

RELIGION

Forgiveness offered through Christ

Hebrews 9:11-18; 10:12-18

In all of the religious systems of the world, there is some kind of hierarchy. The lowly ones must come before the great one who is higher in the system. This highest one has the final word in areas of their spiritual life or death. In the pagan systems, the gods are always angry. The adherents must do whatever is necessary to appease this anger. In the cults, the follower is expected to die for these gods — or at least for their cause — in order to reach their ultimate position.

This reaching for something higher than himself has caused humans to invent some kind of system of redemption. This instilled desire seems to be ingrained in every heart. This human need drives mankind to develop the fig leaf syndrome, some kind of manmade system to allow him or her to feel that they have soothed their own conscience regarding wrongdoing. Genesis 3:7. As appealing as this idea is to the humans, these efforts are never sufficient. These manmade systems do not satisfy this inner longing that is part of our nature.

The loving heavenly father sent his only begotten son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, to die for the sins of mankind. John 3:16. This means of redemption allows

the lost race to know that there is eternal hope. However, each individual must be willing to accept the divinely-provided help, if he or she is to receive the benefits of eternal salvation.

This message of salvation for the lost human race is the message of the gospel. Many people have given their lives in order for this message to go forth. However, the only one whose life has purchased eternal redemption is that of Jesus Christ.

At the time of the writing of the letter to the Hebrew believers, one teaching had reduced the ministry of Jesus Christ to, simply, the position of a superior angel. The writer of old wanted these believers to remember the real purpose of the coming of the savior to represent the sinner before the throne of our holy God. These early readers were familiar with the ministry of the levitical priesthood. Their work consisted of offering many sacrifices for the sins of the individuals and the nation. However, their sacrifices had to be repeated.

This ancient writer, it could have been the Apostle Paul, reminded these believers of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "But Christ being a high priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands,

Sunday School Lesson



Rev. James C. Temples

that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:11, 12.

The idea of a redeemer was part of the teachings of the Jewish society. The kinsman-redeemer was allowed to purchase property that had been sold under difficult circumstances to be purchased. This system allowed the land to remain within the designated tribe or family group. The ancient writer used this picture as he painted the scene showing the act of the high priest offering the sacrifice. The redeeming sacrifice was the blood of Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice for all mankind.

The Old Testament system called for animal sacrifices. Hebrews 9:13. Yet the ultimate sacrifice was the blood of Christ — "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God..." Hebrews 9:14a. The effect of this act becomes personal

for each of us. This blood is able to "purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Hebrews 9:14b.

The writer of old used the legal setting of the last will and testament as an illustration of the redemptive work of Christ. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Hebrews 9:15. Death of the testator was and is necessary for the will to be probated.

The eternal work of Jesus Christ was not limited to his death, and the shedding of his blood. Yes, he was buried, yet he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. John 19:30, 38-42; Matthew 28:2-6; Luke 23:50, 51; Acts 1:9. His eternal position is "even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us." Romans 8:34b, Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God..." Hebrews 10:12. This eternal position shows the ultimate victory for the one who gave himself for the sins of all mankind. Hebrews 10:13.

With the offering of the only begotten son of God,

the sacrificial system was completed. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14. It is important for all believers to understand that the perfection that has been purchased is the direct result of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, not from human effort nor personal ability. The Apostle Paul reminded the believers that our salvation is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:9.

The Old Testament was given on tablets of stone. Exodus 31:18. This object was kept in the ark of the covenant. Hebrews 9:4. However, the New Testament was to be stored in a new medium. "...This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them..." Hebrews 10:16; Jeremiah 31:33, 34. The promise of old reaches to all believers "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 10:17; Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19.

The writer of old wanted the readers and us to remember the completeness of this ultimate sacrifice — "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Hebrews 10:18.

Earlier in his letter, this ancient writer wanted

these readers to understand the completeness of this divine provision. In Christ's position of high priest and sacrifice, "...But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself..." Hebrews 9:26b. He continued, "And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:27, 28.

Yes, we all have this final appointment. What will be the verdict, as you stand before our holy God? Please accept the forgiveness that is offered through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:7, 9. You can, presently, know inner peace, even in a troubled world. John 14:27.

