

Hebrews 2:10-18 // Total Salvation for all the Family

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[0 : 00] Hebrews 2, verses 10-18, which is found on the Church Bible, page 1202.! Hebrews 2, verses 10-18.

In bringing many sons and daughters through glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of the salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

He says, For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.

For this reason, he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

[1 : 44] Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he's able to help those who are being tempted. Amen. Amen.

Thanks, Joanne. Friends, good evening. If I haven't met you, my name's Tim. I'm on staff here at St. Silas. It's a real privilege to be opening up what is a pretty special passage from the book of Hebrews.

So, let's pray as we jump into this. Please pray with me. Father, we thank you that you are a God who speaks. And as Roots Plus will be looking at later this evening, you reveal yourself.

You speak to us so that we don't have to work out who we are. We don't have to guess. We don't have to work out who we are. We don't have to work out who you are because you've told us. Help us listen.

Help us see Jesus clearly tonight, we pray in his name. Amen. Amen. I was walking through the city centre of Glasgow a couple of weeks ago, and I don't often walk past this part of the city, but I was going past the Gallery of Modern Art and the Duke of Wellington statue.

[2 : 56] And if you're new to Glasgow, if you've just come to the city, then it's worth knowing that it's a 40-year tradition now that anonymous members of the public will replace the traffic cone on the Duke of Wellington's head every time it is taken down.

There it is there. This is actually, so iconic is this as a symbol of Glasgow that a new church plant in Merchant City, not our church plant, but another one, a great one that is also doing good stuff, they have this on their website, right, as sort of just part of who Glasgow is.

And here's the thing, even if you are new to the city, my guess is someone's probably already told you this story. Someone's probably already shown you this, photos of it, newspaper reports, whatever, even if you've only been here for a few weeks.

And the reason why you may well have been told about it is because when people think of Glasgow as a city, this story seems to sum up the city pretty well.

That act of who cares what the authorities say, of persistently poking fun, of light-hearted banter, of rebellious independence, of local pride, it all mixes together and goes, like, that's Glasgow.

[4 : 13] Glasgow. It's just a fitting picture of the city. Classic Glasgow. Because some things just go together. Hand and glove go together.

Batman and Robin go together. I should say in this land, neeps and tatties just go together. They are fitting. And in our passage for tonight, we are told in verse 10 that it was fitting that God would make the pioneer of human salvation perfect through suffering.

Have a look at verse 10 of Hebrews 2. Why was it fitting that God saved humanity in that way?

I mean, if you caused someone to suffer, you physically hurt them or you emotionally manipulated them or you crippled them financially or whatever, and someone says, it was fitting that you did that, they don't think that you're a nice person.

And God is limitless. He has options all open to Him. And this is the way that He chooses to go about salvation. Jesus' suffering. And what is it about that that we're supposed to look at it and go, classic God?

[6 : 02] We're continuing our series in Hebrews. We saw last week how Jesus entered into our humanity and redeemed the human race.

We saw that Jesus' hope for humanity, that there is no other.

And tonight's passage focuses on Jesus' solidarity with His people, with us. And the cross is the epicenter of that solidarity.

Three points for tonight. They're in your outline. Total salvation for all in the family, which helps you now. Even tonight. Even tonight.

Even tonight. And can I say, if you experience half as much delight as I have in preparing this passage this week, then you will have had a good time.

[7 : 05] There are great riches here to mine. And I've been praying that God gives us eyes to see these things. So first point. Total salvation. Have Hebrews 2 open.

Verse 10. We read it before. In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God for whom and through whom everything exists should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what He suffered.

Now we've thought about that fitting word in there a bit already, but there's two other words which are worth focusing on. The first is pioneer or archetype.

Christ is paving new ground as He drags humanity upwards in His wake. He's the first one to walk that path, and so He pioneers that path, and we follow.

It's a pioneering salvation. Completely new. The world hasn't seen anything like it. The second word to think about is perfect. It could potentially be strange to think about Jesus being made perfect.

[8 : 14] It sounds a bit confusing, does it not? But it's in the sense of being prepared to be suitable for that pioneering role. So it's not saying that Jesus had any moral imperfections before He entered into the world.

But He couldn't be a pioneer for humanity if He wasn't made human. He needed to be prepared, and prepared perfectly.

But it's not His incarnation, it's not the act of becoming human that is identified as this becoming perfect. It's His suffering. The cross is what ultimately prepares Jesus to be the perfect pioneer of our salvation.

