

Four Questions Before a Christian

by John Sung

John Sung addresses four critical questions for Christians regarding sin, forgiveness, and the importance of community in faith.

Scripture: Hebrews 10:1-4, Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 10:14, Hebrews 10:19-22, Hebrews 10:24-25

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Community in Faith"

Description

John Sung addresses four critical questions for Christians based on Hebrews 10, focusing on sin, preservation, willful sinning after salvation, and spiritual progress. He emphasizes that the Old Testament sacrifices were insufficient for atonement, and only the sacrifice of Jesus can truly cleanse us from sin once and for all. Sung reassures believers that once they trust in Jesus' blood, their sins are forgiven permanently, and they should not doubt their salvation. He encourages the importance of community and fellowship in preserving faith and progressing in spiritual growth, warning against isolation that can lead to spiritual decline. Ultimately, he calls for believers to support one another in their walk with Christ.

Transcript

Hebrews 10

This chapter can help us solve four important questions on 1) Sin; 2) Preservation; 3) Willful Sinning after salvation; 4) Progress.

Vs 1 The law is a shadow of good things to come and not the very thing. So the Jews had to sacrifice lambs every year to atone for their sins. This can never make them perfect, for such sacrifices could not thoroughly solve the sin problem.

Vs 2 If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? One sacrifice would have been sufficient. No need to go and sacrifice year after year. If our hearts are free from sin. Why the yearly sacrifice? This proves the law to be inadequate.

Vs 3,4 Then why did God require of the people yearly sacrifice of lambs? To make them during such times consider their sins. Friends, can the blood of lambs truly cleanse us from sin? Apart from the blood of Jesus, no other way. The Old Testament is only a type. For a lamb's blood can never atone for sin. God wants to remove our sin completely. By what method? Let's see!

Vs 5,6 God says, "Sacrifices I do not delight. What I've prepared must be a lamb. God's special preparation is a new lamb to atone our sins, i.e. Jesus, to take away our sins.

Vs 7 What did God send Jesus to earth for? According to God's will, to remove our sins. So Jesus came to solve thoroughly the sin question.

Vs 8,9 God said, "I do not want sacrifices." Jesus says, "I come to do God's will. I offer my body to atone for sin, for all sins to be removed." We see Jesus becoming the Lamb, dying for us. Jesus' greatest objective in coming to earth is to remove every sin.

Vs 10 A person trusting in Jesus' Blood --- once is enough. One confession of sin is enough. Once trusting in the Lord we not only become born again, but are also sanctified, for Jesus solved the sin problem once and for all.

Vs 11,12 Many priests sacrificed daily, but forever they were ineffective. Jesus at one stroke solved the problem! Thus, once we put our trust in Christ, we are fully cleansed.

Vs 13,14 Since it is Jesus who died for us, we can rest at ease. For the work of the Holy Spirit, not only takes away sin, but takes it away forever more. But many question this.

If a child has broken a bowl and asks mother for forgiveness, mother replies, "All right, I forgive you!" And he comes again the next day, "Mother, I've broken a bowl, forgive me." Mother might think of a second bowl being broken. On second examination she realizes it's yesterday's bowl, "I already forgave you yesterday. Why do you come again?" Yet the child comes again the day after this. Now should he continue to feel guilty of sin, would not mother think the child is mad?

An old lady confessed her sin every day. Do you think this is correct? Know you that Jesus died once for us. So, with one confession for sin, our sin is removed forever! Let us not be confused that if we keep confessing the same sin everyday, we obtain a blessing.

Another old lady confessed her sin 18 times. After prayer I asked her when she got saved? She said, "March 1st." The next day I asked her again. She said, "March 2nd." This old lady's thinking was befuddled. She doubted God's grace. Jesus' blood atones for sin once; removes sin, all sin. We can put all our sin on Jesus, and be at rest. Jesus' blood can solve every problem of sin.

Perhaps someone has this question, "Can a born-again person sin again?" Let's see.

Vs 15-17 We can understand the mystery. When a person is born again, he has the Holy Spirit within to govern and teach him. Should his temper arise, the Holy Spirit will warn him, for God's law is written in his heart. So his actions are in line with God's will. A sin we commit unwittingly, God will surely forgive. Jesus' blood was shed once for all. But sins willfully committed must be punished.

