

The Better Hope - God Has Done What the Law Could Not Do

by Major Ian Thomas

The law is a temporary expedient that leads us to Christ, who is the only one who can pay the price for sin and bring us salvation.

Duration: 1:03:34

Scripture: Isaiah 53:9, Romans 3:19-20, Romans 8:3-4, Galatians 3:8-24, Ephesians 1:16-19, Colossians 1:27, Hebrews 7:18-19, Hebrews 10:12

Topics: "Faith vs. Law", "Redemption and Regeneration"

Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes that the law was unable to provide salvation, as it merely highlighted humanity's sinfulness and need for redemption. He explains that God's covenant with Abraham foreshadowed the coming of Christ, who fulfilled the law's requirements through His sacrificial death and resurrection. The sermon illustrates that salvation is not about adhering to the law but about receiving the life of Christ through faith, which brings about regeneration and a new relationship with God. Thomas encourages believers to rely on the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance, rather than attempting to achieve righteousness through their own efforts.

Transcript

Would you turn to Galatians, the third chapter, and in verse 8, the eighth verse, third chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Scripture preaching.

Preaching the gospel to Abraham. The very same gospel that God has entrusted to you and to me. What does it mean, scripture preaching? How can scripture preach? Well, we've been learning that as Peter McDonough has been tracing through something of the history, life of Abraham, and the covenant that God confirmed in him.

And scripture preaching is indicated very clearly. You needn't turn to this, because you've done so already and probably will again. Genesis 12.

The Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee. I, the Lord, will make of thee a great nation. I, the Lord, will bless thee and make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing.

And I, the Lord, will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curses thee. And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken.

That's scripture preaching. Who was talking? The Lord. And of course, that's the miracle of this book.

It's a divine declaration of intent. Something that God had to say and something that God wants you and me to know. And what God then was saying to Abraham was the gospel, the good news.

Foreshadowing in advance the birth of that little baby boy at Bethlehem. Of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of the tribe of Judah, the house of David and the city of Bethlehem. The glorious consummation of God's redemptive and regenerative purpose settled in the heart of God before ever the world was.

Gospel. What was involved in the gospel? Well, we've seen that the gospel is twofold in character. It's redemptive, a blood transaction, and regenerative.

Brings about the new birth. A blood transfusion. The life of God in Christ shed for us, and the life of God in Christ restored to us.

The one is a blood transaction, redemption. The other is a blood transfusion. He gave his life for us, now he gives his life to us.

That's spelled out in the thirteenth and the fourteenth verses of this same third chapter of Galatians. Galatians 3, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Blood transaction.

Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree, crucified. Well that's the blood transaction. But to what end? Only that there might be precipitated through the reconciling act, the regenerative purpose.

Verse 14. That to this end the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. What was the blessing of Abraham? What did God have in mind in making this pledge, confirming a covenant that he had already made in the person of the one who then was called Abraham, the father of one nation who was to become the father of many nations? Abraham.

The twelve tribes. What was inherent in the blessing? The life of the lifeless. The raising of the dead.

The reinvasion of a fallen race of fallen men, alienated from the life of God, a reinvasion of their humanity by the God who created them. A spiritual new birth. Verse 14.

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the Holy Spirit of promise through faith. That's why Christ died for you, to give himself to you. But he gives himself to us now in the person of the one through whom the father gave himself to the Son, the Holy Spirit.

Elsewhere that's called regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost, new birth, resurrection. That's gospel. A redemptive act and a regenerative purpose.

A blood transaction and a blood transfusion. The blood transaction took place upon the cross, and the blood transfusion took place first at Pentecost. And ever since Pentecost, every time a boy, girl, man or woman in true repentance toward God, in simple childlike trust have put their faith in Jesus, there's a blood transfusion.

Instantly that redemptive transaction is sealed by the gift to that individual of some body who comes to live in some body, the Holy Spirit, indwelling your human spirit through whom Christ takes up residence in you, as the father then, through the same Holy Spirit, took up residence in him. That's salvation. It isn't getting you out of hell and into heaven, that's included in the package, but it's incidental to the ultimate purpose of God, getting God out of heaven into you.

Because that's what it takes to be functional. I think I've mentioned that once or twice. The apostle Paul goes on to say then in verse 15, Brethren, I speak after the manner of men, though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto.

A covenant confirmed. But what was the covenant that was confirmed? Well, we've talked about it. At the beginning of that scarlet thread that weaves its way through the Old Testament scriptures and finds its consummation at Calvary.