How? Well, last week we spent some time thinking about that bottom box of humanity, and we thought about it, how as we look at the world out there, we see humanity low.

Humanity struggling. Humanity not what they were created to be. Humanity out there. And tonight, our passage actually invites us to think more about humanity in here.

[9 : 29] In each one of us. And our experience of the brokenness of our world. Our own experience of sin.

And what happens to that. And so as we step through our passage, we see the complete, the total salvation, and total healing that Jesus gives.

There are three places in our passage where Jesus' sameness with us, to use a clunky English phrase, is emphasized. It is emphasized that Jesus is like us.

And each one of those times tramples over a consequence of sin that we experience in here. So let's take them one by one.

Hebrews 2, 11. Have a look at that. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. See how that's emphasizing Jesus' sameness with us?

[10 : 30] The one who makes people holy, the one who are made holy are of the same family. So, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

Now, shame is different to guilt. If guilt says, I did something bad, shame says, I am bad and now everyone knows it.

It's the humiliation. It's the losing face. It's that kind of idea. And I think in a world that is so performative, where we so carefully manufacture an image of how we present ourselves to the world, and that's just in our friendships, let alone online, when we're deliberate about what we hide, shame is a lurking beast.

I'm sure that there are things that you are ashamed of, that nobody really knows. There are things that I'm ashamed of.

But here's the thing. Jesus knows. Jesus knows all that is going on inside of us. And that's a terrifying thought.

[12:00] The opposite to shame is honour. And it's a terrifying thought until we realise that despite the shame that we feel, that Jesus knows better than anyone, He honours us.

Jesus is not ashamed to call you brother, sister. The consequence of sin.

Shame dealt with. Second place, where Jesus' sameness with us in the passage is identified. Verse 14. Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity.

There's the sameness between Jesus and us. So that, by His death, He might break the power of Him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Now, fear is different. Again, if shame is, I am bad and now everyone knows it, fear says, something bad is going to happen to me. And this is the work of the devil who uses our sin to generate fear within us to prevent us from coming to God.

[13:25] It says that everyone is held in slavery by this fear. Which is quite ironic, really, because freedom is the thing that our world boasts about having.

Freedom is the thing that people will go to great lengths to defend for themselves. And yet, this passage says, nobody actually has it.

We're all chained. And we're chained by a fear of death. Now, it may not be at the forefront of our minds, always.

It might be that we've pushed that down, dug it away into a little corner because we don't like thinking about it. And, at least in the case of our world, we don't really have great resources to think about it either.

I remember I was talking with someone who I'd just met. I was at an event of some sort. And there was something in the news of someone, a young adult in their early 20s, who had just suddenly and immediately died of a brain aneurysm.

[14:35] And somehow this came up in conversation. And this guy said to me, he said, you just never know what's going to happen in life. So, you've got to make the most of it while you can. That was his sort of philosophy for life.

And that sounds somewhat reasonable when you first hear it. But it... And I didn't know what to say to him at the time. But it struck me, actually, as I reflected on it later, that it's actually quite a bleak picture of life.

Because life, therefore, is just a matter of filling your time with as many experiences as you can, until you die when it's all taken away and you can't experience anything anymore.

That's the closest we get to meaning or purpose in that outlook. And throughout the millennia of human history, that has been thrown out as a philosophically inadequate view of what life is all about.

And yet, for many in our world, in our universities, in our workplaces, in our governments, that's the best that we've got.

[15:50] And it's the best that we've got, because we don't want to confront our deep-seated fear that maybe the guilt that I feel, maybe the shame that I feel, the guilt and shame I feel for the way that I've lived, for the things that I've done, for what I've failed to do, maybe that is supposed to wake me up to something about the meaning and purpose of life.

But if we haven't worked that out, it will produce fear in us, even if we try to push that fear as far away from our conscious thinking as we can.

Something bad will happen to me. It's all our world's got when it comes to fear and death. Try to ignore it. But the antidote to fear is power.

We fear because the devil has a power over us. And the antidote is for someone to trump that power. Power to defeat the one who is enslaving you.

And the Christian has no need to fear anything, for Jesus has overpowered the devil, setting you free. And so shame is dealt with in this life and in the next.

[17:07] Fear is dealt with in this life and the next. The third place where Jesus' sameness with us is identified. Verse 17 of chapter 2.

