



## NG Study Guide: Hebrews 10:1-18 :: “Jesus Offers Great Assurance” Pt. 1 [12.3.23]

### Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. *Leader note: Please review the brief instructions for leaders at the bottom.*

### The Study

**Thesis:** We all reach moments in our lives when we realize that our best is simply not good enough. We are a fallen people who fail to live up to the standard of perfection that God has set. Today we will discover that Christ came as our once and perfect sacrifice to sanctify us with His perfection.

**Subject:** Christ’s once and perfect sacrifice

**Object:** Be sanctified through Christ’s sacrifice

**Context:** Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were facing persecution because of their faith in Jesus. We’ve learned that Jesus is greater than the prophets, angels, Moses, the Promised Land, Joshua’s rest, the Levitical priests, and that He offers a greater covenant. In Hebrews 10 we see that Christ is the once and perfect sacrifice that provides His people with true forgiveness of sins.

#### A. Imperfect sacrifices [1-4]

*For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. <sup>2</sup> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.*

##### 1. Insufficient - a shadow [1]

*For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.*

As we’ve discussed the law was put in place to help us live in the best way according to God’s standard. However, we are all fallen people who fail to live up to those standards every single day. We saw these standards become more and more clarified growing from 10 [Exodus 20] to 613 [Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy]. Though these commands were good, they are an impossible standard for fallen people to live according to. They are good, but are merely a shadow of the good things to come [1]. Because God’s people continue to stumble their way through life and break these commands, continual offerings must be made in order for His people to be forgiven. If the law and ritual sacrificial system that was in place was perfect, there would be no need for something better to come. It

was insufficient and imperfect because it constantly brought God's people back to offer sacrifice after sacrifice (year after year) for the forgiveness of their sins [1]. This sacrifice did not make those who approached God or drew near to God, perfect [1]. God was unable to dwell with His people as He did in the garden because of the insufficiency and imperfection of the people and the sacrificial system. However, this was merely a shadow of the good that was to come.

## **2. Inadequate - continual [2-3]**

<sup>2</sup> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

They received continual forgiveness, but not a definitive forgiveness, therefore it was inadequate. The worshippers, due to their sin, needed to continually come back to offer sacrifices year after year for the forgiveness of past sins [1]. The author points out that if an adequate sacrifice had been made for their definitive forgiveness they would've been able to cease from these continual offerings [2]. However, they annually, on the Day of Atonement, felt the burden, weight, conviction, and awareness of their sins indicating the inadequacy of the sacrifice for definitive forgiveness [2]. Therefore, there was a reminder of their sins every year [3].

## **3. Ineffective - to take away sins [4]**

<sup>4</sup> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

These sacrifices were ultimately ineffective in that they were unable to definitively and decisively remove past, present, and future sin from whomever was offering them. This was a system that was established by God, and therefore the blood of bulls and goats that were offered on the Day of Atonement *did* provide forgiveness of the sins that were committed. But because of the ongoing nature of the sacrifice the blood of the bulls and goats was unable to change someone's status from sinner to saint, it didn't change their standing before God allowing them to approach His presence in worship.

## **B. Christ's perfect sacrifice [5-10]**

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. <sup>6</sup> In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "

<sup>8</sup> Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

### **1. Christ came as the sacrifice [5-7]**

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. <sup>6</sup> In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "

Because we recognize that the animal sacrifices that were made are insufficient, inadequate, and ineffective in removing sins we are then directed to look at the perfect sacrifice that came through Christ. The author directs our attention to Psalms 40:6-8 that are a prophecy that point directly toward Christ [5]. The author approaches the Psalm as though it is directly quoted by Christ himself. He came and sacrificed his human body, as opposed to an animal sacrifice, as the once and perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness and remission of sins. Because of this once and perfect sacrifice, no other sacrifices are

necessary as Christ has completed the work of forgiveness. Therefore, we are told that God has no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin because Christ came to satisfy our *atonement*, our *restoration* to him, and our *forgiveness* once and for all. We then see that the entire volume of the book (Scripture) is written of and points towards Christ. Scholar J. Barton Payne cites that there are 574 references to Christ in the Old Testament. And while some of those references may be repetitive, we can confidently say that Jesus fulfilled at least 300 prophecies that we see given throughout the Old Testament. Going all the way back to when sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, in Genesis 3 we see a picture of Christ crushing the head of the serpent. These references appear from Genesis all the way to Malachi. The entire meta-narrative of Scripture points directly to the once and perfect sacrifice of Christ. That's the point of the book! It is all built around Christ coming as our sacrifice to restore mankind in relationship with the God who created us, and this is only accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ. His sacrifice is the only sacrifice that is perfect: completely sufficient, completely adequate, and completely effective.