Satan rebuked by God in the day that man fell. I'll put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. The seed of that woman, Jesus, to be born of Mary, conceit of the Holy Ghost is going to bruise your head, he'll destroy you, but you will bruise his heel.

That was the covenant, and it was confirmed 2,000 years later in Abraham. It concerned a seed, the seed of the woman. We're not left in doubt, of course, in God's word as to who that seed of the woman was who was going to bruise Satan's head.

Destroy him that had the power of death, even the devil, and liberate, emancipate those who all through their lifetime were in fear of death. Verse 16. To Abraham and his seed were the promises made.

He saith not unto seeds, plural, as of many. In other words, the benefit was not to come simply through a national culture. Not seeds, plural, but as of one, to thy seed, singular, which is Christ.

So the seed promised, when God confirmed his covenant in Abraham, was the one who the seed of a woman was to bruise Satan's head, Jesus, in the unfolding redemptive and regenerative purpose of God. That's why, of course, the Lord Jesus, remember, in the Messianic psalm, quoted in the 10th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, said, verse 5, Thank you, Father, for the body you have prepared for me to offer, a body conceived of the Holy Ghost, fashioned in the borrowed womb of a virgin girl. As foreshadowed, of course, throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, God said, I'll give you a sign, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.

Isaiah chapter 7, verse 9, Thou shalt call his name Emmanuel, God with us, the incarnate Word, the Logos, clothed with the humanity of man whom he created in his own image. But emptying himself, humbling himself, making himself of no reputation, was willing though the Creator to play for 33 years the role of creature, though he was the God who made man be the kind of man whom he as God had made. And to us a child is given, a son is born.

9th chapter, the prophecy of Isaiah, Thou shalt call his name Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this. It will demand a divine intervention,

and did.

So the foreshadowing of the woman whose seed would bruise Satan's head, the theme runs right the way through the Word of God. Thank you, Father, for the body that you have prepared for me to offer to you. 7th verse of the same 10th chapter, the epistles of the Hebrews, I have come to do your will, O God.

All that has been written of me in the volume of the book. What book? Old Testament. The Old Testament.

For as we've seen already, the New Testament was given late and simply tells us that the Lord Jesus did what the Old Testament said he would. I've come to do your will, O God. The story was written in advance, and there came a day when a little baby boy was born at Bethlehem, and the Lord Jesus said the hour has come to tell the story.

You're on solid rock, you see, when you come to the Lord Jesus. You step into the eternal, timeless, redemptive, and regenerative purpose of God, finding its consummation in the one born at Bethlehem, who was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. As of one to thy seed, which is Christ.

Now he goes on to say this, in verse 17, this I say, that that covenant made by God when he rebuked Satan confirmed in Abraham 2,000 years later, to find its fulfillment at Calvary 2,000 years later, and now you and I on earth anticipating his return 2,000 years later. Exciting. I'm anticipating the return of the Lord Jesus any time.

Could be before tomorrow morning. In some ways I hope not, because I've got some exciting things to tell you about tomorrow morning. But I'd settle for it if you decided to come tonight.

But I really, quite frankly, old as I am, don't anticipate going to heaven by underground. I'm going by air. We're going to meet him in the clouds.

Marvelous. At least, I will if I'm in Colorado. But you see, that's the other side of the world, and I'm going up.

Is anybody's guess as to where you folks are going? I just hope you manage to change course. This I say, the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ. The law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul it, but it should make that promise of none in faith.

Now you need to pause and consider that. God made a covenant, he rebuked the devil, said that a little baby boy was going to be born of a woman who would destroy Satan, and all his works. That covenant was confirmed in Abraham, and then the law was given 430 years later.

So would you anticipate that you're going to be saved, reconciled to God by keeping the law, when God had already confirmed in Abraham the pledge he made of a little baby boy to be born at Bethlehem? God change his mind? Suddenly decided we'll scrap the earlier plan, now we'll let people get to heaven by keeping the law. Well that would be nonsense. The law was added 430 years after.

If the inheritance be of the law, we deserving our salvation, God patting us on the back and congratulating us that we've done so well in keeping his law. If salvation, the inheritance, be of that law, it's no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise, and God didn't change his mind.

So there's a very natural question that might arise on your lips, wherefore then serveth the law? If God already made up his mind that you and I were going to be redeemed through the shed blood of his

incarnate son, born at Bethlehem according to promise, if that was his plan to which he's going to stick, why did he add the law 430 years after? Well the answer is very simple, verse 19, it was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made. In other words, the law is a temporary expedient that was to cover a period of time until the one promised in the covenant, Genesis 3 15, confirmed in Abraham, should be born at Bethlehem. So the law is a temporary expedient until the seed arrives, Jesus.

