



HEBREWS

Jesus is GREATER THAN...SO STAND FIRM

JESUS IS GREATER THAN... SACRIFICES—CHAPTER 10

FACILITATOR'S NOTE

In this chapter the author brings his argument establishing Jesus' ministry as the final step of the Lord's saving work and the implications for believers. He alternates between joyous celebration of our new status resulting from the Gospel and stern warnings to not surrender our new status by rejecting Jesus' sacrifice and turning away from the Lord. This chapter, like Chapter 6, discusses sins that make one unable to be restored. As with chapter 6, we encourage all facilitators to emphasize that the sins which the author identifies as placing one in an unredeemable state are not the routine stumbles and struggles that all believers face, but rather a deliberate and unrepentant rejection of Christ and turning from him.

IMPORTANT: As always, we encourage you to begin preparing for each lesson by committing the class and the teaching to God in prayer. After this, we encourage you to dig into not only the specific chapter in Hebrews for this week (Chapter 10), but also the book of Hebrews as a whole and the Scriptures at large. As you move through your readings, jot down any thoughts that come to you and particular passages that stand out and speak to you. We assure you that these will come into play as you facilitate this discussion. It is **ONLY AFTER DOING THESE THINGS** that you should approach this lesson plan and perhaps use it as a guide. Your group is different than all the rest and so your lessons should be adapted accordingly.

PRAYER

A prayer of praise that the Lord sacrificed Himself to make us right with Him and petition that He helps us resist the temptation to turn from Him.

FOCUS

- The law was an image (or shadow) of righteousness, not righteousness itself.
- Jesus' work as the Great High Priest is the final sacrifice that did what no other sacrifice could do – it took away our sins once and for all.
- Because we are cleansed of our sins, we can approach the Lord who made our cleansing possible with confidence.
- **WARNING:** Do not sin deliberately!
- We must persevere.
- Recognize that **JESUS IS GREATER THAN** any sacrifice because He is THE SACRIFICE.

LESSON

Discussion Starters (OPTIONAL)

- How do you qualify relationships? What is the difference between a sibling and a cousin? A friend or a good friend?
- When did you first become aware of growth in your relationship with God? What specifically made you aware of this?
- How does ingratitude make you feel? Can you remember a time when you made a great effort or sacrifice that was completely ignored or unappreciated? What was your response?

FROM GOD'S WORD

- 10:1-4
 - Key Points
 - The law was never intended to save the Israelites or remove sin. It was a reminder of sin and a sign of what was ahead, namely, the Gospel.
Discussion: In the time Hebrews was written, who might have found this idea exceptionally challenging or offensive? [The Pharisees]
 - A simple rhetorical question to make the argument: If the sacrifices required by the Law were sufficient, then why did they need to be made every single year?
 - The author states unequivocally that the "blood of bulls and goats" cannot take away sin. **Discussion:** Are modern believers ever tempted to make some kind of material sacrifice to remove our sins? For example?
 - For Discussion
 - The law could never save you (nor was it meant to). Does anyone have a hard time with this today? Why or why not? [Legalists, non-believers who try to use the OT to play "gotcha!" with believers.]
 - Are modern believers ever tempted to make some kind of material sacrifice to remove our sins? For example?

- 10:5-10
 - Key Points
 - The author references Psalm 40:6-8 and interprets it.
 - The physical death of Christ (the literal sacrifice of His body) accomplishes what the other sacrifices under the Law could not.
 - The sacrifice institutes a new covenant, which makes the old one inert.
 - V. 7 establishes the critical difference between Christ's sacrifice and the Levitical sacrifice: Christ's obedience made His sacrifice perfect.
 1. The old sacrifice was to compensate for disobedience and the sacrifices themselves could not obey.
 2. The new sacrifice (Christ) was always obedient *and* free of sin. This makes His sacrifice perfect for everyone else's sin because it was an act of obedience and perfect (without sin of His own).
 - For Discussion
 - What do the lengths that the Lord went to in order to purge the sin of humanity say to us about the seriousness of sin?

- 10:11-14
 - Key Points
 - The Levitical priests stood when they did their work because their work was never done.
 - Having made the ultimate sacrifice and completed the work of the priesthood, Christ not only gets to rest (sit), but He does so in his rightful place at the right hand of God.