My five-year-old daughter named Genesis once broke a bowl, which I had asked her to bring. She asked for forgiveness and I forgave her, because that was a slip of her hand. One day she got into a temper. She purposely broke the bowl, so I beat her. Willfulness invites a beating.

A born-again person has his sin problem solved once for all. No need to worry any more. So the Bible says, "I have my law written on your heart."

Vs 18 Here it says, "I will not remember the former sins." If the Lord will not remember, we can rest assured. Once we have completely confessed, trusting in His blood, we're all right. So, do not confess day after day the same sin, which is tantamount to doubting. The Lord says, "Sins unwittingly committed are immediately forgiven you".

When a little child is walking and slips Mother not only pities him but also loves him the more, knowing his weakness. Let's not be discouraged. Arise quickly. The Lord on the cross has solved the sin problem completely.

The second question: Are we happy after we're born again? Happy indeed! So, let us preserve it!

Vs 19-22 Trusting in Jesus' blood our sin is resolved. So, the Bible says, "Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" --- for our sin has been completely removed. Originally, the high priest could enter the sanctuary once a year. Now, we can see God any time, for the Lord has opened for us a new and living way, by the blood that leads to God's holy place. He is our Father. We are His children. We can pray direct, "Father!" We must not doubt whether our sins are still there. If we are before God, can we still doubt if God loves us? The Lord Jesus has become the high priest before God. If we have spots and mistakes, the High Priest has already prayed on our behalf and cleared them. Before a man is born again, he has a bad conscience, but

Vs. 22 says our conscience has been cleansed. Now if there is a little uncleanness in our conscience, our heart will feel it.

There was a girl student in Shanghai who miswrote the Name Jesus as Gesus (G for "grass" radical). She didn't realize this at first. When she realized it afterwards she couldn't sleep because of a disturbed conscience. Before daybreak she came to see me. I thought she had committed some grave sin. Actually it was the G she wrote for J. This is an indication of a cleansed conscience. A little mistake is felt immediately. It is like a sheet of white paper with some black ink stain so easily seen. If the ink stain is on a black sheet, it won't be seen. When we are born again by the Lord, we become white as snow.

But though we are washed clean, the flesh is still weak, hence the washing of feet everyday. How? Through the daily self examination. If we examine ourselves, we can be rest at ease. With adequate faith we can come before God. I'm afraid many born again ones doubt in their prayers by constant asking for faith and power. But let me tell you, God will not remember little mistakes.

Vs 23 Moreover we have this hope to reign together with Christ in the new heaven and new earth. And let us not lose hope in the New Jerusalem and the new body. For what God has promised won't go wrong. What we fear is our hopelessness. If so, we have no hope, no hope then no prayers.

Vs 24 We should love and care for one another in Christ, then we can solve the question of preservation. When I see you have a black spot, I'll tell you and vice versa you'll tell me. Now, why the Church? It is in order that united we might provoke one another to love, to run the heavenly race. This brings progress. But not for a born-again person to run alone, then he will cool off. Not so when we are in a fellowship, whereby we are more and more encouraged and kept and helped through fellowship. So members of the same Church should help one another; keep one another; preserve one another. Without the Church, one is left alone to eventual failing away. Many students attend exhortation meetings and youth fellowships while in school. When they return home they begin to grow cold, and are taken by Satan eventually.

There was a girl, very zealous in school, who cooled off when she returned home. Many friends worked on her to gamble. Though she refused they coaxed her to join the game and not to worry. Fortunately, some friends from the Church saw this and pulled her away. Through their pleadings she was kept on her heavenly path.

Vs 25 Therefore, do not stop assembling together. More so is required of the preaching bands. Should they stop because of lack of time, they will stop as a matter of habit. But when you are in a big congregation and you see everyone praising the Lord, you naturally warm up together with them. Alone, you are cooled off. When you enter the Church and the sound of praise surrounds you, do you not then join them in praising God? In the ancient Church, there were no preachers. Rather, one by one from amongst the Congregation stood up and related their experiences. If someone got sick, all prayed with one accord for him. Every Lord's Day, they kept the Lord's Supper. So in the Lord let us keep oneness and unity. To stand-alone is loneliness.

I like very much to have a few co-workers. We stay together, and with one heart we talk together, study the Word together. So let's persevere, mutually encourage and keep up the meetings. "Walk together."

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