Rev. James C. Temples' Sunday School Lesson has appeared in the Early County News each week since 1967. A native of Early County, Rev. Temples taught in public schools 32 years and 10 years at Southeastern College of Assemblies of God, in Lakeland, Florida. He also served as pastor and evangelist during those years. He can be contacted at P.O. Box 1569, Auburndale, Fla. 33823; 863-965-0157. Email: jctjet@aol.com.

The Holy Spirit works through all

One of the great characters in the gospel of John is actually present with us today, right now, right here. The only problem is, you cannot see him. Jesus told us about him in John 16:5-15. He is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a person

The Holy Spirit has a name; or, perhaps more accurately, a title. He is the "Paracletos," a compound Greek word formed by the preposition "para," meaning "beside, alongside, or perhaps even inside," and the noun "cletos," meaning "called, summoned or invited." The Holy Spirit is the one called alongside to help, comfort, counsel, teach, defend and empowerer.

The Holy Spirit is with God the father in the creation and governance of the universe. The Holy Spirit is with God the son in incarnation and atonement, resurrection and return. The Holy Spirit is with the child of God in salvation and christian service. The Holy Spirit is always with God and always involved in the things of God because the Holy Spirit is God.

The father and the son are one (John 10:30). The son and the spirit are one (John 16:7 and 1 John 2:1). Therefore, the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit are one triune God.

But just what is the Holy Spirit empowered to do?

The Holy Spirit has a purpose

In verse 8 Jesus says, "He will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness and judgment." This is a sort of purpose statement for the Holy Spirit. His primary purpose is the propagation of the gospel.

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate newspaperman. He gets out the bad news, the good news and the real news that's fit to print. Only he does not use paper. He writes on the human heart.

The bad news is "sin." Everyone in the world is a sinner. We have all violated the perfect word and will of God. However, only some people realize it. Even fewer are convicted by it. But when a person knows they are truly guilty, when they confess that their sin is against God, when they desire and demonstrate deep repentance, then a person knows that the Holy Spirit is at work in their life delivering the bad news.

The good news is "righteousness." "Gospel" means "good news," of course, but a one-word summation of the gift of the gospel is "righteousness." To "go to the father" Jesus had to pass through the cross. In the cross, the great plan of double imputation was planted.

The Gospel Truth



Dr. Charles F. DeVane Jr. First Baptist Church

Christ takes our sin and gives to us his righteousness when we believe. But how can a person believe such an unbelievable story? It takes a persuasive and powerful teacher, namely the Holy Spirit.

The real news is "judgment." The reason the Holy Spirit brings you this good news and bad news is because of the real news of the judgment to come. In fact, judgment has already begun with "the ruler of this world." Most interpreters interpret "the ruler" to be Satan. If worldly things — money, sex and power — are your chief desires, then in the words of an Eagles tune you are "following the wrong gods home." However, if you desire spiritual things in the realm of the father, son and Holy Spirit, then be sure it is the Holy Spirit leading you to follow the son so you may escape the judgment of the father.

Since the Holy Spirit is here today, I hope he will help you to understand that

the gospel is God's news of sin, righteousness and judgment. I beg you to believe this gospel of sin, righteousness and judgement. And I know if you do, it is the Holy Spirit fulfilling his purpose in your life.

The Holy Spirit uses people

The Holy Spirit is an invisible, divine person. The Holy Spirit brings the gospel to bear upon the lives of Christian believers. But just how does the Holy Spirit accomplish this great, gospel mission?

Our text tells us he guides, he speaks, he discloses and he glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. How can the invisible God do these things? The Holy Spirit uses people, gospel people, believing people, Christian people.

The Holy Spirit was at work in the old testament from creation to the conception of the messiah. The Holy Spirit filled the life of John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ and empowered them to perform their earthly ministries. The Holy Spirit came upon every member of the newborn Christian community on the day of Pentecost. Since then the Holy Spirit has been at work in the lives of every Christian, enabling them to believe and empowering them for

worship, witness and Christian work.

