

Hebrews 2025 | The Gift of Salvation

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Hebrews 9:14-28

Late yesterday afternoon Celisa and I were coming out of the Farm Boy Restaurant in Morgantown, Kentucky and as we got to the parking lot she looked at me and said, "Will you drive home?" I didn't know what to say. I almost fainted. She never rides with me when I'm driving. She believes I'm not safe to ride with. She believes I drive way, way, way too fast. I know we have state troopers on the safety team so I'm not going to tell you how fast I drive but she believes that while I'm driving I don't look straight ahead but rather at things on the side of the road that catch my attention like tractors, grain bins, and big farm fields. Therefore, she doesn't feel safe with me. Naturally, I said, "Of course I'll drive." To which she said, "Will you go slow and will you keep your eyes on the road?" To which I agreed. Most of the way home from Morgantown it was four lanes road and after a few miles I looked over and evidently I was doing a good enough job driving slowly and going straight that she was fast asleep. Before I knew it, without even swerving I was driving a little faster than she would want me to drive and I don't know how she does it but when I get to that certain speed (and I won't tell you what it was) she wakes up and she says, "You're driving too fast." I said, "Sorry, sweetie. I didn't know I was driving so fast." Then I slowed back down. Now, I don't know about you guys but I struggled getting home last night driving slow and trying to look straight ahead because she had her phone hooked into her console and Google Maps was up and it told me what time we were going to get home. Anytime I see that I'm going to beat it by 10 minutes.

This morning I want to warn you that I'm going to have to preach like I normally drive. I'm going to have to go really, really fast because our passage this morning is Hebrews chapter 9, verses 13 through 28 and that's 14 total verses. Now, you know when I preach that I normally like to go really slowly and stop and analyze different things but this morning because we really need to get through verse 28 we're going to go really,

really, really fast. This morning we're going to talk about the gift of God's salvation as we walk through Hebrews during this Christmas season. We've picked out three verses that I think capture the big picture of this text that we will read this morning for our Scripture reading.

Scripture:

Hebrews 9:15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Hebrews 9:28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Verse 15 begins with one of our favorite words here at Hardin Baptist Church when we're reading through the Bible and it's the word, "therefore." Whenever we at Hardin see the word "therefore" we stop and see what it's there for. If you're not very comfortable with your Bible and don't read it a lot please understand that "therefore" is one of those connecting words that the author uses to remind us, to alert us that what he's about to say next is based on what he's just said. You don't know how bad I want to stop and review what we've been saying for the last several weeks but I cannot. If you're new to the church, if you're new to God's Word, I encourage you to go to our website and listen to two or three messages that have been preached so that you fully understand why the preacher wants us to know that what he's getting ready to say is based on what he's already said because he's now talking about the high priesthood of Jesus and how Jesus is a better priest.

See, this is not a letter, it's a sermon written to a small Jewish house church in or near the city of Rome. There are some folks listening to this sermon he's preaching who are thinking about going back into Judaism rather than continue to follow Christ because persecution is breaking out

on Christians by the government but not on Jews. The preacher is worried that they're going to go back and he doesn't want them to so he reminds them that Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant. We've already talked about the new covenant and how it's unconditional in nature, how it doesn't transform from outside in but inside out, how all who are part of the church know who the Lord is, and how sin has been dealt with once and for all so there is no more remembrance of sin in the presence of God because of this new covenant. Now normally when we see the word "mediator" we know what that word means. Someone is going to stand in between two people or two different parties and he's going to mediate, he's going to arbitrate, and to do it fairly he has to be equal to both sides. That is normally how this word is used but if we were to look this up in a Greek dictionary it also has a secondary meaning. It's not mediator in the sense of being equal to both sides while settling a dispute, but it means last will and testament.

Now I personally believe Apollos is the preacher here who was an Alexandrian Jew. We know from historical research that in the seminary there at Alexander they taught their Jewish people that when they understood Scripture they would sometimes bring multiple facts, different things in a row into the message so the people could track it and the light bulb would come on. So sometimes they would take a word that has three different meanings and use all of those different meanings to truly highlight the point, and that is what the preacher is doing here. He's switching from a mediator equal to both sides to the guarantor, the surety of the last will and testament of God. Do you see this? Jesus Christ, God's Son, guarantees the will of God is going to be enacted, and if we jump ahead to verses 16 and 17, it talks about this death that had to occur. Why did Christ have to die? He had to die because the people who benefit from a will (the beneficiaries) do not get what's in the will, do not get the inheritance, until the person who made the will dies. There must be a death. As long as the person is alive, they still have a will but everything stays with them. The beneficiaries do not get the blessing until they die. My sister and I were in the will of my mom and dad. We now have what they want us to have but we're kind of sad because to get it we don't have them. They wanted us to have it. Jesus wanted you to have something and as long as he was alive you could never have it. He had to die. So he's the

guarantor, the surety of the new covenant. Why is he the guarantor? "So that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance."

