

Q1 L09 - Jesus, the Perfect Sacrifice - 2022-02-26

Luccas Rodor: Hi friends, welcome to our "Sabbath School Study Hour" here at the Granite Bay Church in the greater Sacramento area. I'm so thankful that you have decided to invest this hour here studying with us and learning more about God's Word. And we have a great study today. Thank you so much for the local congregation that is here too, you that are watching online. I'm sure that is going to be a great day for you.

We have been studying from this quarterly, which is called "In These Last Days, The Message of Hebrews." And the lesson I was just commenting with Pastor Doug and Pastor Shawn behind the stage, it's been so beautiful to learn about Jesus as our sacrifice, as a mediator of a better covenant. And so, today we'll be studying lesson number nine, which is "Jesus, The Perfect Sacrifice."

But before that, I would like to offer and to invite you to take advantage of our free offer. It's called "The Surrender of Self." And if you would like this free offer, you could call 866-788-3966, and you could ask for offer number 153. If you're in continental North America, you could text SH087 to the number 40544, and you could ask for a digital download. But if you're outside of North America, if you're, you know, somewhere else and you would still like this offer, then you could go to study.aftv.org/SH087 and you could download a digital copy of this too.

Before we get started, I would like to invite our chorus here to come out and lead us in praise.

Luccas: Pastor Shawn will be leading our lesson today and before he steps out, I'd like to invite you to pray. Dear Father, thank You so much for this beautiful day where we can come together and learn more about You. Thank You so much because the lesson today, we'll be talking about Jesus as our perfect sacrifice. Lord, thank You so much because everything that You have done, You have done it perfectly. Please anoint Pastor Shawn's lips today as he leads out, allow him to truly be inspired by heaven, Lord, and use him to bless us and to teach us. I ask these things in Jesus's name, amen. God bless, Pastor Shawn.

Shawn Brummund: It's good to be able to see you here this morning as we come together to study again one of my favorite books, which is the book of Hebrews, and my favorite topic, not only in the book of Hebrews, but also throughout all of the Bible. And so, I want to invite you as we continue our study here this morning by opening your Bibles to 1 Corinthians, and we're going to the first book of Corinthians. And I want to look at three different places there because as we come to the first two chapters of Corinthians, we find there that Paul is reflecting upon his ministry.

Now, he planted the church in Corinth, which is the ancient city in which this letter was written to. And so, sometime later, probably years after he had planted that church, the very first Christian Church in that city, he's writing back and it's reflecting upon his ministry, not only in Corinth, but as an apostle and prophet and pastor, preacher, evangelist, and the many other things that he was.

So, when we come to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 18 he says, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." And so he says, "Listen, the message of the cross has two different effects on different people, depending on who's listening and how they respond." And so, he says, "Listen, for some people, it's foolishness when they hear the message of the cross. And but for us who are saved, for us who have seen Jesus and embraced that Jesus on the cross," and which the cross here is obviously representing, "it has the power to save. It is the hope of salvation for all who believe."

And then later on as we follow--drop down on the same chapter in verse 23 it says, "But we preach Christ crucified," it says. "To the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks," representing the non-Jewish populations or the Gentiles, "to the Greeks foolishness." And so he says, "We preach Christ crucified." And then we come to chapter 2 as we look at the first two verses there. And again, Paul comes back to

the cross and the crucifixion that Jesus experienced there for you and me. Chapter 2 and verse 1, it says, "And I, brethren, when I came to you did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

And so again, here we have Paul reflecting upon his ministry, reflecting over the years, reflecting of his time in Corinth. And he said, "When I first entered the city of Corinth with the mission and the purpose of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and lifting Jesus up from the earth and causing all those who are hearing to be able to see Jesus crucified for the sins and the guilt of the world," he said, "I determined not to know anything except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." And so, for Paul, the cross was the center of his ministry. It was the greatest emblem and representation of the hope of the Christian. And therefore, we come to that powerful statement, "I determined not to know anything but Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

In spite of how unpopular a crucified God was, both to the Jews and to the Greeks, and well, to all people for that matter. Paul knew that it was the only avenue to save us as a fallen and corrupt mankind from sin and from its penalty. And not only that, but Paul also understood that to preach the message of Jesus, the eternal Son of God that became one with humanity as a crucified God, one that volunteered Himself to die on that cross for the sins of the world, it was the greatest, most powerful demonstration of both God's love, as well as His character, vindicating the true heart and character of God.