For this reason, he had to be made like them, fully human in every way. There's the emphasis on the sameness. Atonement is the solution for guilt.

To be atoned for is for guilt to be done away with. The word suggests a process where Jesus' sacrifice of himself turns God's wrath away from us and onto him.

And now God's favour is turned towards you, for you have been reconciled with him. Our world is full of guilt and shame and fear.

And our world has no real way of dealing with it. The only response is to try and pretend that it's not real, at least not in me.

[18 : 28] And yet. The shame is there. The fear is there. The guilt is there. And the cross deals with all of it.

The cross brings total salvation. And there's three Old Testament quotes in our passage that tell the story. The first one is from Psalm 22.

Jesus himself said the first line of Psalm 22 when he was hanging on the cross. It's known as the cry of dereliction. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

The first line of that Psalm. And what image does that conjure up for us of Jesus on the cross? One of him being rejected? Him experiencing distance from God?

Prayers not being answered, potentially? That's all right. That's all true. But Psalm 22 is not one verse long.

[19 : 34] And Jesus was hanging on the cross for a few hours, so he may have been able to work his way through all of it. And it starts off as a psalm of rejection, but it turns to a psalm of hope.

At the end, Jesus says, I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters. In the assembly, I will sing your praises.

What image does that present of Jesus hanging on the cross, speaking to his Father? It's hope. It's knowing that the future is going to be okay. It's knowing that God, his Father, will come through. I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters. In the assembly, I will sing your praises. He's anticipating this future scene in heaven where he's with his Father, and he's with his brothers and sisters, us, and he's telling us about how great his Father is.

[20 : 51] He's hoping for that. He knows that day is coming. Second quote, Jesus says, Hebrews 2.13. Note in Hebrews, by the way, that these are all quotes attributed to Jesus.

Jesus says, Hebrews 2.13, I will put my trust in him. That's from Isaiah 8. And the next verse in Isaiah 8 is also the next one that is quoted, again on the lips of Jesus, here am I, and the children God has given me.

What do you get as you put those three together? There is Jesus, who has come into the world on this rescue mission. His target is saving humanity.

And so he identifies with us. He becomes one of us. He takes on flesh. And he knows your name. And he knows your shame. And he knows your guilt. And he knows your fear. And he loads it on his shoulders. And he incurs God's righteous anger against sin.

[22 : 02] And while he's there, he's praying, Father, I've got them. I've got Tim. I've got Catherine. I've got Innes.

I've got Pauline. I've got St. Silas. And I trust you. You have promised to vindicate us.

You've promised to exalt us. Here am I. With the children you have given me. Hope.

Trust. Waiting. And that's the solution for our shame. Jesus identifies with you and calls you brother and sister.

There's a solution for your fear. As he is raised to life, he overpowers the devil and frees you from any power that death might have had over you. It's the solution for guilt. For you are now reconciled with him.

[23 : 09] The cross completely covers all bases because it was the finest human our race has ever produced who died. The perfect one. The pioneer.

Total salvation. In this life and the next. No aspect of your fallenness is too difficult for Jesus. And it's a total salvation for, second point, first point was the longest by the way, total salvation for all who are in the family.

Just glance over the passage and note how those who are saved by Jesus are referred to. What sort of language is used for them?

Verse 10, sons and daughters of God. Verse 11, the holy family. Verse 11 and 12, brothers and sisters children of God given to Jesus.

Verse 16, Abraham's descendants. All family language. It's brothers and sisters here, it's sons and daughters there, it's descendants there, it's family here.

[24 : 32] This forgiveness that we've seen is for all who are in this family. But how do you get into this family of forgiveness?

There's an old Spanish story that Ernest Hemingway tells about a father who is desperate to be reunited with his runaway son, Paco. The father put a small notice in the city newspaper. Paco, meet me at the Hotel Montana at noon on Tuesday. All is forgiven. Father. And on Tuesday as the father makes his way to the hotel, there were 800 young men named Paco who had turned up, desperate that the invitation was for them, for him.

That's our world. There's so much shame, so much fear, so much guilt.

How can I get into the family of forgiveness? And Hebrews was written to Jewish background believers, Jewish background believers it seems, who attempted to go back to a view of Judaism where they didn't face the persecutions that Christians were facing.

[26 : 01] for them, the cultural assumption would have been that the walls of this family of forgiveness are ethnic, racial, that to be Jewish and a religiously devout one at that, grants you a place in the family.

family. But this passage says something different. It's being connected to Jesus that determines whether you are in.

