



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

Christ's Sacrifice Once and For All – Hebrews 10:1-18

August 5, 2018

1. **Lesson Starter:**

Today we will be examining the Ultimate Will of God demonstrated through the obedience of Jesus Christ to his death on the Cross as our sacrifice. To help us work through this very important message, we will be breaking the lesson down into three major segments:

- Failure of the Law to make perfect people to approach God, Vs 1-4
- Inadequacy of animal sacrifices and need for Jesus's Atonement, Vs 5-10
- The finality of Christ's offering for forgiveness of sin, Vs 11-18

2. **The Failure of the Law 10:1-4**

¹ The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ² Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. ³ But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. ⁴ It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

The opening verse of “only a shadow of the good things” indicates its inadequacy. A “shadow” shows the approaching presence of Jesus, but has no lasting substance of itself! The inadequacies of the “shadow” were not designed to do the *lasting eternal work of God* for perfecting of his people.

The final evaluation of the Levitical sacrifices through the blood of bull and lambs was that it “did not take away or remove sin eternally”. Otherwise, they would not have had to offer them continually!

Three items proved the inadequacy of the old system:

- The constant repetition of the sacrifices showed that their effect was only temporary
- The consciousness of sin in the believer remained, proving the cleansing was imperfect
- The old sacrifices were continual reminders of guilt. God desired that even the memory of sin should be forgotten (Vs 17)

In verse 4, the Hebrews writer dwells on the defectiveness of the Old Testament system by stressing the verb “to take away” sins. This verb in the Greek is not used anywhere else in the New Testament. In all of Hebrews, but specifically what we learned in Chapter 9:26, the purpose of Christ's work is stated as the “the putting away of sins”.

3. **The Final Sacrifice 10:5-10**

⁵ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; ⁶ with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. ⁷ Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, my God.’” ⁸ First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law. ⁹ Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

When Christ came into the world, the writer puts Psalm 40:7-9 on the lips of Christ. God's delight comes not from the sin offerings, but us doing His will!

Psalm 40:7-9

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have opened, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. ⁷ Then I said, "Here I am, I have come, it is written about me in the scroll. ⁸ I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart." ⁹ I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, Lord, as you know.

For Christ to be able to do God's will on earth, it was necessary for him to have a body. What the law could not accomplish was satisfied with a single self-sacrifice of Christ. Notice the emphasis on Christ sacrificing his own desire and will as opposed to the physical sacrifice on the cross. Without submission of our soul to God's will, no other events could happen! It is all about Jesus's willful obedience. Something we need to take note of and ask ourselves, what has our decision been? Are we continually coming to God in submission and obedience so that God can use us in his will? This is always the first step.

Jesus came into this world to be our high priest, to finally put sinful men forever into the perfect relation to God. What the law failed to do, Christ did by his submission, obedience and suffering. **Once for all**, abolishing the need for temporary or continual sacrifices.

4. **The Final Forgiveness 10:11-18**

¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. ¹⁴ For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: ¹⁶ "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." ¹⁷ Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

The finality of Christ's offering is underscored with three phrases:

- Christ had offered for all time, the order of eternity
- A single sacrifice emphasizes the uniqueness of what Christ did
- He sat down at the right hand of God showing his sacrificial work was complete and he was resting for eternity. There is nothing more to do or add.

The writer quotes a favorite Psalm 110, where God promises to bring all his foes into submission. Christ had just completed all that was necessary to make this come to fruition for His ultimate triumph.

Psalm 110:1-4

The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of your enemies!" ³ Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy splendor, your young men will come to you like dew from the morning's womb. ⁴ The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Now the **Holy Spirit** bears the assurance that the promises of the new covenant will be fulfilled. Verse 18 sums up the Christian truth that Christ's one time sacrifice satisfies all requirements. No more need for sacrifice is necessary.

In summary for chapter 10 through verse 18, the writer has told us:

- The Old Testament law was only a shadow of the reality to come through Jesus
- The sacrifice of Christ is superior to the Old Testament system
 - As the substance is to the shadow

- Christ blood superior to bulls and goats
- Superior as the spiritual world is to the material world
- Superior as eternity is to time

No “shadow Old Testament System” could have ever removed humanity’s massive burden of sin and guilt. The first part of chapter 10 through verse 18 establishes the superiority of Christ sacrifice as compared to their past law and customs. This also established the spiritual and scriptural foundation for what the writer of Hebrews is about to lay down to all Jews, “The Invitation to Follow and Accept God through Christ in true faith” for next week’s lesson!

5. Group Discussion Questions:

1. As referred to in Verse 2, 3 and 4; discuss what the blood sacrifice of bulls actually did for the Old Testament Jew?
 - a. In the context of the actual sin?
 - b. In the context of the guilt of sin?
 - c. In the context of our relationship to God?
2. Depending on your discussion from Question 1, why does Verse 2 seem to differentiate “the sin” compared to “the guilt of sin”? What does this mean?
3. From Verse 4 and given the Jews historical understanding of the purpose of sacrifices for them by the priests, how were they to understand the phrase “the putting away of sins” if this was the first time using this term?
4. If God was *not pleased* with the sin and burnt offering as mentioned in verses 5 through 8, why would He have initially established this in his law?
5. As mentioned in Verse 9 and 10, what has to come first before we can be used by God in a powerful way for his Will and Plan?
6. Put yourself in the Jew’s situation; How do you think they would react or think about being told that no more sacrifices are necessary? What basis or context do they have to understand Christ’s sacrifice being eternal and the last one?