Who are the beneficiaries of God's will? Now I really want to slow down here. Last night we were buzzing down the road and when we got to the Hopkinsville bypass I saw lights up ahead. Celisa was awake. She was safe and secure with me driving and all of a sudden we saw these lights. It looked like a park but we knew it wasn't a park so we wondered if it was somebody's house. Do you know what I did? I slowed down. I didn't just slow down, I pulled onto a secondary road and it was so grand and it was so glorious that I actually pulled into the driveway and just stopped. That is what I want I want to do right here but I can't. Let me tell you what Apollos wants us to understand. Some of us are beneficiaries of God's will. Do you know who we are? We're the ones who've been called. Now there is the general call of the gospel that Jesus talks about at a wedding feast in Matthew 22, and it says many are called but few are chosen. It's an invitation that goes out and anybody who hears can believe. That's not the word here. The word call here is not the general call of the gospel, it's that effectual call of the gospel. It's that call that God issues to those he has chosen before the foundation of the world and that he's predestined to be like Christ. There is an effectual call that when the gospel is preached it doesn't just *invite* someone to come to faith but it *persuades* someone to come to faith. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." If you love God then you've been called according to his purpose and you have this promise that all things work together for good in your life. But then, to make sure we really understand why all things work together for good, Paul gives us the foundational thought, "for those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." Then he starts again and says, "And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified." Who are the ones who get glorified? The ones who get justified. Who are the ones who get justified? The ones who get called. Who are the ones who get called? The ones who get predestined. Who are the ones who get predestined? The ones who God foreknew.

What Apollos is trying to teach us is we are not in this inheritance because of anything we've done for God, we are in this inheritance because of who we are—we are God's child. What are we going to receive? The promised eternal inheritance. Wow. Everything that mom and dad left me and Gina is going to fade away. I had some stuff that was really valuable but now five years later it's not so valuable. It is depreciating. What is the blessing that has been left to us? It's eternal. It's an inheritance. It's been promised since a death has occurred. Why did Christ have to die? How do you and I who are called receive this inheritance? Because a death occurred, Christ's death. What did Christ do? It redeemed us from transgressions that were committed under the first covenant.

You guys know this but the first covenant could never really deal with sin. All the first covenant could do was roll sin forward. But when Christ came, he didn't just roll sin forward he redeemed sinners from the sin committed under the first covenant. Which means when Christ died, he wasn't just dying for the sin of the present age and he wasn't just dying for the people under the new covenant age, he was dying for people also under the old covenant age and all of that sin that was sinned under the first covenant. Every law that has ever been broken, Christ redeemed us from those sins.

See, what Apollos is going to do now is take us back to that first covenant and he's going to remind us that God commanded the people to have certain behaviors. They were to do this and not do that. When God told them through Moses, the people stood up and said... *hey Moses, tell God everything that he says we will do...* That was the wrong answer. Three times they said they would do it! And here is what Moses tells us- that first covenant was also initiated by death, but not death of the Son of God, death of animals. When Moses went up on the mountain to get the law he told the children of Israel to kill so many animals. They killed the animals, drained the blood, and then they put the blood in bowls. Moses built an altar and he took half of the blood and he poured it on the altar. If you read Exodus 24, he took the other blood in the other bowls and he poured it on the people. But when you read this passage here in verses 18 through 22, it doesn't sound like he just poured blood on them but he took some of his soft brushes, took some wool, dipped it in the bowels, and then he started smothering it on all of the people. All of a sudden you have people standing there covered in blood. Why? Because that's the guarantor of the

covenant. To enter into a covenant, for there to be a will, there has to be a sacrifice. Why couldn't the people under the first covenant keep the law? Because it was based on the blood of bulls and goats. Can I remind you what the Bible says in Leviticus chapter 17, verse 11? We are not ever supposed to eat or drink blood. Why? Because the life of the body is in the blood and the blood was given for atonement so you don't eat it and you don't drink it, you use it to make a sacrifice. You use it to make an offering to God. Now, get this picture. In the Old Testament era the people could never keep the law. They couldn't do what they were supposed to do and they couldn't do what they weren't supposed to do, because though that sacrifice was made, the life in that animal could never enable the children of Israel to do what they were supposed to do and not do what they weren't supposed to do. So all that happened in the Old Testament was sin was covered. That's why we're under a new covenant not the old covenant. Under the new covenant we've been redeemed fully from sin.