- 10:15-18
 - Key Points
 - The author references Jeremiah 31:31-34. [**Facilitators:** If time allows, you may want to have the class read the Jeremiah passage in order to prompt a discussion with the class about what it is describing]
 - For Discussion
 - The old covenant was written down on scrolls and parchment. The new covenant is in our "hearts" and "minds". What are the implications of this change?
 1. The new covenant is internalized. It is not what we do but who we are (as new creations in Christ).
 2. The relationship changes from a king and his subjects to a father and his children.
 3. Any implications that you can think of?

- 10:19-25

- Key Points

- The creator of the universe died for our sins so that we can enjoy His blessings and presence. He has made us His own. In light of this, the author gives four exhortations:
 1. **Draw near to the Lord** – Christ’s saving work gives us access to Him at a level that no human being ever believed possible.
 2. **Hold unswervingly to our hope** – Our hope is based on God’s promise.
 3. **Consider how to spur one another on to love and good works** – love fulfills the two greatest commandments and the context reinforces that the good works are born out of trust in God and the joy and gratitude that follow from that trust.
 4. **Continue to meet together** – note how the author ties this to #3. We cannot encourage one another without *being together*.

- For Discussion

- All instructions about the assembly in the NT encourage assembling rather than command it. The assembly is assumed to be a blessing rather than a requirement. How does this challenge contemporary assumptions?

- 10:26-31

- Key Points

- This is the fourth warning in Hebrews and is regularly identified as one of the strongest in the New Testament. **DO NOT COMMIT DELIBERATE SIN!**
 - Numbers 15:22-31 gives an example of the difference in how the Lord sees deliberate sin compared to unintentional sin.
 - For the Israelites, deliberate sin was turning to false gods and never coming back.
 - For the believer, deliberate sin is to renounce Christ (which is apostasy) and never turning back.
 - Why is there no sacrifice for this? Consider what the author says about apostates:
 1. **They trample the Son of God underfoot** – akin to spitting in His face.
 2. **They treated the blood of Christ as an unholy thing** – they have trivialized the crucifixion and are wasting Jesus’ blood.
 3. **They insult the Spirit of grace** – the believer has the indwelling of the Spirit. If the believer then becomes apostate, he or she contaminates the Spirit.

- For Discussion
 - Do you know anyone who has sinned deliberately and renounced Jesus? What happened and how did it turn out?
- 10:32-39
 - Key Points
 - The audience had experienced hard times before, and their response was pleasing to the Lord. They had:
 1. Been publicly exposed to insult and persecution.
 2. Stood side by side with those who were so treated.
 3. Suffered along with those in prison.
 4. Joyfully accepted the confiscation of their property.
 - The author concludes with two more references to the OT (in Habakkuk) to reassure the audience that the Lord's people have always had to endure and their patience will be rewarded.
 - For Discussion
 - The author mentions standing side by side with or suffering alongside those who are being persecuted or tested twice in this passage ("suffer alongside" is the definition of compassion; *com* means "with" and *passion* means "suffering". Is sharing someone else's suffering and helping them to endure as pleasing to God as enduring our own troubles? Why or why not?

REFLECTION

- How can we approach God with both the boldness we draw from His promise and the reverence and humility that we owe to Him?
- Is there a difference between forgiving sins and "remembering them no more?"
- Is the assembly a blessing for you? Why or why not?
- How can we use the assembly to bless each other and "spur one another on to good works" as the author instructs? What do you think is missing from most Christian assemblies that could help with this?

PRAYER

LESSON OUTLINE – Here are the lessons we will be studying the weeks to come.

- INTRODUCTION (January 5)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Angelic Beings–Chapter 1 (January 12)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Angelic Beings–Chapter 1 (January 19)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...But Still Human–Chapter 2 (January 26)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Moses–Chapter 3 (February 2)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The High Priest–Chapter 4 (February 9)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The High Priest–Chapter 5 (February 16)
- THEREFORE, Don't Fall Away–Chapter 6 (February 23)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Melchizedek–Chapter 7 (March 2)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The Law–Chapter 8 (March 9)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The Tabernacle–Chapter 9 (March 16)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Sacrifices–Chapter 10 (March 23)
- THEREFORE, Have Faith–Chapter 11 (March 30)
- THEREFORE, Stand Firm–Chapter 12 (April 6)
- THEREFORE, Offer Acceptable Sacrifices–Chapter 13 (April 13)
- CONCLUSION (April 27)