Now we need to understand the nature of the law, we're not going to spend very long on this because we've other things that we need to discuss. That the law that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, that he etched himself, God, with his finger on stone, God authored it, that's why you and I cannot amend it, was threefold in character, it was a civil law as between man and man, and it was a moral law as between man and God. Civil law in our western nations is based upon that civil law God gave to Moses then.

The moral law we call the Ten Commandments, and we've discussed already that the Ten Commandments are not simply rules and regulations that God thought up to make life difficult. The law simply described the righteousness of God. The minimal demands that he as our creator has the absolute right to make of a man the creature made in his image.

Don't lie, I'm not a liar, don't steal, I'm not a thief, don't commit adultery, God says I'm not an adulterer, and you were created to reflect the glory, so that all creation could look at man and know what God was like. That's the moral law. Why did God give the moral law? Because of transgressions.

Because Ichabod, the glory had already departed, and man had long since ceased to be conscious of the nature and character and glory and holiness of God. So God introduced the moral law so that you and I might know what those minimal demands are of a holy God who created us to reflect his character. It was added, because of transgressions, to prove guilty sinners guilty.

The law was never designed to make men good. The law was designed in God's divine economy to prove men bad. Just keep the place there in Galatians 3, but have a look at Romans chapter 3. Third chapter, epistle to the Romans.

Nineteenth verse, we know that what things whoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law. What for? So that they can try and keep it and be good, uh-uh, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. That's why God gave the law.

To prove you, to prove me, all men, guilty. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. For by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The law was added because of transgressions so that in the light of what God demands of us who were made in his image, we will recognize that we have fallen short of the glory of God, and that's sin. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. For sin is the transgression of the law.

Because when you and I transgress that law that describes God's righteousness, we have fallen short of the glory. It was God's plumb line. If you could imagine that one of my hobbies is building dinky little things in the backyard.

I fancy myself somewhat as a builder, and when I've built some dinky thing in my backyard, I invite one of the neighbors and give them a good meal and take them out into my yard and say, what do you think of that? And of course being good neighbors and having had a good meal, they say, absolutely fantastic. I'd

like to congratulate you. I didn't know you had it in you to do anything like that.

Fantastic. And I agree, because that's why I invited them to dinner. Well, you do that several times, and then it gets a little bit boring, because after all, they don't know much about it anyway.

So next time when I've produced my masterpiece, I decide that I'm going to invite a man whose reputation is far and wide. I mean, he's in the top strata of that profession, and what he has to say will be worth something hearing. And so I give him a very specially good meal, take him out, and I say, what do you think of that? And my chest swells, and my chin goes out about three and a half inches, and I can watch him sort of drinking it all in.

And I say, well, what do you think? He says, that's not bad. I say, beg your pardon? He says, it isn't bad. Well, of course it isn't bad, I say.

Of course it is. I did it. Oh yes, he said, I can see that.

I mean, it's all right, you know, for a beginner. And I'm beginning to blow my top. I'm getting really hot around the neck.

And I say, what's wrong with it anyway? He said, don't get angry with me. But if you would look at it from where I am looking at it, you would see, it's just classic eye along this line, and you'll see there's some ugly little bulge in the middle. And not only that, if you look at it in another direction, you'll see that it's about two and a half inches out from top to bottom.

It doesn't stand straight. And he's talking about my wall. And I'm really about now to explode.

So he says, no, don't explode, it makes such a mess. He says, just a minute, he goes into the house and he takes the plumb line out of his pocket and puts it against my wall. And a sort of sickly smile spreads over my face.

Because there's an ugly twist, a bulge in the middle. And it's leaning over about two and a half inches out from top to bottom. And do I hate his plumb line.

You see a plumb line was never designed to make a crooked wall straight. A plumb line was designed to prove crooked walls crooked. That's why crooked walls hate plumb lines.

And that's why man whose heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked hates God's law. He tries to amend it. He wants one that doesn't hang true.

He wants one made out of a coat hanger that he can twist to match his own crookedness. It's called the new morality. Which, of course, is nothing more nor less than the old immorality.

Because, you see, the law cannot be twisted. Because it represents the righteousness of God. And if you want to change God's law, you've got to change God.

It's called the righteousness of God. In the 10th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where Paul, speaking of his own kith and kin as Jews, said, I have real compassion for them because they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. If you do something which isn't according to knowledge, how do you do it? In ignorance.

What was the nature of their ignorance? Not according to knowledge. The next verse goes on to say, 2nd verse, Romans 10, they being ignorant of God's righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness, and do not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. And, of course, if you don't like the demands of God's righteousness, you can shop around.

