

The Perfection of Christ's Atoning Work

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I. Introduction

A) Reminder Labels

- Every now and then we need a good reminder

- When I read warning labels, they can definitely help serve as an

an important reminder

- However I recently read three warning labels that may have been

a little over zealous

1- There was the warning label on a wheel barrel which read:

"Not intended for highway use."

2- There was the warning label on a stroller which read:

"Remove child before folding."

3- My personal favorite warning label was written on a carpenter's

electric drill which read:

"This product not intended for use as a dental drill."

* Yet however humorous these warning labels may be, we often need very important reminders.

B) In like manner, God's people often need to be reminded of the Gospel

C) Historical context

- The author to the Hebrews is writing to a people who were under the threats of persecution and false teaching, and this is confirmed by several clues within this epistle.

- In Hebrews chapter 13 we read in verse 3 how that many were imprisoned and "mistreated"
- In verse 23 of the very same chapter we read how that Timothy had also been imprisoned for his faith
- Yet there was also the threat of false teaching which they are warned against in the ninth verse of chapter 13
- It is believed by many scholars that there was pressure for many to revert back to the Old Testament sacrificial system, and thus the writer is appealing to them to hold fast to the Gospel
- He does this throughout the Epistle by appealing to Christ's Supremacy over all things
- A key word in this epistle is the word "better," and it is used at least nine times
- He is a better revelation in ch. 1:1-4, He is a better hope in ch. 7:19, He is a better Priest in ch. 7:20-28, He offers a better covenant in ch. 8:6, He gives better promises in ch. 8:6, He is a better sacrifice in ch. 9:23,

He offers us a better possession in ch. 10:34, a better country in

ch. 11:16, and a better resurrection in ch. 11:35

* In other words, Jesus is superior in every single way so why go back to the shadows when you can enjoy the Substance?

- Thus as the writer approaches our text this morning he wants to emphasize the Perfection of Christ's Atoning Work

* He does this by appealing to three things:

1- It was Foreshadowed through the Mosaic Sacrifices (vs. 1-4)

2- It was Foretold to Them in the Old Testament Scriptures (vs. 5-9)

3- It was Fulfilled through the Obedience of Our Messiah (9-10)

II. Foreshadowed through the Mosaic Sacrifices (vs. 1-4)

A) They Served as a Shadow (vs. 1-2)

- It was rough sketch or an outline

- It pointed to the necessity of sacrifices for sin, but could never

in- and- of itself completely take away sins

* One commentator put it this way:

"Shadow is put first emphatically; only a shadow or outline of
The substantial and eternal blessings promised. A shadow has no
Substance; but brings before the mind the form of the body from
which it is projected! The image itself is given to us in Christ, a
full and permanent embodiment of the good things to come."

(A. Saphir)

* Illustration of dinner date with a photo of your spouse

B) These Sacrifices were Repetitive (vs. 2-4)

- Notice some key words and phrases here: "these same sacrifices,"
"offer continually year after year," and "reminder of sins every
year"
- If you know anything about the Mosaic system of worship then
you understand that it was an ordeal for the sinner
- They had to present their sacrifice to the priest who had to then

kill the animal, and then they had to wash their hands in the lavar
before entering into the inter court

- Yet only once a year could the High Priest go behind the veil and
into the Holy of Holies to offer up atonement for the sins, not only
for the people, but also for himself

- After all of this there was still no direct access to God

- This was done year after year after year with a constant reminder
that all was not right with the worshipper before a holy God

* It's as if the writer is saying: "Do you really want to go back to that
system of worship when Christ has already completed the work on
your behalf?"

* What confidence is there in a system that was only meant to last for
a limited period of time?

* Here I must pause and ask you a question? Where does your
confidence lie?

* Is it in your own ability to check off a box before God or is it in the finished work of Christ?