We understand that this sacrifice was the will of God to restore us in right relationship to Him.

## **2. Christ came to do God's will [8-9]**

<sup>8</sup> Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

The author then restates some of these direct quotes from Psalm 40:6-8 for the point of emphasis. When there is repetition in Scripture it is to create added focus and emphasis on the truth. We see that again the sacrifices of animals for the full atonement of sins was imperfect. That God did not desire them, but Christ came, leaving His throne in heaven, entering the world in the form of the human body (His creation), lived the perfect life that we could not, and took on our punishment sacrificing His life as final payment for our sins. We see that this was to accomplish the will of God [7, 9]. It was God's will that His only son come as the once and perfect sacrifice on our behalf. This was truly an incredible sacrifice. This was not something that Jesus desired because he knew the gravity of it. He stated in Matthew 26:39, just moments before his arrest, "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." The sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf is unimaginable, yet he was obedient to do the will of His Father.

There is a pattern throughout the course of human history and in Scripture that we see: God states His desire for His peoples' obedience, and their/our obedience is imperfect bringing us back to doing what is right in our own eyes. If we were obedient to God's will for our lives, Christ's sacrifice would be unnecessary, yet we daily fall in disobedience to His will. Christ set the perfect example of perfect obedience to God's will as our perfect sacrifice. Though this is the only means of our true forgiveness, this should inspire us to live in obedience to His will also.

## **3. Christ came to sanctify [10]**

<sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Because of Christ's once and perfect sacrifice, we have been sanctified through the offering of His body [10]. Notice that the term sanctified here is past tense: we "have been sanctified" [10]. Sanctification is defined as the act of making or declaring something as holy. This is a reference to our *positional sanctification*. Because of Christ's perfect sacrifice, we were made and declared holy by God. Though we have been sinful, are sinful, and continue to be sinful, God has bestowed the holiness of Christ on us. He has positionally moved us from unholy to holy, from dead in our sin to alive in Christ, from imperfect in our sin to receiving the gifted perfection of Christ. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, when God looks at you

He sees the righteousness of Christ. What a gift! You have positionally been cleansed from your past, present, and future sin. This is something that the animal sacrifices could not attain, but the perfect sacrifice of Christ positional moved us from unrighteous to righteous before God. We do not have to fear or question our standing before God. Christ's sacrifice has sanctified you. You are positionally holy before God. All you have to do it receive this perfect sacrifice that has been made on your behalf. Christ came as *the* sacrifice, to do God's will, and to sanctify us positionally before God.

### **C. The sanctifying sacrifice [11-18]**

*<sup>11</sup> And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. <sup>14</sup> For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. <sup>15</sup> But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, <sup>16</sup> "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," <sup>17</sup> then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." <sup>18</sup> Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.*

#### **1. The final needed sacrifice [11-13]**

*<sup>11</sup> And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.*

Christ's sanctifying sacrifice was the final needed sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins (past, present, and future) [12]. The sacrificial system that was in place required the priest to offer daily repeated sacrifices for the forgiveness of past sins of God's people. But Christ's magnificent, unfathomable, massive sacrifice was the final needed sacrifice for our forgiveness that sanctifies His people. These animal sacrifices that were made repeatedly to forgive the past sins of God's people because they were disobedient daily, prohibited them from entering into His presence in the tabernacle to worship and be right before Him. But because of the perfect sacrifice of Christ, there is no longer the need for the priests to offer these daily sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. We still need to continually go before God in confession, but because of the once and perfect sacrifice of Christ, we are positionally sanctified and restored to God in relationship. He accomplished the work, it is complete, which is why He is now seated at the right hand of the Father, waiting till His enemies are made a footstool [13]. The final sacrifice has been made for you, it was the once and perfect sacrifice of God himself coming to offer His own body and blood for the forgiveness of sin. The work is done.