You'll find churches all over the place who will give you a twisted plumb line. And you'll think you're going to get by until one day you stand before him, and the only basis and standard upon which God will evaluate men at the judgment will be his righteousness. God's plumb line.

So, the law is our schoolmaster. Still there, Galatians chapter 3, verse 24. The law is our schoolmaster.

What's the law to teach us? That we're guilty, that we fall short of the glory, that we've sinned. The law is our schoolmaster. Not to make us miserable.

Just to alert and awaken our souls to the fact of our need, and as our schoolmaster, leads us to Christ, the Savior, who saves his people from their sins. The only one who can make crooked wolves stray. So, the law is our schoolmaster.

Bring us to Christ, that we might be justified, not by the law, or our good works, our practice of religion, but that we may be justified by faith. And after that faith is come, there's no condemnation. We're cleansed.

We are no longer under a schoolmaster. You're the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ. Now, that was the second part of the law.

The third part was the sacrificial law, and we've already discussed that. That was the shedding of blood of bulls and goats and heifers and doves and lambs. That can never take away sin.

A shadow only of good things to come. Hebrews 10, verse 1. Or Hebrews 10, verse 4. The blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin. Then you say, what is the value of the Old Testament sacrifice if it couldn't take away? It was a temporary expedient.

Until the seed should come. The only one who could pay the price, because he was the only one who possessed the life that man lost in Adam, and the only one conceived of the Holy Ghost, indwelt by the blood of God, the life of God, who could lay down that life and pay the price. The seed.

So, the blood sacrifice of the Old Testament was a temporary expedient. It was like God's checkbook, just as the moral law was God's plumb line that showed that we were in debt. Until Jesus came to pay the debt, God had a checkbook.

And in the Old Testament, to any boy, girl, man or woman who came to the priest and said, I know that I've sinned, I'm guilty, I'm condemned by the moral law, how can I have peace with God? How can I have remission? And the priest would say, bring the blood of a lamb, a dove, a heifer, whatever it may be. God's check. Now, a check doesn't pay a debt.

It only covers it. That's the atonement. Don't confuse the atonement of the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament with reconciliation or redemption.

It was a temporary expedient. It only covered the debt, but didn't pay it, didn't take it away. It was a check.

Supposing I owed you a thousand dollars and I don't, just in case you get some wrong idea. Well, you might anticipate one day I'll pay my debt. And sure enough, through the mail you get a letter from me, and in that letter there's a check, made out to you, signed by me, dated, everything is in order.

Have I paid my debt? Well, no. All you've got is a piece of paper, a promise to pay. That doesn't pay your debt.

I mean, you received that check for a thousand dollars, but I've got no money in my bank. How much is that check worth? Well, nothing. You could tear it up, throw it in the trash can, and lose nothing, because it isn't worth anything.

It's only a promise to pay. Supposing I went, you know, to the shopping center and bought a radio and gave them a check like that, and then I stayed in the Holiday Inn for ten days and paid with a check like that. What would happen after a bit? I'd be part of your prison ministry.

Because a check, you see, with nothing in the bank to honor the check, is worthless. But supposing there's enough money and a spare in my bank, and the bank in which you deposit it, functions it, you know, makes it work, cashes it. Is your debt now paid? They transfer a thousand dollars from my account into your account in cash.

Now your debt's paid. Check has been honored. It's been cashed.

And if you don't know too much about banking, you might think, well, that was pretty simple. I get a piece of paper like that, I take it to the bank, and I get a thousand dollars in cash in my account. I think I'll try that again tomorrow.

And if you could get hold of it, you'd get the same kind of check and take it to the bank and try to get another thousand dollars out of the same check. How would that work? Well, you'd be part of my prison ministry. How much is a check worth once it's been cashed? Nothing.

Absolutely nothing. On the back of it there'll be stamped honored. Canceled.

And if you try to get another thousand dollars out of the same check, then you'd pay the price. Having cashed it, and having received the thousand dollars in your account, supposing you tore that check up then and put it in the trash can, how much would you lose? Nothing. You'd lose nothing if you tore it up when it was never cashed, and you'd lose nothing if you tore it up after it had been cashed, because it's only a check.

Just a promise to pay. Now that was the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices. Absolutely valid.

But only so long as there was somebody who had cash enough to honor the check. Who was that? The Lord Jesus. Because he was the only man since Adam fell who had that life that Adam and all mankind had lost.

The life of God. Cash in the bank. That's why the Lord Jesus on the cross cried, you see, Teteleste, I paid in full.