* Illustration: New Year's Resolutions

- Man's attempt to reform himself outwardly without dealing with the matters of the heart

* Yet for us to be truly changed we must first be reformed from within

III. It was Foretold through the Old Testament Scriptures (vs. 5-9)

A) This is a Text that is taken directly from Psalm 40:6-8

* It is important to note that NT writers did not always quote OT passages in the same way, but they kept the spirit of the text intact

* The point of David's Psalm was the importance of making the Lord our trust, and that it is not merely outward sacrifices but rather inward reform that God is after

* We know that David was a man after God's own heart who sought out worship whole- heartedly

* Let me pause and ask you this question: What is the state of your before the Lord this morning?

* Is your worship whole- hearted or do you have some other divided interests?

* Illustration of football

- After enjoying the Super Bowl I wonder how many of us schedule our Sunday's around football rather than the Lord

- While there is nothing wrong with football or any other hobby of interest may we not make an altar for them, but rather worship the Lord whole- heartedly

B) Highlights the Eternal Counsels of God

- The redemptive work of Christ was in the mind of the Godhead from all eternity

- * The Mosaic System of Worship was never meant to last
- * It was only meant to serve a temporary purpose in the ultimate plan of God
- * It was to remind the people that atonement was necessary for their sins, and to point to a Messiah to come Who would be the Saviour of the world!
- * Revelation 13:8 says of Jesus that He is a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
- * 1 Peter 1:20 says of Jesus that "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world..."

IV. It was Fulfilled through the Obedience of Our Messiah (vs. 7-10)

A) All of Scripture Unfolds God's Plan of Redemption

- * It is fitting that the author uses the Old Testament to bring the big picture in focus for his Jewish audience

- * The whole purpose of the Law and the Prophets was to point to Christ as our Substance.
- * In their zeal to conform back to the Mosaic System of Worship they are reminded that Jesus is far Superior in every way to the "shadows of the good things to come."

B) Christ Came to Do the Will of the Father

- * What the Law could not do, Christ was able to perform
- * In the Mosaic System the High Priest had to offer up sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people
- * I think of Aaron, who was a high priest, who also made the bronze image for the people to worship
- * Christ triumphed where Aaron failed, because He was able to obey God in every jot and tittle of the Law, but not only that He paid the penalty for our disobedience on the Cross

* He endured the wrath of God so that you and I could be justified or declared righteous in His presence

* Thus the Old System of worship, which could not completely remove our sins was done away with so that Christ could establish a better way based on better promises!

C) It Was a Permanent Solution

- In Christ there is no more remembrance of sins year after year

- There is no more need of continual sacrifices offered up on an altar

- Our conscience, which could not be permanently cleaned, is now completely cleansed... not for a limited time, but rather once and for all!

* In Christ we are set apart and cleansed thoroughly from within

V. Conclusions

1- We trust in a Savior Who can be trusted.

- Over and over in the book of Hebrews we are reminded that Jesus is superior in all things, and therefore he can be counted on
- He can be relied upon to save you, not merely in part, but thoroughly from our sins
- There is no more fear in death, because we have been freed from the curses that were written against us in the Law

2- Our Consciences Are Completely Clean

- We do not have to revisit the altar of doubt, but rather we can trust that all our sins are completely gone
- This does not mean that we go on in sin, but that when we sin we can go to God in prayer... confess it and ultimately forsake it
- I no longer have to kill an animal to pay for that sin

3- It is by faith alone that we have access to God

- Have you ever wondered how the Old Testament saints were saved?
- They were saved the same way- Through faith
- In Hebrews chapter 11 we are going to read about the famous Hall of faith.
- The author eludes to many Old Testament saints who were saved, not by merely going through the rituals of the Mosaic System
- * They were doing the very thing that these hearers were exhorted to do
- * They were looking forward to the promised Messiah, and in faith they obeyed the will of God
- * Dear friends, don't let our society deceive you. If you are not in Christ this morning then you are exhorted to put your full faith in Him for the salvation of your soul
- * Christ died for our sins, He was buried, He rose again from the dead, and He was seen by over five- hundred eye witnesses

- * There is no other name under heaven in which men can be saved

- * For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that
who so ever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting
life

- * Friend, have you trusted in Christ? If not then I implore you to look
unto Him and be saved!

- * Let us pray