Now, Paul also knew that there was many other implications that came with the cross, but those were the two biggest ones. And therefore Jesus had inspired Paul to determine not to know anything but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Now, I have to confess, even as I come back to this as a preacher and as a pastor of 25 years now, it is a reminder to me that I do not come back to the cross, that I do not present and talk about Jesus and Him crucified often enough. And I think we would be hard pressed to find a preacher that doesn't find himself sometimes being sidelined too often for too long without making Jesus and Him crucified the center of the message in which God has given to us.

In John chapter 12, and verse 32, Jesus made a very powerful, huge statement. In that particular verse Jesus says, "And I--if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." Now, in case we didn't understand exactly what Jesus was saying, John then was inspired by God to follow up with the next verse and statement where he says, "This he was saying signifying by what kind of death Jesus would die." And so, Jesus knew that the ultimate drawing card, Jesus knew that the ultimate magnet that He had to be able to draw a corrupt and fallen, sinful, pride-filled, selfish, self-centered mankind and beings is to be able to find Himself on the cross giving Himself over for the sins of that same people. It is the ultimate drawing card, is it not?

Jesus, self-sacrificing Himself, died a death that He did not deserve, that you might be able to receive what you don't deserve. That's the cross, that's the message that we're looking at here today. Now, we have to make sure that we don't misunderstand that statement that Jesus made because He did not say, "If I--If I am lifted up from the earth will save all men." But it does tell us that it is that message, it is that event, it is that moment in history that is more of a drawing card towards the Kingdom of God and towards the Maker of the universe than any other thing that God has ever done.

Now, not all respond with a saving response, not all surrender and confess their sins, repent from their ways, ask God into their heart, as many of you have, if not all of us here today. But it is the ultimate drawing card. And therefore Jesus could confidently say, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me."

How sad it is that so few respond and go all the way in response to that drawing. Now, of course, the list is very long of the different stumbling blocks as the offenses, the different things that get in the way between us experiencing that drawing power of looking--of looking and witnessing and seeing Jesus in our mind's eye on that cross dying for us. Now, I can't give you an exhaustive list, I'm sure, even if I sat down for a couple of hours or a couple of days, I wouldn't be able to exhaust the list, but I want to share

with you just four of probably the--if not in the top in the top ten for sure, if not in the top four reasons, why many men, many women, many children and young people decide not to fully respond to the drawing power of Jesus on the cross.

Pride, that's probably the top of the list, almost for certain, wouldn't you say? Pride gets in the way between us responding fully in surrendering to God. Jesus, in His inauguration speech, the Sermon on the Mount that He gave, He said, "blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Now, of course, this flies straight into the face of the very heart of our fallen nature, doesn't it? Because it tells us that we need to put all pride aside, and we need to humble ourselves first before God. But then the Bible also says in different ways, many times that as believers, we are called by God to humble ourselves before each other. Didn't Paul himself, under inspiration, tell us that we are to count each other more important than ourselves? And so, pride is a great obstacle that keeps us from God. Jesus says, "Unless you become like little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of God."

We need to humble ourselves as a child and accept Christ into our hearts. That's the gospel that Jesus gives to us. But pride, sadly, is probably the number-one reason that keeps us away. Another very common reason is fear. The Bible records many times that there are many who came to respect and believe the message of the apostles, believe the message of Jesus, but they did not fully take their stand. They did not fully stand for Jesus Christ and for that message of truth because they fear that they would be cast out of the synagogues, fear of rejection, fear of embarrassment from the world around us, from the majority that continued to say, "No, God, I don't want You to be the Lord of my life. I don't want You truly as my Lord and Savior." And so, certainly in the top three or four or five, there would be fear.

Another obstacle that can get in the way, if we're not careful, is greed. And an extension of that, we could say that the fourth one I'd like to share here today is self-centeredness, greed and self-centeredness. You see, the message of Jesus on the cross giving Himself voluntarily in a way, again, that He did not deserve, that He might be able to give you and I the greatest gift that we could ever receive is a great and powerful message and example of self-sacrificing love. In fact, we find a great, powerful quote in the very last day of this week's lesson on Friday, the very last of that excerpt that we have there from one of the writings of Ellen G. White. And she says there, "Indeed that Christ was giving Himself as an example of the greatest demonstration of self-sacrificing love."

Now, of course, that's the opposite of greed, is it not? It's the opposite of self-centeredness. And so, even though it is the ultimate drawing card and Jesus may have very quickly and very powerfully, clearly told us that, sadly, the message of the cross is also the most unpopular message that there is as well. But as Paul said in Romans chapter 1, and verse 16, he says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God unto all who believe unto salvation."