Father, I've cashed the check. It's been honored. And when he went, you see, with that malefactor who said, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

He said, this day, not tomorrow, not in two days, not in three days, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise. I'm going to go to tell all those Old Testament saints who've had a check in their hands ever since they went to the priest. I'm going to tell them the good news that the check has been cashed.

Teteleste, it is finished, paid in full. So the law offers us only the shadow of something good to come, the seed, a check that needed to be honored. Is the law then, verse 21 of Galatians 3, against the promises of God? God forbid.

There's no conflict between the law and grace. The law was the temporary expedient that God uses still to prove us that we need his grace. G-R-A-C-E, God's riches at Christ's expense.

That's grace. But he had to pay the price. He had to cash the check.

And when man fell in Adam, he forfeited the life of God. And only one who had the life of God to forfeit on the behalf of man could pay the price. That's why you see Christ died and rose again on the cross.

He bore our sins, Peter tells us, in his own body on the tree. Not in the tomb, he never went there. His body did, but he didn't.

Because the Lord Jesus said, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise. So where was Jesus the day he died physically? In paradise. Where was his body? In the tomb.

He didn't suffer corruption. It remained there until the Lord Jesus, three days later, came back to that body and restored physical life to it, and appeared to his disciples and showed them the wounds in his hands and feet. But he'd by then been to paradise to tell all the Old Testament saints, Moses and Abel, who in obedience to God's sacrificial law had obeyed the gospel, the good news, and were accepted then on the same grounds that you and I will be accepted now.

They in anticipation of the event, and we in retrospect putting our trust in Jesus. Very simple. So is the law then against the promises of God, verse 21? God forbid.

Now I want you to pay very careful attention to this. It's in the subjunctive. If there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have come by the law.

Now what does that tell you? Had there been a law that could have given life, righteousness would have come by the law. What does that tell you? Never read the Bible in a hurry. Righteousness comes from life.

Righteousness comes from life. Had there been a law that could have given life, then righteousness would have come by the law. Because if the law can give you life, in the life you receive righteousness.

What life? God's life. Philippians 1.11, which I've cited several times, the fruits of righteousness are by Jesus Christ. The fruits of the Spirit.

The one by whom God, the Holy Spirit, you and I receive the life of Christ. Now if the law could have given us the life of Christ, then righteousness would have come by the law, and we could have gone to the law and received life. Had there been a law that could have given life, what does that presuppose? That there is one or isn't there? Had I got to the airport in time, I would have caught the plane.

What does that tell you? That I did or I didn't. I didn't. With your nose against the shop window, you see, if I'd had enough money, I would have bought it.

Does that mean you did or you didn't? You didn't. Because your husband wasn't there with his checkbook or credit card, to his delight. Had there been a law that could have given life, righteousness would have come by the law.

Because righteousness derives from life, the life of God. But the law cannot restore that life. What does the law do? Well as the Ten Commandments, I've told you, it represents the minimal demands of a holy God made of a man creating his own image.

So the law accurately describes the righteousness of God. Tells you the quality of life that derives from allowing God to live in you. Teach your mind, control your emotions, direct your will and govern your behavior.

He clothing his deity with your humanity. Man as God intended man to be. He God in the man, the origin of his own image.

He God in the man, the source of his own God activity. He God in the man, dynamic of his own demands and cause of his own effects. That's how God created man.

And when God was in a man living his life, clothed with the man's humanity, he of his own free consent, making himself available, body, soul, spirit, mind, emotion, will, full of the Holy Ghost, the righteousness that others saw in Adam, had they been there, would have been the righteousness of God. As the Lord Jesus, playing that role to perfection, real man, could only say, when you look at me, you don't see me behave, you see my father behaving. He that sees me sees my father.

Because I'm playing that role for which I as God created you as men. I'm allowing my father in me to be the source of all I do and say and am, righteousness, God behaving. So the Lord describes the quality of life, righteousness, that would derive from the life of God.

But what the law cannot do is restore to man the life of God from which righteousness derives. It can only prove us guilty and lead us to Christ. Who then says, I'm come that you might have, what? What the law can't give you, life.

What the law could not do through the weakness of the flesh, about which Sonny was talking this morning, what the law could not do through the weakness of the flesh, that old Adamic nature, that carnal mind that is at enmity with God, not subject to his law, neither can be, what the law could not do through the weakness of the flesh, God has done. Sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin has condemned our sin in his flesh on the cross. So that giving himself for us, risen from the dead, he might give himself to us and by his presence in life abolish the state of death so that we may walk in the Spirit.