Does the Holy Spirit guide you to public worship on the lord's day, to holy scripture for daily readings, to fellowship with Christian people, witness to non-Christian people, and love for all people? Does the Holy Spirit speak to you, does he take the words of biblical sermons and the biblical text and tell you, "This is true and this is how you are to truly live?" Does the Holy

Spirit clearly disclose to you the difference between right and wrong, truth and error, godliness and ungodliness? And the bottom line, are you living a life that glorifies our great God and Savior Jesus Christ? Only the Holy Spirit can enable you to do that.

The Holy Spirit is here today, right here, right now. God's people are here. God's word is here. God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, is here. Do you see him in you?

CHURCH NEWS

Friendship M.B.

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church will have revival service, June 16 through June 20 at 7:30 p.m. Rev. David Johnson is the guest speaker. Everyone is invited to attend.

Blakely First Assembly of God

Blakely First Assembly of God Church will host the Bradys live in concert June 22 at 6 p.m. For more information call 723-3042. Everyone is invited to attend.

Bethel Baptist

Bethel Baptist Church will have a gospel sing featuring the Morris family June 14 at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments and fellowship will follow the sing and

a love offering will be taken. Everyone is invited to attend.

Rosinvick M.B.

Rosinvick Missionary Baptist will have a pre-Father's Day program Saturday night, June 14. The program begins at 6 p.m. The speaker will be Rev. Ross. Everyone is invited to enjoy this occasion with us.

True Love M.B.

True Love Missionary Baptist Church invites each and everyone to fellowship with them this Sunday, Father's Day, at 12 noon. Deacon Leonard Alexander of St. Luke Church in Ft. Gaines will give a dynamic speech on behalf of fathers.

THANKS

The family of Tommy Bell would like to thank everyone for the visits, cards, floral arrangements, phone calls, meals and support shown to us during his recent terminal illness. Our family has been truly touched by the acts of kindness shown to us during this difficult time. Thanks again for your love and support and may God continue to bless each and every one of you.

The Tommy Bell Family

The Bible gives reasons for becoming a Christian

There are reasons for becoming a Christian. One should become a Christian because of the joy one possesses in Christ. (1 Peter 1:8). Peace is another possession of the faithful Christian. (Philippians 4:7).

When one obeys the Lord their heart allows the love of Christ to rest and rule in them. (Ephesians 3:17-19). Being a Christian means freedom from the

Let the Bible Speak

Robert Argersinger, Hentown Church of Christ

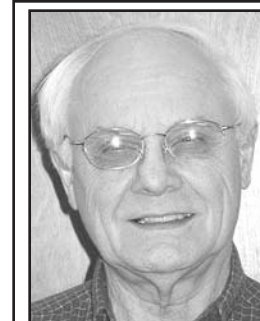


bondage of sin. (1 Peter 3:21). Being a Christian is also the way to glorify God. (1 Peter 4:14-16).

One becomes a Christian by obeying the gospel plan

of salvation. The plan of salvation is very simple. One must hear the good news of Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 15:1-40; believe in Jesus (Hebrews 11:6); repent of our sins (Luke 13:3,5); confess Christ as the son of God (Romans 10:9,10); and be baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-7; Galatians 3:22-29; Acts 2:36-47).

Make it a Family Affair.
Attend the church of your choice this Sunday.



Health Notes Sun-Sensitizing Medications

by Bob Hall, R.Ph.

Many drugs — whether they are applied topically, or taken orally or otherwise — can make patients more sensitive to the sun. Cellular damage may occur when the drug absorbs UVA light, resulting in an exaggerated sunburn only on skin areas exposed to the sun. The reaction may be seen soon after starting the medication and may be dose-related. Some of the most significant problems are caused by medications used to treat acne and other skin conditions — retinoids (isotretinoin, *Accutane*, *Retin-A*, etc.), *Efludex*, coal tar and psoralens. However, excessive sun exposure should also be avoided by people using quinolone antibiotics, tetracyclines, sulfonamides, amiodaronem quinidine, antidiabetic drugs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs such as ketoprofen), phenothiazines, thiazide diuretics, cancer chemotherapy, tricyclic antidepressants and many other medications. Patients who take these medications should use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays, wear protective clothing and avoid sources of high-intensity light such as tanning beds. The prescriber may wish to decrease the dose to minimize the reaction or select another drug.

HALL DRUG CO. 90 Court Square
723-3441