I am not ashamed of the gospel, are you? I'm not ashamed that I follow a God that loved me so much that He set the ultimate example and died on the cross for your sins and mine. The cross is central to the gospel. And so therefore, it's not--it should not be surprising that we find it also in the book of Hebrews. And that's what we're studying here again today. We're looking at Jesus, the perfect sacrifice, the perfect sacrifice. Now, Hebrews spends a lot of time talking about the ins and outs of the sacrificial system at the Jewish temple. And then its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus on a hill called Calvary where He died on a Roman cross.

Now, Monday's lesson shares some interesting insights on the lessons that can be learned from the five different sacrifices that the Israelites were to bring to God at the temple. But the foundation of every single one of those five sacrifices was the shedding of blood, was an innocent animal that was brought to the altar and that died for the sins of that person or of that family and group of people that that person represented. It was the foundation, it was the symbol of the substitute death that was represented for us. And so, the question is asked, I think it was around Monday or maybe it was Sunday in this week's lesson studying and it says, "Why did God require a sacrifice?" Why is it that God has always required a sacrifice? Why is it that it tells us that without the shedding of blood, there is no

remission of sins? In Romans chapter 6, and verse 23, it tells us that the wages of sin is, is death. And so, very clearly God tells us in the book of Romans that the wages of sin is death. And then in Romans chapter 3, and verse 23, it confirms what you and I already know and that is that for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Where did Paul get these truths from? Was this a new revelation that God was giving to Paul and to mankind for the first time? Or is it something that Paul already knew because of his study of the Word? It was already what he knew from the study of the Word. Paul was simply reflecting and reiterating, confirming the truths that God had revealed to mankind all the way back to a beautiful garden called the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve, the mother and father of all mankind, first found their breath and their experience in life. Genesis chapter 2, as we back up to that particular chapter and as we look at those first chapters, we find the foundation for what Paul and God is expanding for us in the book of Hebrews. In Genesis chapter 2, and verses 16 through 17 it says, "And the Lord commanded the man saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat for the day that you eat of it, you shall surely, you shall surely die.'"

Did God just give mankind a command? He did, did he not? He said, "Listen, I want you to consider staying away from this tree. You know, I'm not sure if you should or not, but--" No, it was a command. Just as much as He says, "You shall not murder, you shall not use the Lord's God--Lord God's name in vain," so did God tell Adam and Eve, "You shall not eat from this particular tree. You may freely eat of all the other trees, and there's more trees than you will ever, ever need. But of this one tree of the knowledge of good and evil, I am commanding you today, I am setting a law before you. And the day that you decide to break that law, you shall surely, you shall surely die."

In Romans chapter 6, verse 23, it tells us the wages of sin is death. Adam and Eve ate that tree, did they not? They eat from the fruit of that tree. We all know the story. Did they sin when they ate from that tree? Yes, they did. Why? Because the Bible tells us in 1 John chapter 3, and verse 4 that sin is the transgression of the, of the law. Sin is the transgression of the law. Adam and Eve had decided to break God's law, they had sinned that day. Genesis chapter 3, and verse 19 it says, "For dust you are and to dust you shall, to return."

You see, after they had sinned, after they have had that sober conversation with the Lord as God then begins to unpack the different negative consequences that would result because of that sinful, disloyal decision that they had made, they had broke faith, they had broke confidence in the Lord that had given them so much. And as God was sharing all these different negative consequences again that they and their descendants would experience through the centuries that were ahead, God wraps that conversation up by saying, "Oh, and by the way, remember that time whatever days ago or weeks beforehand when I say, do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die? I really meant it. And so, Adam and Eve, as hard as this is to say, for dust you are and to dust you shall return." Because of this, God presented the gospel that same day as well.

You see, Jesus and the Father not only confirmed with Adam and Eve that the consequences of death and all the negative things between that and the time that they ate and the time in which they will return to the dust, He also gives them the good news. And He says, "Listen, this is horrible news. This is a bad day in history." But He says, "I want to give you a promise. I want to share a gospel message with you here today." In fact, if you look at the order of the conversation in the Garden that day after and Adam and Eve ate, we find that God actually shared the good news before He shared the bad news.

You know, sometimes we ask ourselves, "I got good news and bad news, what you want first?" God didn't even ask them that. He said, "Listen, I'm so wise, I know that it's better for me to give you the good news before I share with you and confirm some of the bad news that's going to happen because of your decision today." The same day that they sinned, God presented the gospel, the ultimate sacrifice and death in their place. And that's why Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15 is a massive verse that Christians through the centuries have clung to that have seen the light shining from the Garden of Eden, shining from that first few chapters of the first book of the Bible called Genesis. Genesis 3:15 God says to the

serpent, "I will put enmity between you, serpent, and between the woman."