For what the law could not do through the weakness of the flesh, God has done, sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, that the righteousness demanded by the law might now be fulfilled in us who walk, not after the flesh that can't, but after the Spirit who can. Romans chapter 8 verses 3 and 4. All right, now let's match that with Hebrews in chapter 7 verses 18 and 19. Hebrews 7, 18 and 19.

And you'll see the beautiful consistency of God's word. Verse 18 of the 7th chapter of the epistle of the Hebrews, there is verily a disannulling, rendering out of use, a disannulling of the commandment going before. Not the moral law, that'll never change because God never changes.

He's speaking now of the sacrificial law. There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitables thereof. That law command of God, which in the Old Testament said, bring the blood of a bull, goat, heifer, or a lamb, which can never take away sin.

There is therefore a disannulling, a rendering obsolete of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitables thereof, because the law made nothing perfect. The law made nothing perfect. In the margin of your Bible put there Psalm 19, 7. This is Hebrews 7, 19.

You'll be able to remember that. Hebrews 7, 19, Psalm 19, 7. What does Psalm 19, 7 say? The law of the Lord is perfect. It gives a perfectly accurate description of God's righteousness, and of all that righteousness demands of you and me as men who were created in God's image.

The law of the Lord is perfect, but all the law of the Lord which is perfect can do is convert the soul. In other words, prove us guilty and show us that we need exactly what God had in mind when he promised Abraham that that seed should be born, foreshadowed in advance Genesis 3, 15, when God rebuked the devil, when Adam fell. The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.

Now don't misunderstand that. The bringing in of a better hope. That doesn't mean that God, you know, first thought up the law and it failed, so he had a panic committee in heaven and thought up a new way.

Uh-uh. It's the covenant that God made in the day that man sinned. Confirmed in Abraham, fulfilled in Jesus.

God didn't think up anything new, whatever. He simply brought in the plan in his appointed time, because in the fullness of time, dead on schedule, Jesus was born of a woman. Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4. That he might accomplish the redemptive act.

The bringing in of the better hope. The introducing into the world of the Lord Jesus, the Lamb slain before ever the world was. A better hope.

Wonderful. Jesus. Anything else? Well yes.

In the same chapter there, Hebrews chapter 7, another but, verse 24. But this man, Jesus, because he continue with ever hath an unchangeable priesthood, he didn't have to be replaced by virtue of death. He was a priest after the order of an endless life.

He brought, we saw that, Hebrews 10, 12, but this man offered one sacrifice for sins forever. Not day after day and week after week and month after month, like the Levitical priesthood, because that has been rendered obsolete. Because that was but a check that Christ cashed on the cross, in that one sacrifice for sins forever.

This man, because he continue with ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became as who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For this he did once, when he offered up himself.

You see, in the Old Testament, the fire consumed the sacrifice, but on the cross, the sacrifice consumed the fire, never to burn again. A better sacrifice. In Hebrews, in chapter 9, just turn over the page, look at it,

22.

Almost all things are by the law purged with blood, without shedding of blood, no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things, the shadow, the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly, the reality, the substance of it, the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. I often wondered why it was sacrifices when Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever, and yet there it's in the plural.

Well, how many times did Adam die? Twice. Spirits really forfeited the life of God on the day he fell. In the day that you eat thereof, God said you will surely die, and did, but over 900 years of age later, he died physically.

How many times did Jesus die? On the cross, when he was made sin, after those three agonizing hours of darkness, he could cry, it's all over, finished, because the Holy Spirit came back, re-inhabiting his human spirit. He was raised from the dead, the first man ever to be raised from the dead, the first man who forfeited the life of God, but to whom that life was restored, and the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. Remember? Sacrifices.

Don't look at it now, but Isaiah, chapter 53, verse 9, speaking of the Lord Jesus in anticipation of the event. Death there is a plural word in the original. Deaths.

Deaths. Don't you turn to it, but let me read it to you just in case you don't believe me. You see, I had a special Bible written to suit my doctrines.

Isaiah 53, verse 9, he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his deaths. Plural, in the margin. If you've got a marginal translation, you'll see that.

The original word is plural, because Christ died physically and spiritually. Conquered death in all its forms. Magnificent.

A better sacrifice. And having conquered death, risen by the restoration to him of the Holy Spirit, physically dying for your sake and mine, three days later, reoccupying that body that lay in the tomb, that that life that was restored to him might now be restored to you and to me. Turn to Ephesians in chapter 1. And I'm going to read this from the Amplified New Testament.