Now let's look at verse 23, "Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." Watch this. Here is what this Alexandrian Jew is doing because of his training in seminary. He went from a covenant having a mediator to now Jesus being the guarantee of the will of God, and now he takes us back to Jesus as the high priest. Here is what we know- the high priest went into the Holy of Holies and made a sacrifice. Jesus purified things in heaven not on earth. It takes a better sacrifice to purify things in heaven. If God's going to come down and live in that building and sinful hands built it, it needs to be purified, right? Why did heaven have to be purified? If God wants to live with us I understand why that place has to be purified...but heaven? Yes, in order for us to live with him heaven has to be purified. *Wait...we thought heaven was pure.* Well, I did too but it's not. Did you know that there is a real possibility that the first sin didn't happen in the garden meeting? Did you know there is a real possibility that the first sin happened in heaven when an angel named Lucifer decided he no longer wanted to follow and God and he wanted to be God and he got kicked out? A whole legion of angels left with him. Therefore, in order for us, God's

children, to live with him in heaven a sacrifice had to be made in heaven. Who made that sacrifice? Christ.

Look what it says in verse 24, "For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." He has appeared in the presence of God. This word "presence" literally means face to face. Have you ever had somebody get in your space so you kind of back off? Can we turn this around? Do any of you have somebody in your life that you really like to be in their face? Jesus, right now, is in the very face of God. There is intimacy, there is oneness where he is. Think about this. You're a Jew and you're wanting to go back to Judaism and you have a high priest who once a year goes into the Holy Place in the big temple of Herod in Jerusalem. He goes in, makes a sacrifice, and gets out but our high priest, Jesus, didn't go into the temple in Jerusalem and make a sacrifice. He went into the very presence of God and he's still there. And he's not standing as the high priest on did on Earth. He's sitting. Why is he sitting there? On our behalf.

Now, please listen to me. I think this is good. Several weeks ago, Kory titled this scripture, "The Gift of God's Salvation." Salvation is presented in Scripture in three tenses- past, present, and future. In the past tense, Jesus Christ, our high priest, went into the very presence of God and made a once for all sacrifice and he's still there on your behalf and on my behalf. Do you know why? He's not only guaranteeing our justification but he's guaranteeing our sanctification. Right now, God is so working in our lives and so sovereign of the affairs of our lives that he's moving us further and further away from the image of Adam and more and more into the image of Jesus Christ and that is why he's allowing or causing certain things to happen in our lives. And when we get to that point where we need him, we just come to him and he gives us mercy and grace. He gives us the ability to get over what we've done and then the ability to get on with the rest of our life. Why? Because what the power in the blood of the animals could not do because there was no power in their life, there was power in the life of Christ and in sanctification he enables us to live the life God wants us to live.

Do you know how long he's been in the presence of God? Since he went back almost 2,000 years ago our time. Do you know why he's there? Because of you. And can I just say this? We learned this earlier, but when you do something you don't want to look for somebody else who's already done it and get comfort from them. You want to go to somebody who was there where you were but didn't do what you did and that's Jesus. He had a human body just like us. He was tempted to sin just like us yet every time he did not sin so he went deeper and deeper and deeper. So when you get into that moment and you're going to blow it come to him and there will be mercy and grace in the nick of time. How could we go back to another high priest when we've got Jesus?

Watch this. Verse 25, "or was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world." Do you get it? The Jewish high priest went in and did this every year. Jesus- one time. "But as it is, he has appeared once for all..." Now, I love this. I want to give you my opinion and not everybody will agree with me on this. I want to modify this word, "all." When Apollos says, "once for all" it means he did it once for all time. Just one sacrifice because it completely dealt with sin. How dare you try to add something to God's salvation. When you try to add your works, when you try to add legalism, and when you try to add obedience to the law you're saying that Christ's sacrifice wasn't enough. It was. It was once for all time but it was also once for all people. Look what it says, "at the end of the ages..."

Paul, to the church at Galatia, said Christ came in the fullness of time. If we could go back, we can't, but if we could and look at the Christmas lights of the book of Daniel, Daniel prophesied when the end of time would come. Jews viewed the world in two categories- the age that now is and the age to come. This here is talking about the end of the age as it was then and that ended with Christ. We've now entered into the age to come. It's spiritual before it's physical. Do you get that? So, Christ, at God's time made a sacrifice of himself to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Wow. He didn't make a sacrifice that rolled it forward. As the high priest he sacrificed himself.

Now, just think about this. You're a Jew hearing this message and you're getting ready to go back to Judaism and this is what you have to think about- the Jewish high priest, when he goes into the temple, he doesn't take his own blood. Do you know what blood he takes? He takes the blood of a bull and goat and it can never cleanse your conscience. When Jesus made this choice he didn't choose the blood of a bull or goat. Do you know what he chose? He chose to take his own blood into the presence of God. He laid his life down for you and when he laid his life down the power of his life is now available to you and it's available to me because he's still in the presence of God face to face on your behalf and my behalf.