And from that point on, God has always, from this chapter all the way through to the end of the last book of the Bible in Revelation, God has used a woman to represent God's faithful church, those who decide to follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior. And from that point forward, He chooses to represent those who do not choose Jesus by the serpent. "I will put enmity between you, serpent," as God is addressing the serpent in the Garden that day. "Between you, serpent, and the woman, and between your seed and between her seed."

God is also revealing that one of the unfortunate most tragic results of Adam and Eve's decision to sin that day is that not only would they suffer the consequences, but their children would suffer the consequences, and their children's children, and the great grandchildren, all the way to your generation and mine. He tells us, and Adam and Eve, He tells them, says that unfortunate reality that He says, "There will be two camps that will exist upon the planet from this time forward," those on God's side and those who were on the serpent's side. It was that way back then in the first generation, still is today.

There is only two camps that both--all of us, every single human being on the planet today is in only two camps, always has been, always will be until Jesus comes. But then God reduces the seed representing the descendants both of the woman, those who decide for Jesus, and the descendants of the serpent, those who decide against Jesus, and either consciously or by default find themselves in the camp of the serpent, God then is whittling down those descendants to a singular male person. For it says in the very next line, "He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." God is saying, "Listen, of all the descendants of the woman of the faithful of God through the lineage eventually of Judah, of Abraham, of course, and then Judah and then David, we would find Jesus Himself, the Son of God, the ultimate seed."

Jesus gives a promise to Adam and Eve that day that the Son of God would come and that He would give the sacrifice. Now, friends, if you get crushed under a heel, does it hurt? If you get in a farming accident and a big piece of machinery crushes your heel between two multi-ton pieces of machinery, does that hurt? Oh, it's going to hurt. It's going to hurt a lot, isn't it? Are you going to survive? Okay, it's going to take some healing. It's going to take some recovery. You know, it's not going to be an easy road, but you're going to make it, aren't you? Okay, this is representing Jesus on the cross. Okay, He received a mortal wound that day, did He not? He died on the cross for you and me. But as Jesus said, before He even received that wound that crushed on his heel, he said, "I have the power to both to give My life, and I have the power to take it up again."

Then it also says that Jesus helped crush the head of the serpent. Now, if you get that same machinery in the farm crush your head between those things, are you going to make it? No, okay? All right, so I don't even know if you'll feel the pain, you know, for more than a couple of seconds. You're not going to make it, are you? That's what it's saying here, when Jesus died on the cross, it was the death knell for the devil. The devil lost at Calvary.

So again, I want us to notice that even before God introduces Adam and Eve to the symbolic animal sacrifices, he promises the ultimate and perfect human sacrifice that animals pointed to, that those animals, those sacrificial animals, pointed to. They were all pointing to the seed. They were all pointing to the promise that God gave to the very first man and woman that lived. And so, the promise of a coming Savior is not something that was unavailable in the Old Testament. It was available from the 3rd chapter of the Bible all the way through. And so, God introduces the ultimate fulfillment of the animal sacrifices.

And then the later verses gives us some very clear information that tells us that indeed He then introduced Adam and Eve to the animal symbolic sacrifices that were given to them to sacrifice by faith looking forward to the time when Jesus would come and die on the cross and fulfill those symbols, when type would meet antitype. And so, as we follow through in those same chapters, in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 21 and the first several verses of Genesis chapter 4, we only have to apply some very simple

deductive thinking that tells us that God indeed did introduce this deep symbolism of the promise that he already gave at the sacrifice of His Son. Genesis chapter 3 and 21, it tells us that God made for Adam and Eve that day tunics of animal skins.

Now, you and I know that the only way we can acquire animal skins is by taking the life of an animal, right? So, by some very simple deductive thinking and reasoning, we can assume then that God had taken the life of an animal that day. Now, as we go to the first verses of Genesis chapter 4, we can continue to apply some very simple deductive thinking and realize that, indeed, God had not only taken the life of that animal to provide clothing for Adam and Eve in their new sinful condition and state, but also that he introduced a sacrificial system, why is that? Because the very first two boys and children of Adam and Eve very clearly understood the sacrificial system. Now, where did they learn it from? Again, very simple deductive thinking backs us up to their parents.

Okay, where did you learn your first information? If you were in an ideal situation the way that God would have it for all of us, but in a fallen world we don't always have, but we learn it from our parents, okay? And if you back up before Adam and Eve, where did Adam and Eve come up with the idea? Deductive thinking tells us it can be none other than God himself. And so, when you connect those dots, you start to realize that the entire system of salvation was revealed the very same day that Adam and Eve had sinned. How did that sacrifice take place?

