past.

But none of us is going to reach that pinnacle of perfection because we still have this thing called the flesh to deal with and we have not arrived and we are not going to arrive.

[28 : 14] But the time is coming when this corruption will put on incorruption, this mortal will put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the same.

Death is swallowed up in victory. Then we will be a finished product. Then we will be just like our Lord Jesus Christ. Question or comment about this? This is a really important point.

Anybody? Okay, let's move on. That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death.

That is the devil and he is going to be summarily dealt with. In fact, the first one, the first one that is going to be dealt with when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in Revelation 19.

This is kind of fresh in my mind because we're coming up on it on Sunday morning. It's going to be the Antichrist. He is going to be the first victim when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in chapter 19.

[29 : 24] He's going to be the first casualty. And after that, all of his hoard with him and he and the false prophet will be tossed into that lake of fire in Revelation 20 and they will be there during the whole millennial reign of Christ.

And then Satan himself is going to be thrown in and the text says that Satan will be cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are.

And he's been there for a thousand years. So he is going to get his comeuppance for sure. And we are delivered from him and through the fear of death.

We're all their lifetime subject to bondage. And that bondage, of course, has to do with being hemmed in, chained.

In fact, I don't know if you're aware of it or not, but the very word religion means to bind or tie.

[30 : 38] And sometimes it can be used in a negative way where it ties people up and it binds them. And this is exactly what the Lord criticized the Pharisees and the scribes for.

He said, you have made the word of God of none effect by your traditions, which you used to override the authority of Scripture.

And you bind men to your tradition and your laws and your interpretation in ways that God never intended and never provided for.

But this, fellas, this is what the power of manipulation in the hands of people in positions of authority can accomplish.

And I tell you, it is striking. striking. It is striking. I've often thought and kind of trembled at the idea that, you know, nobody is in position to take advantage of people by manipulation as much as the clergy.

[32 : 01] Think about that. Because so many people place authority in the pulpit, that they ought not to place, really.

And it is almost as if it comes from the pulpit that's the same as coming from God. No, it isn't. No, it isn't. We've got a lot of pulpits today that are manned by false prophets.

We really do. So, it's a very important point. But people are vulnerable. People are vulnerable to positions, people in positions of authority. They tend to think that they are the experts and I better do what they say and so on.

I'm not just going to bring in our government the Supreme Court. Well, yeah. The power to do this what you talk to. Yeah, the same thing, you know, politically or religiously. And let me give you an example because this probably is the most stunning example, I think, in all of history.

And that is, you take the Roman Catholic Church back in the Middle Ages, not only had enormous religious power, many people are not aware that it had enormous political power.

[33 : 17] And so much so that the Pope of Rome could easily intimidate kings and queens and heads of states in Europe by threatening them with excommunication.

and here is this band, the Pope, and by the way, it was just a corruption of the Catholic Church and it was preceded by corruption in the Jewish religion and today it is followed by corruption in the Protestant Church.

Neither Jew nor Roman Catholic nor Protestant has escaped this thing called moral and spiritual corruption.

It is endemic in all of these groups. And the time is coming when all of these will be part and parcel of religious Babylon in Revelation chapter 17 and it's kind of fresh in my mind because I'm teaching on Sunday.

But the false prophet is going to be the head of the one world church. There will be a one world government and a one world church and that one world church is going to be made up of apostate Roman Catholics, apostate Protestants, apostate Jews, apostate Muslims, apostate Buddhists, apostate everything else.

[34 : 54] All are going to belong to that one great religious body and it will be headed by the false prophet. So that's where all of this, and this by the way is religious Babylon in chapter 17 and 18 deals with commercial and political Babylon and it is going to be brought to wreck and ruin during the end times.

But this whole concept of power and intimidation here was the bishop of Rome, the pope, and he held sway over kings and queens and could actually threaten them with excommunication.

And was it not one of the popes, I forget which one it was, that placed the crown on the head of Charlemagne? and you know what that symbolizes don't you?

The one who places the crown on the subject is the superior and the one who receives the crown is the inferior. So here we have a picture of the Pope of Rome being the superior placing the crown on the underling who was Charlemagne, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire at that time.

And they wielded enormous political power. And a lot of that was broken with Henry VIII in the 1500s when he broke away, you know, the Pope wouldn't grant him the divorce or the annulment and he broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and found what became known as the Church of England or the Episcopal Church or sometimes referred to as the Anglican Church.

[36 : 47] But he became then the head of the new church and that kind of bled away some of the power of Rome because out of that of course, out of that later came Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation.

So the Pope of Rome lost a lot of his political clout that they enjoyed during the Dark Ages. and but it is still a very very powerful weapon and when you when you can convince people that you hold their eternal destiny in your hands and they had better serve your interests or you have the power of excommunicating and if you know anything about Catholicism I know a little bit about it because my first wife was born and reared in Roman Catholicism but if you are excommunicated from the church that means you cannot receive any of the sacraments and it is through the sacraments that grace is delivered so you're cut off from the source of grace and you are doomed

I mean you've made your bed in hell as far as the official position is concerned and that's exactly where it is but there's a real softening of that today that's still the official position of the Roman Catholic Church but you don't hear very much about it today because Roman Catholics in general have become a lot more accepting and a lot more tolerant if I may use the word of those who are not Roman Catholic and you will not find you will probably not find very many Catholics today who would be willing to say if you are not a member of the Roman Catholic Church you're going to hell but that remains the official position it really does but most Catholics today simply don't buy that and it is also evidenced by how many Roman Catholics practice birth control in opposition to the church's teaching and so on so this manipulation and authority thing is a very very big item and it moves very heavy today any comments or questions before we yeah pardon me indulgences yeah yeah well that was that was the straw proverbial straw that broke the camel's back when when the church came out with the selling of indulgences and the idea was that if you give money money if you give money to the church then that will enable your loved one to receive time off in purgatory and who would not want and you know the official catholic position is that you do not go you do not go to heaven when you die you go to purgatory and when you're in purgatory you are purged and punished for your sins and when you're purified of your sins then you are released from purgatory and then you go to heaven so the idea is you have maybe your aged mother or father who died and they are in purgatory and if you give this money they will get time off their sentence in purgatory and get to heaven more quickly well who wouldn't want who wouldn't want to bail out their mother and father you know so you see what I mean by manipulation and intimidation is a powerful thing and when you have people who are who are subject to that kind of teaching and don't have the truth to counteract it they become tools for manipulation and that's that's the history of religion by the way religion in itself is manipulative and it's only the grace of

God through our Lord Jesus Christ that liberates and sets men free hey guys enjoy your breakfast and thanks for being there today okay