#### **2. The sanctified continue sanctifying [14]**

*<sup>14</sup> For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

According to verse 10 we have been sanctified. Because of His sacrifice, He has perfected us forever [14]. This is repetitive affirmation of the positional sanctification that God has made available. It is past tense, indicating that it has already happened. However, we then see the author state that there are still those who are being sanctified, present tense [11]. How can this be? Those who have received the perfect sacrifice of Christ have been perfected forever because they have received the righteousness of Christ. This is the once and perfect sacrifice. However, we are still growing in our obedience to God. The moment we receive the forgiveness offered through Christ's sacrifice does not mean that we no longer sin. Though we are positionally sanctified, we still have the opportunity to grow in our obedience to God. If prior to receiving Christ's sacrifice we struggle with anger, lust, or coarse language that does not mean

that in the moment we will no longer struggle with those things. Once we receive His forgiveness, it now allows us to grow in our holiness. This is called progressive sanctification. We are positionally sanctified, but we will continue to struggle with the temptations of this world and grow in our holiness. Even Paul, someone we greatly look up to for His faith, states in Romans 7 that he continues to do what he does not want to do. We are positionally sanctified, and yet still progress in our sanctification during this life. It's a both-and. Until finally, we reach the day that we meet Christ face to face and become perfectly sanctified. At that moment we will no longer struggle with the temptations of sin but will be positionally sanctified, and our progressive sanctification will be made perfect.

### **3. The New Covenant [15-18]**

*<sup>15</sup> But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, <sup>16</sup> "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," <sup>17</sup> then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." <sup>18</sup> Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.*

The author then points out that the Holy Spirit provided a foreshadowing of this perfect sacrifice in Jeremiah 31:34. He shows that the new covenant that God will instate takes the commands of God and moves them from strictly observance out of duty, to being written on their hearts and in their minds. This is the picture of that sanctifying sacrifice. They were living in observance to all the mosaic laws that had functionally been performed outwardly to strive for right standing before God. But under the new covenant, moving away from the old sacrificial system, the commands of God would be written on our hearts. This would be a mere outward performance, but an inward transformation to love and live more like God himself. This is how the sanctification process works. We receive the sacrifice, His commands are written on our hearts and minds, and we begin to live our lives growing in love for God and love for neighbors. We grow in our sanctification. Additionally, we see the impact of the perfect sacrifice of Christ is the remission of our sins under the new covenant. All of the lawless deeds and sins are no longer remembered by God [17]. Why? Because Christ took on our sin. He became our sacrifice. His blood was spilled to remove our sin from us and to give us access to the Father. This sacrifice made a way for all of God's people to enter into His presence to worship Him, without the fear of death because that death had been paid. There is no longer any need to offer the sacrifices required by the old covenant because there is a remission of sins. They have been removed (past, present, and future). The New Covenant through the sacrifice of Christ is available to you, and God has given you access to Himself through the once and perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

#### **Study Guide Qs**

***Q1. Contemplate the sacrifice Jesus made to sanctify you. What feelings does this stir up?***

***Q2. How does Christ's obedience to do the will of God inspire us to do God's will in our own lives?***

***Q3. How does the assurance of our salvation (positional sanctification) impact the way that we live?***

***Q4. What are some ways you experienced spiritual growth (progressive sanctification) during this last year? (Share the growth you've witnessed in others as well.)***

## “Disciples Who Dig Deeper” (optional or alternative study)

1. An article to help understand ‘expiation’ (removal of sins): <https://www.gotquestions.org/expiation.html>
2. A deeper explanation of the types of sanctification: <https://enduringword.com/media/sanctification-three-ways/>

### Love your neighbors (inside + outside the group) better:

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors inside or outside the group?
2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbors inside or outside the group?

### Disciples who make disciples:

1. Who would like to share how they recently sought to make disciples?
2. Here is a disciple making idea to consider for the weeks ahead: [Contemplate how God has equipped you to make disciples through our new large-scale initiative. We’d love to have you involved.](#)

### Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don’t force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

### Leader Notes:

1. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.
2. **Feel free to pre-select the discussion questions that you want to focus on** in case there isn’t enough time to answer them all.
3. **The “Disciples Who Dig Deeper” section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities.** As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the “Disciples Who Dig Deeper” section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.
4. **Every time you meet consider asking:**
  - a. **What about this passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?** If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don’t hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.