Well, the later information is God, years later, told Moses to record some of the details of what He inevitably must have recorded and revealed to Adam and Eve that day, is that He would have had Adam and Eve come over to this beautiful lamb, a lamb that not very long beforehand, Adam had the privilege of naming as one of the species that God put on the planet. And as he brought this male lamb in all its perfection--now, you have to remember up until this point, death was non-existent. It was a foreign concept to Adam and Eve. And as the Lord puts a knife into the hand of Adam, He says, "I want you to put your--" before that even, He says, "I want you to put your hands on the head of that lamb, and I want you to confess the sin that you have committed towards Me and towards yourself and towards mankind." And God would have explained how symbolically that sin would have been transferred into the lamb.

Now, I want to ask you a question. Did the lamb have anything to do with the decision to sin that day in the Garden of Eden? No, the lamb is perfectly innocent, an innocent party to the sin of Adam and Eve. Can you see the fitting, beautiful, powerful symbolism that is found there that is connected to the ultimate Lamb of God who also had no influence or place in the sinful decision of Adam and Eve or your sin or mine? And so then after he confesses the sin and God explains how that symbolically transferred the guilt and sin upon an animal that had nothing to do with that sin, did not deserve to receive that sin, nor the penalty of that sin, God then puts a knife into the hand of Adam. And He says, "Now, Adam, I want you to take the knife, and I want you to cut its throat.

And as the blood is bleeding out and pouring out of that innocent lamb, I want you to be able to remember each and every time that you commit a sin, each and every time that you fail Me, and that your children fail Me, and that your grandchildren fail Me, that that represents My Son, the seed of the woman, the one that I have promised, the perfect Son of God that would come and die for the sins of the world."

And that is one of the central facets and that, in fact, that is the central truth, that symbolism and the ultimate fulfillment of it was the central truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the preaching of Paul, as well as one of the most powerful gospel books that he had ever written, and that God had ever inspired him to write, which is found in the book of Hebrews. And now we get to look at something exciting in the book of Hebrews itself.

Let's go back to the book of Hebrews. We're going to chapter 9, and this is no small verse. Hebrews chapter 9, verse 15. Okay, Hebrews chapter 9, and verse 15. Our lesson study brought it to us, so if you've read your lesson study, you've already read it. Let's go back to it. This is powerful. The first time I

came to this, I was just-- the light just went on so bright for me. And it just answered so many questions that I had in concern to the nation of Israel and the Jewish people and the sacrificial system and the temple and the priesthood. How did that all apply and relate to the New Testament and Jesus on the cross and all these other things, the sins that of those who are forgiven in the New Testament era compared to those in the Old Testament era? And all the misunderstandings and misinformation that comes around those questions. In verse 15 it says, "And for this reason He is the mediator of the New Covenant." That's the New Testament. Covenant and Testament are synonymous. Mediator of the New Covenant or Testament by means of death.

Okay, fair enough, every evangelical Christian understands that today and pretty well every church. It says, "For the redemption of the transgressions under the?" Under the first covenant, under the first Testament. We typically call that the? Come on, now. What do we call the first covenant? The Old Testament, okay, all right? I stumped you a little bit there, didn't I? Okay, remember, I already gave you a hint. I said, "Covenant is synonymous with Testament. All right, so you should have got that really. So, it's the Old Testament, isn't it?"

Okay, we want to make sure that we know exactly what God is trying to tell us here. And if we don't understand the covenant is synonymous with testament and that the first covenant is the Old Testament that God sealed with blood with the sacrifices in Moses's day, we will not understand the full truth and implications that God is telling us here today. It says that "when Jesus died as a mediator, he is the mediator of the New Covenant, the New Testament, by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions--"

What's another name or word for transgressions? Sins, all right, you with me, okay? "For the redemption of the sins under the Old Testament." Okay, I'm just translating here for what we more commonly understand the first covenant to be. We typically think and call it the Old Testament. "Under the Old Testament that those who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

And so, what this is telling us, friends, is that the only reason that Adam and Eve will be at the first resurrection, the only reason that they will accept and receive eternal life, is because of the death that Jesus died on the cross for their sin. When Jesus died on the cross, He bore the sin of Eve reaching up to that tree and eating from its fruit. He bore the sin of Adam when Adam took one of those pieces of fruit from the hands of Eve and chose to ate--to eat. And every other sin that has been committed by mankind throughout all of human history was born by Jesus upon his own body when He died on the cross. Do you see that, friends? This is a powerful truth. Some of you say, "Well, this is old news. Thank you for confirming and reviewing it for me."