We've cited it already once, but maybe you need to be reminded, and others of you weren't here. So in Ephesians 1, I do not cease, verse 16, to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. I always pray the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that he may grant you a spirit of wisdom, revelation, insight into mysteries and secrets, in the deep and intimate knowledge of God, by having the eyes of your heart flooded with light, so that first you can know and understand the hope to which he's called you, which is Christ himself, somebody living in your heart, your only hope of being restored to glory, Colossians 1.27. That's the first thing.

Secondly, how rich is his glorious inheritance in the saints. Not your inheritance in him, but his inheritance in you, a place for his feet in your heart. Because he said, I'll make the place of my feet glorious, to beautify the place of my habitation.

It's his inheritance in the saints, the right to be God in the man. So that you can know and understand, verse 19, what is the immeasurable, unlimited and surpassing greatness of God's power in and for us,

who believe, as demonstrated in the working of his mighty strength, which he, God, exerted in Christ, when he, God, raised Jesus from the dead. Verse 1, chapter 2. And you, Hattie Quicken, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

As I asked you the other day, is he talking to a bunch of people in heaven? No, he's talking to the Ephesian church on earth. But he says, you've been raised from the dead, by the same mighty power that God exercised when he raised Jesus from the dead. Was that a physical resurrection? Well, of course not.

It simply means that the life that the Lord Jesus laid down for you and for me, God's life, which was restored to him in the moment of redemption, in a spiritual new birth, regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost, God restores to you and to me. And in that same chapter, 2 and verse 4, in the Amplified New Testament, God, so rich as he in his mercy, because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful, intense love with which he loved us, even when we were dead, he made us alive together in fellowship and in union with Christ. He gave us the very life of Christ himself, the same new life with which he, God, quickened him.

Isn't that incredible? He gave to you and to me, when we believed, the very life with which God, the Father, quickened his son, the life of God. That's why you can say to me, to live is Christ. Look in the third chapter, verse 16.

May he grant you out of the rich treasure of his glory to be strengthened, reinforced with mighty power in the inner man, by the Holy Spirit himself, indwelling your innermost being and personality. May Christ, through your faith, actually dwell, settle down, abide, make his permanent home in your hearts. That, verse 19, you may really come to know, practically, through experience for yourselves, the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge without experience.

That you may be filled through all your being unto all the fullness of God. That is, that you may have the richest measure of the divine presence and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God himself. Is that enough? That's what it means when you believe.

You're wholly filled and flooded with God himself. You have the richest measure of the divine presence. God, the Creator, re-inhabits the creature.

How wealthy can you be? Colossians 2.9. In him the wholefulness of deity, the Godhead, continues to dwell in bodily form, giving complete expression of the divine nature. And you are in him, Christ, made full, have come to fullness of life in Christ. You too are filled with the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In other words, your body becomes the temple of the living God. And all he needs in that temple, your heart, is a place for his feet so that he can reach his throne and make the place of his feet glorious and beautify the place of his habitation. Well, being as we are so magnificently furnished by the presence of Jesus unto every good work, what's gone wrong? Why has redeemed sinners, indwelt by the Creator God, allowed to draw upon the illimitable resources of deity by virtue of the presence of Christ living within us? Why do we give such a shabby exhibition? I'm going to take these two or three moments only just to show you something on video.

Not a video, a transparency. Let me just remind you, when by faith, in this condition, dead in trespasses and sins, alienated from the life of God, the Holy Spirit, having been withdrawn, leaving you physically alive, soulishly active, but when you turn in faith through Christ, back to God, truly repentant, with childlike

dependence, you're redeemed. Your sins are forgiven.

Blotted out like a thick clasp. Because the Lord Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree. And being made sin for us, our sin coming between himself and God, the Holy Spirit, withdrawn from the Lord Jesus, he died.

But the Holy Spirit, three hours later, was restored to him, the first man raised from the dead, that his Holy Spirit then, for the first time in all human history at Pentecost, then instantly, every time any boy, girl, man or woman is redeemed, his life restored to you and to me. The same life with which the Father quickened him is the life with which he now quickens us. But ego is still there.

The resistance. The flesh that Sonny talked about this morning. Now, the church, the body of Christ, is represented by these who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

It isn't a building made with hands, but the bodies of redeemed sinners indwelt by their risen Lord. In the early church, of course, they sat around a tree. Which was the church? The tree or the bodies? But then it was the rainy season and so they had to die for cover and Mrs Smith let them come into her home.

Which was the church? Her cottage or the people? The people. But then they accumulated a few funds and thought we ought to have a nicer place than that, so they built a nice church with a clock given by a brew who thought he'd get to heaven by giving a clock to the church. Which was the church? The people or the building? The people.