The children given to him, he calls them brother and sister. In Psalm 22, which was quoted, speaks of a time when all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord and all the families of the nations will bow down before him.

So you can be in the family if you come to Jesus. That's how you get into the family of forgiveness. And it's exactly what these Jewish background believers were tempted to turn their backs on. But if you believe Jesus is ruling this universe, ruling your life, and you trust him, then you have a place in the family of forgiveness.

[27 : 27] And this family becomes the primary family to which you belong. Because the bonds that you have with this family are thicker than blood. They will last for eternity.

Total salvation, this life and the next. But if you turn your back on Jesus, you'll have lost your connection with it.

This is part of a final point for this evening, how this helps us now. Verse 18, because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

tempted. Now in part, this verse is preparing us for later in the book where this idea of Jesus as our great high priest will be unpacked a little bit more. But there's a bit of help for us here too, as we are.

Because Jesus suffered, he died at one point in history, once for all. Didn't have to happen again, totally sufficient, total salvation.

[28 : 40] And at that point of his suffering, of his death, he was tempted, tested. If there was a moment where Jesus was going to give up on the great salvation project, it was when he was faced with the cross.

But he stuck to the plan, he trusted his father, he waited for his father, he hoped with a certain hope that he would come through.

And because of that, because he endured, he is able, to help you, to help me. And this is an ongoing way, he's able to help us in our temptations.

And those temptations, they might be a testing time where we're tempted to give up on following Jesus, or it may be a more general time where there's a particular sin that we're struggling with. And Jesus can help you from two angles.

He can help you in his humanity. He knows what it is to be weak. He knows what it is to be tempted, tested.

[29 : 49] He knows what it's like to be you. My wife Lauren and I, we have this little joke that we make with each other when one of us sort of stuffs up or does the wrong thing, it's usually me.

And we say, when we've done the wrong thing by each other, we say, well, it's hard for me. Like, by suggestion that, well, you don't have to deal with the things that I have to deal with, right?

It's hard for me. And it's a ridiculous thing. It's a ridiculous complaint. Because, of course, we both face the same situations all the time. It's an even more ridiculous thing to say to Jesus, it's hard for me.

Because Jesus knows. He knows to a greater degree than any of us do. Hebrews 4, 15, later in the book, it says, we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses.

Jesus' humanity helps us in our time of testing. Because it means you're never alone in your temptation. Even in the depths of your sin, you're never alone.

[31 : 00] That's a lie that the devil wants you to hear, that you might live in fear. But Jesus knows, and He's not ashamed of you.

And Jesus can also help you in His divinity. Jesus is, right now, at the right hand of the Father, eternally united with Him. And now that He is united with you, He is always seeking your best interests with God.

God is never against you, if you are a Christian. Hebrews 7 25 says, He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him because He always lives to intercede for them.

You're never alone, and God is never against you. Remind yourself of that next time you're battling temptation. temptation.

You're never alone. God is never against you. You're never alone. God is never against you. And if you're tempted, tested, to turn your back on Jesus completely, just walk away from the whole thing, think back to the cross, think back to the total salvation that is provided, but before you think about what's in it for you, think of the excellency of the man who's on the cross, the one with this perfect love, the one with this perfect grace, the one with this passionate, zealous quest that you might be saved.

[32 : 53] the path to defeating sin is not to focus on your sin, it's to focus on the one who defeated it, the lighting in him.

It leaves us with one final outstanding question as we draw all these things to a close. Why was it fitting? Why was it fitting that this that we've looked at tonight in this passage from Hebrews 2 is the way that God did it?

Have a look at verse 9. It's the last verse before our Bible reading for tonight. Just the last half a sentence of it. It says, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

By the grace of God. That's what salvation tells, the grace of God. And it was fitting for the grace of God that he didn't just save you but he saved you in such a way so that now as you live this life for him you would be helped.

The grace of God is not just on display for eternity after this life. It's now day by day to help you in your temptations and in your tests to hold fast to him.

[34 : 27] Classic God. I mean that's how he deals with sinners. how glorious will eternity be as Jesus sings the Father's praises to us and for eternity we say Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Father we're so thankful for Jesus and we're so thankful because we are sure that we are not even scratching the surface of how excellent he is in our minds.

And so we pray Father you would continue to fill our vision with him that we might always live for him in this life and the next. In his name we pray.

Amen.