For some of you, this may be life giving. For me, it was life giving because it just threw away so many misunderstandings and so much misinformation and concern to what it was like to be a believer in the Old Testament time. What was it like to be a faithful Israelite? What was it like to be David when he lived during-- when Jesus died on the cross, He died for David's sin and his adultery with Bathsheba. The only reason that David has the promise and the hope and the certainty of being in the first resurrection is because Jesus died on the cross for his adultery. The only reason that Noah is going to be in the first resurrection is because Jesus died on the cross for the sin of Noah when he indulged and became drunk one night and embarrassed himself before his family.

Jesus died for all sin throughout all of eternity. And Hebrews here is tightening up that truth for us in this one powerful verse. That's why I was so excited when I saw it in our lesson study and as it was pointed to for us to be able to look at because this is a huge verse. On Tuesday, Jesus's perfect sacrifice is looked at. Why was Jesus's sacrifice perfect? Well, because Jesus is perfect, right?

Okay, why did that make all the difference compared to the sacrifices that took place before that? Because there was millions of sacrifices that already took place by God's faithful people as instructed and told by God. And yet when Jesus came, He died one perfect death. Well, of course, Jesus was the ultimate antitype, wasn't he? Okay, so we have type, Jesus is the antitype. He's the One that came and

fulfilled the symbolism that God had introduced in the Garden of Eden the same day that mankind had sinned.

And so, after 4,000--we have to take in context the book of Hebrews, you know, because as we look at these different books, it's helpful. And scholars will tell you that, pastors will tell you. It's true, having the context of the entire book, what kind of environment and context was the church in? And what were they up against? What were they facing? What was the audience experiencing when God had first inspired Paul to write to the Hebrew believers? These were Jewish people, religious Jews who had converted to Christianity and accepted the fulfillment of Judaism in the seed of the woman, Jesus Christ the Messiah.

We have to remember that after 4,000 years, millions of animals sacrificed, the symbolism came to its fulfillment, and the Hebrews found themselves needing to switch gears, to change rails in a way that was--must have been very, very challenging for them, why? Because right from their childhood on, they had both participated in and/or observed the sacrifice of--well, by the time their adulthood, if they heard this truth, would be hundreds of sacrifices. This was an integral part of their religious experience and faith expression and now God is saying, "Stop it. You need to change gears." Why? Because now the perfect sacrifice has come.

Now, for you and I we'll say, "Well, of course, that's what they did, and that's what they should have done, and they should have done it immediately." But you have to remember that these people, you know, you're conditioned for some of them, let's say they're 40 years old, for 40 years now, part of their faithful expression of faith before God is to bring an animal sacrifice to symbolize their guilt, to symbolize their redemption, their forgiveness, and their reconciliation with the holy God.

And now God is saying, "You don't need to do that. Stop doing it, not required anymore," why? Well, God then explains it several times, several times throughout the book of Hebrews, why? Because he wants to get it across. Hebrews chapter 7, and verse 27. In Hebrews 7, verse 27, the lesson study tells us in this--points us to the verse and the Bible says, "Who does not need daily as those priests--"

Now he's talking about daily sacrifices of the priests brought these daily sacrifices. "Who does not need daily as those high priests who offer up sacrifices first for His own sins, and then for the peoples, for this He did once for all when He offered up Him, Himself." Hebrews 10, verse 10 says, "By what--by that we will have been sanctified through the bought--through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." And then when it comes to Hebrews chapter 10, verse 14, God repeats it again. He says, "For by one offering, He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."

Now, we don't want to miss out on that because it gives us sanctification and also the gospel is found here with justification, why? Because it says, "For by one offering, He has perfected forever," that's justification. When you come to Christ, you confess your sins, you surrender to Him, He's your Lord and Savior in your heart from that point forward. God forgives you every sin. He completely cleanses you. And now when He looks down upon you, He says, "As far as I'm concerned, you have never sinned. As far as I'm concerned, you're completely holy."

Now, does God and you both know that you haven't arrived yet? Yes, He knows that and you know that. But as far as He is concerned, you have already arrived. But then it goes on and says that there is also a sanctifying experience that God asked us to enter into as well, and that sanctifying experience is a process that takes time as God roots out our selfishness and our self-centeredness and our greed, and all these other sinful attributes that God needs to be able to clean out of our life.