Verse 27, "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many..." Now, I want to walk you through this. We received Adam's sin; it was imputed to us. Now, let's not blame Adam and Eve because if we'd been there we would have done the same thing. I want to think if it would have been me and Memish and she offered me that fruit I would have said, "No, what are you talking about" but no I would have ate it, said how good it was, and plunged the whole world into sin. Instead of blaming Adam and Eve you would be blaming Ricky and Celisa. But, I'm glad it's Adam and Eve. Amen? It's appointed to man to die once. We have an appointment. We're going to die. Unless Christ comes while we're alive we're going to die. Then do you know what we face? Judgement. So here is what Apollos is saying to the Jew- you're going to die and under the Mosaic Law you're going to face the judgement of God. You're going to be in big, big trouble because you're going to have to pay for what you did wrong. Do you know what it's going to cost you? It's going to cost you eternal life in a lake of fire forever and ever and ever. It will never be paid off so you'll be there forever. Woah.

Now watch what he does, "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many..." Christ, as a man, also had an appointment to die but he didn't die because of his sin. He died because of our sin. Do you know what he did? He faced judgement not the judgment of his sin because he didn't have sin but he bore the judgment of our sin. Do you know what that means? On that cross when he took his blood into the presence of God, God took all of our sin and put it on him and God poured his wrath down on Jesus and for about three hours, all the intensity of our hell, the

hell of the whole world was put on Christ. It wasn't a physical death. Two other guys had spikes driven through their wrists and spikes driven through their ankles. I want to be honest with you. I could have manned up and died that death too. Two other guys died that way. What was the difference about the death of Christ? He bore our sin. He bore your sin. He paid your penalty. Can you imagine the intensity of eternal judgement on Christ for those three hours and him crying out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" He knew why but he said what he said to fulfill Psalm 22 so that we would know he was paying our sin debt. He faced God's judgement and now he's in the presence of God.

Picking back up in verse 28, "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." Now, I want to caution you here. I'm going to go in a direction that is going to put me out on a limb and I could find nobody in all of my research who goes where I'm going to go with you now but I believe I'm right. So Christ will appear a second. The context of the sermon is the Day of Atonement. The high priest goes in and makes a sacrifice. He has bells on the bottom of his robe. He has a rope on his leg so that if he dies in there they can pull him out because nobody else can go in there. The Jewish people came on that day, watched him in his royal wardrobe make an offering for his own sin, come out, make an offering for their sin, go in, and then put the blood on the altar again for them as he had himself. While he's in there they're worried if God's going to accept the offering. Nobody can see him because nobody is in the Holy Place of the Holy of Holies but him so there is a moment where nobody can see him. Then, all of a sudden, he comes and out and everybody is relieved because their sins had been rolled forward again. When he came out, remember the goat that was killed was God's goat but there was a second goat that was Azazel's goat and the priest would lay his hands on that goat and when he laid his hands on that goat, symbolically he had put their sin on that altar, it had been rolled forward, and now it's going to be removed. He would put it on that goat and that goat would take the sin of the people and he'd be let out in the wilderness. Everybody would see their sin go out into the wilderness.

Jesus Christ, our high priest, went into the Holy of Holies of God and made a sacrifice and he's still there but one day he's going to appear again. When he appears the second time our sin is going to be completely dealt

with not just the pillar of sin, not just the power of sin, but the presence of sin is going to be gone and we're going to receive our full and final salvation glorification. We're going to receive a brand new body that is just like Jesus. There is not even going to be the presence of sin in this body. Dexter Road is going to be glorious! Redbud Road will have no sin! He's going to set us back down in that body on a new heaven and a new earth. Sin will be dealt with once and for all. It's gone. And you and I will receive our full and final salvation which is a glorified body where we live with God forever and ever and we don't walk by faith anymore. No, we get face to face with him. I just have to tell you this. You do not want to be behind me in the line in heaven when we see Jesus. When I see him I'm going to grab him, I'm going to hug him, and I'm not going to let go for probably 1,000 years so you should just prepare yourself for that. So you better get ahead of me because we are going to be face to face with him because those things that cause us to pull away from him are gone. We're not even going to be like the seraphim where we cover our face and cover our feet. No, we're going to have glorified bodies like his. Wow!

So, what are we supposed to do? We're supposed to be eagerly waiting for him. Are you eagerly waiting for him? How dare you like this world better than that world! How can we even think there is something else we want to do before he comes unless it's to tell our son, daughter, grandad, grandma, neighbor, friend, or person we work with about him? Because when he comes that second time, those who are not eagerly waiting for him are going to spend an eternity separated from him forever and ever and ever.

Have you received the gift of God's salvation? Has the Holy Spirit opened your eyes to being a sinner and have you turned from your sin and put your faith in Christ? You're never going to be cut out of the will of God. Jesus guarantees your full and final salvation.

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