The church is the body of Christ, inhabited by a risen Savior. Now, unfortunately, this is not on the screen, but down here you'll find this is man in normality bearing the fruits of the Spirit, because if you could see down here and you can't, the roots of that tree are in God. Then man fell, forfeited the Holy Spirit, and he produced only the works of the flesh, because his roots were in Satan.

But when you're redeemed, the Holy Spirit comes and your roots are on this side in God, but unfortunately there are roots on the other side still in that old Adamic nature. So there's a mixture, every now and again the fruit of the Spirit, every now and again the works of the flesh. A sort of mixed up kid, that's the carnal Christian.

But you see, what God had in mind in Christ was not only should he die for us, but we die with him, to that old Adamic nature. And so by the cross, you see, you and I by faith can put the axe to the roots that still have their Satan, their roots still in Satan. Now I've seen a fantastic demonstration of that here right on site.

It's down in the CMS place near the restroom. Don't know whether you've noticed it, you ought to go and have a look. There's an old trunk of a tree and it's rotting.

It's as good as dead, but coming out of the center it is a new tree. Interesting. That's a Christian.

So long as the axe of course has been put to the old tree, then the new life can spring. Life out of death. I'm going to take a picture of it.

Quite fascinating. Now that's the problem. That's why we give, you see, such a shabby exhibition of the new life that we received in Christ.

That's why Paul wrote to the Galatians. He says foolish Galatians, who's bewitched you. Somebody's taking you for a ride and dumped you in the boondocks.

What was their problem? Well there were legalistic believing Jews who wanted to put them once more into bondage of the law. Instead of them living, drawing their limitable resources from the life of Christ. So this is what he says.

It's called the Amplified New Testament. It isn't exaggerated, it's simply amplified. Because the English language is poorer than the Greek, so you need more words.

Oh you poor, silly, thoughtless, unreflecting, senseless Galatians. Well what have they done to deserve that lot? Who's fascinated, bewitched, cast a spell over you? Let me ask you this one question. Did you receive the Holy Spirit as the result of obeying the law and doing its work? Did God pat you on the back and I'll give you my life because you've done so well? Well that was a rhetorical question.

He knew perfectly well that wasn't true. Was it by hearing the message of the gospel and believing it? You heard the good news of the gospel, you believed it, repented toward God, put your trust in Jesus, and instantly God gave you the Holy Spirit. Are you so foolish, so senseless and so silly? Verse three.

Having begun your new life spiritually, God's gift to you of the Holy Ghost, for whom Jesus now lives in you as the Father once lived in him. Having begun your new life spiritually with the Holy Spirit, you're now reaching perfection by dependence on the flesh, polishing your own image, taking the wick out of the oil, and burning out and producing nothing but smoke and ashes. He said, can you be that done? Here's an illustration I've used a thousand times.

This is the thousand and one thing. You're driving down the road and there's a woman with her head under the hood. Out of the kindness of your heart you stop and say, lady are you in trouble? She said, this thing won't go.

So you jump into the front of the car and switch it on and look at the gas gauge and rather as you anticipated there's no petrol. So you say, lady I'll tell you where this thing won't go. It doesn't have what it takes.

But I've got a rope in the back of mine, I'll tell you to the next gas station. And you do. And when you get there you say to the man, fill a tank.

And he does. Then to her great embarrassment she finds she doesn't have any money. And doesn't even have a credit card.

Well you say, lady be my guest. I'm happy that I'm here just when you need me most. And you pay the bill.

You didn't have to, but you do. In other words you pay a debt you did not owe. Because she owes a debt she cannot pay.

What's that called in the bible? Redemption. That's a blood transaction on the cross. Where Jesus paid a debt he did not owe, because we owed a debt.

But why do you pay a debt you did not owe? Because she owes a debt she cannot pay. To fill her tank and give her what it takes to get home. Well she is very thankful.

You get into your car. You're just about to drive off when you, as a last gesture of goodwill, open the window to wave and say goodbye. And you see that woman with a full tank pushing the car home.

What would you say? I know what I'd say. I'd say, excuse me, I want my amplified new testament. Oh you poor, silly, thoughtless, unreflecting, senseless woman.

I pay a debt I did not owe, because you owed a debt you could not pay. To give you what it takes, a full tank to get home. And you push the thing.

You laughing? Who are you laughing at? Yourself? Why did Christ die, shed his blood? So that you might receive what it takes to be a man, a woman, as God intended man to be. He gave himself for you, paid that debt, so that risen from the dead he might give himself to you, a full tank to get you home. And you push it, and wonder why you're tired.

How about getting on board, put your foot in the gas and go for a ride, and begin to enjoy what for so long as a Christian you've been enduring.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32250.mp3>

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