Verse--chapter 9, verse 26, the last half of this particular verse says it again. It says, "But now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Hebrews 9, verse 28 it says, "So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear a second time apart from sin for salvation." Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 12 says, "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

You see the theme, friends? Why is God repeating it so often? Why does he keep revisiting that powerful truth? Well, it's important for you and I to be able to absorb it, but it was even more difficult inevitably for the Jews, for the religious Jews that had become Christians that had seen Jesus as their Lord and Savior, accepted Him as so as such, but now needed to readjust their religious experience in a very dramatic way. And so, God goes out of his way to be able to explain to them and share with them that, "Hey, this is something that is done with. It's something that has found its fulfillment. It served its purpose in a needful way.

It was my idea," God says. But now that idea has come to its fulfillment, and now you can express yourself by coming to Jesus in your heart in your mind's eye as you come to Him in prayer and claim the death of Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. Again, this would be very helpful for the religious Jew. Hebrews chapter 8, and verse 13 tells us something very important.

Let's go to Hebrews chapter 8, and verse 13 because, again, this is no small verse. And again, it's relate-- the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Okay, so Hebrews chapter 8, and verse 13 it says, "In that he says, a New Covenant--" Again, that is the New Testament. "He has made the first obsolete." What's the first again? Now you better get this this time. The Old Testament, okay, good. All right, the Old Testament. "A New Covenant or New Testament, He has made the first obsolete." That's the Old Testament. "Now, what is becoming obsolete and growing away, growing old, is ready to, is ready to vanish away."

And so, very clearly here, God in His graciousness, notice how He's just giving the Jewish believers' transition time. He's saying--He doesn't come up and say, "Stop it and stop it right now." No, He doesn't do that, does He? He says, "But just let it start to vanish away. I know, I know you still have a part of you that feels unfaithful unless you bring that lamb because, you know, you didn't--you didn't treat your wife quite the way you should have. You lost your temper or whatever it is. And I know in the past, you know, that you knew that was the right thing to do to bring a lamb, but now I want you to come to the lamb." And so, God is telling the Jewish believers, "Listen, you need to let that go. It's vanishing away. It's fading because it's found its fulfillment in Jesus."

Now, the last two--the last two days speak on the Day of Atonement, talks about the judgment hour, and we don't even have nearly enough time. We're just wrapping things up today. So, if you haven't looked at the last two days of the lesson study, we really want to encourage you to be able to spend some time and consider some of the thoughts that is sharing that. Revelation chapter 3, and verse 20 is my favorite. In fact, let's close with that.

Let's go to Revelation chapter 3, and verse 20 with our last minute or so that we have here because this is such a powerfully--I just want to express one thing as well. You know, I know that it's become the in thing for us, as Seventh-Day Adventists, to scrap the whole term "investigative judgment" from 1844 onward when Jesus entered the second phase of ministry, not only as our mediator, as we talked about today, but also as our advocate and judge. And we just call it the pre Advent judgment now.

Friends, why did God inspire Ellen White to use the term "investigative judgment?" You know, I did a word search dozens of times. Several times God had asked--inspired Ellen White to use the term "investigative judgment." And yet we're afraid to use that term. Either we're guilty and we know we're not right with God, or we're misunderstanding the gospel. One of those two, and if it's either those two, we want to get that straightened out, amen? Because I can freely use the term "investigative judgment," and I have no qualms doing that. And I do not feel threatened by it in any way, why? Because I understand the gospel correctly and because I know that my heart is right with Jesus.

Revelation 3:20 gives me that hope. Sorry, it's not Revelation-- Revelation, chapter 3, and verse 5. Verse 20 is another powerful one as well but verse 5. In closing it says, "And he who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the book of Life. But I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." You see, even there in the judgment hour, Jesus is still interceding for you and me, is He not, okay? Now, He wants us to be able to continue to forget those

things that are behind, press forward to those things which are ahead.

As Paul said, Paul says, "I have not yet arrived." And he wrote that at the end of his life. He said, "Listen, after years, I'm still in process. God is still rooting out things in my life. But one thing I do, I forget those things which are behind, and I press forward to those things which are ahead, which is the upper calling in Jesus Christ my Lord." And so, friends, that's what I want to leave you with in concern to the judgment hour. Remember, Jesus is still interceding for you as you are in process, but you need to be faithful to Him, amen? Let's close with prayer.

Father in heaven, I just want to say a short prayer that You might be able to bless each and every person here and that as we contemplate the words and truths that we looked at, that You might speak to us and help us to be able to follow. In Jesus's name, amen.

Friends, those of you who are watching online, we want to thank you and on various networks for joining us here today. And don't forget to take advantage of our free gift offer. And the information will be on the screen for you to be able to take advantage of that. God bless you, and we look forward to seeing you next time--next week on our "Sabbath School Study Hour." For those of you watching this live, don't forget to stay by. In ten minutes from now, we're going to begin our worship service. Love to have you join us if you're not joining a local church. Until then, God bless.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing, free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen. And be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want, and most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: Amazing Facts Changed Lives.

Kip Johnston: I was raised very spoiled, very lucky, very blessed. I was raised in the church actually. As a child, God was presented to me as vindictive, so it didn't interest me very much. When I got much older, I was told by a friend of mine I wasn't even a Christian. I said, I'm a good person. I don't steal. I don't cheat. I don't kill." And it was told to me that, "No, in order to be a Christian, you must be born again."

The next day, I went and appropriated a Bible. I read the New Testament. I just sat the Bible down and said, "God, if you're real, deal me in." I went to a Christian college to study theology and about God, but when I left college, I took a job selling Christian literature and Bibles door to door. And I went flat broke. I stopped in to play poker in a place in LA. I was an instant success. My life became poker and I got books, and I read poker books. I had my Bible in one hand and a poker book in the other. I was a Christian poker player. I thought the Lord was blessing me. The amount of money that I made playing poker was so big, it would scare you.

I was very self-indulgent. I did not deny myself anything that I thought would make me happy, but I was still empty. I went to all the Christian churches, gave them all a fair shot, some of them three months, some of them two years, unimpressed. Saturday morning, I happened to be traveling from one poker place to another. I just happened to have a little TV in my truck, and Doug Batchelor came up on there. I was like, this guy makes sense. I knew Doug Batchelor was in Sacramento, so I came to meet him. I told him, I said, "I'm a Christian doing God's work, and I make a living playing poker. And I am giving away great converses to players. I go to church and help the community and don't tell me that I'm not doing what's right." And he said, "No, you got to get out of that casino, period." I said, "I'm making good money." And he says, "I know that you know what I'm telling you is right," and I did.

I recognized through it all, I wasn't happy. I said, "Lord, my life is a disaster. I'm selfish, I'm empty. I've tried to do what You wanted me to do so many times, and I've always failed. Why do I always fail? Why do I always lose my way?" And the Lord spoke to me, says, "You got to be involved. You got to be involved in My work." And that's when I said, I need to dedicate my life fully to God's work. I, by the

grace of God and my wife, we went to India.

Until the Lord tells me otherwise, we're going to build orphanages in India so that children can grow up and hear about Jesus, and they can go tell the 1.3 billion people in their country. God had a plan for me and now I just want to be fully dedicated to the Lord's cause. I am Kip Johnston, and God used Amazing Facts to change my life.

Announcer: Amazing Facts Changed Lives.

Peggy Toulon: My name is Peggy Toulon, originally from Houston, Texas. We lived in Midland for about 14, 15 years when my husband had a job offer to move to Detroit. We went, you know, expecting things to be easier as far as financial situations go. And, you know, once we got there, we realized the cost of living there was actually worse than it was here. And so, he was working more. He was out of town a lot because he was a truck driver. And there was a time when I felt like I was taking care of my girls on my own. In any situation that would come up, he wasn't there.

You know, it was just me trying to take care of everything. And I--I felt kind of angry towards God for that, felt kind of angry toward my husband for that, you know? And at that point, I was already kind of angry with God because He hadn't been answering my prayers. Of course, my prayers back then were really selfish-type prayers. They were more, you know, "God, we need more money. We don't--you know, we need financial help." And I just thought, what's the point? God's not listening to me. I don't even want--I don't even want to have anything to do with Him anymore.

There was one night I had been reading Revelation, and I read through the whole thing and it made no sense whatsoever to me. And I--after I finished it I said, I prayed, "Lord, help me to understand what this means. You must want me to understand. It's in your Word. I must--I need to know what it means."

And so, I went on to bed and a couple of days later, we got a flyer in the mail that said, "Amazing Facts Presents Revelations Prophecy Seminar." And I was like, wow, that's an answer to prayer. You know, I was so excited and my husband was too. And so, we decided we were going to go to that seminar. And I just knew when I got through the whole seminar, I just knew that's where I was going to be.

With Amazing Facts, I have learned so much about the Bible and about how to study the Bible, which was what I needed before. Because without knowing how to study the Bible, you can't--you can't get to know Jesus. And that's the most amazing thing to me is that God has led me to the place where I am now to where I can learn every day more and more about His character and how much He really does love us. Looking back, I'm just happy that He led me the way He did, even though I wasn't really listening.

God has a way to just lead you where you need to be and take you down the right path. But I looked at my life now and I think wow, if it could have been that way before and I would have had Him in my life this way all along, you know--I don't know. I'm just--I'm just happy now. You know, it doesn't matter what's going on in my life. I'm happy with God.

God's good is life to me.