

## **BEING SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST**

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### **HEBREWS 2**

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

#### **The Son Made Lower than Angels**

For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet."

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

#### **Bringing Many Sons to Glory**

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

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In the commentary to this epistle in my own, personal Bible, it says, "The occasion of the Epistle was the need of special exhortation for Hebrew readers who had professed faith in Jesus as the Messiah, some of whom were wavering in their attitude. [anyone here ever waver in your attitude?] Hence, the exhortation is to "hold fast" (3:6) and to "go on unto perfection" (6:1) What is interesting to note, the word exhort used in the New Testament, is the Greek word parakaleo, which means to "personally make a call, [which] refers to believers offering up evidence that stands up in God's court."<sup>1</sup> We are in God's presence, even now! It is also implied to mean to "comfort, encourage, [and] console". Sound familiar, the Comforter? The Comforter, that the Apostle John spoke of as being the Holy Spirit, is the Greek word parakletos, which has been translated as "Comfortor" or "Helper". That exhortation, or personal encouragement, comfort, and help, whether it is from other brothers and sisters in Christ, or from the Holy Spirit, is intended mostly to encourage us to "hold fast" and to "go on unto perfection". It is a beautiful thing that we not only have the Parakletos, the Comforter, we also parakaleo one another, encourage or exhort one another, through the Word, in Christ, as we are being sanctified (set apart in His holiness) in Christ.

**Hebrews 3:6** says, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, [He is the temple, we are the living stones of His temple-He is the Chief Cornerstone, as we are being built up, in Christ], **IF we hold fast** the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (**Hebrews 3:6**) That is one of many examples of Scripture that speaks to us needing to cling to Jesus, as He is our life, similarly to what to Israelites were told, to cling to God for He is their life. (**Deuteronomy 30:20**) It is also a reminder that we are most certainly in a covenant relationship with God through Christ, just as the Apostle Paul said "Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." (**2 Corinthians 1:21-22, NIV**) Yet, we all have an obligation in our covenant relationship with God in Christ (as a relationship involves at least two parties) to "hold fast", and to "go on unto perfection". Nowhere are we told in Scripture that our covenant in Christ is conditional based on our circumstances, meaning, that it only applies when things are going well for us. Likewise, it isn't just supposed to be active when things are just going bad. You know, just turning to God when you need to be bailed out of a jam.

I've been mentioning frequently that it is most imperative for us to keep in mind that God's works are perfect (**Deuteronomy 32:4**) and all of His ways are perfect (**2 Samuel 22:31**) It is not up to God to get on our plan and do our bidding, it is up to us to get on His plan and

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1 <https://biblehub.com/greek/3870.htm>

purpose and to acknowledge and even fear Him as THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. One passage of Scripture that makes it very clear to us as to our role, in our relationship with God is **Ephesians 2:8-10**. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We are His workmanship, and He intends to work in us His perfection. Those good works include the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control". (**Galatians 5:22-23**) It is up to us to walk in it, spiritually speaking, and to trust God, as all of His ways and works are perfect and that the covenant agreement we have with God, in Christ, is that, as the Apostle Paul tells us, "your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**) As a good friend of mine stated, who is confined to a bed in a nursing home, "you don't tell the King what to do". James, the brother of Jesus said, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." All of God's works and ways are perfect and He alone is God Almighty, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There's nothing inherently wrong with crying out to God, as we are told to cast all of our cares upon Him for He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7), but it is up to Him on how He chooses to answer our prayers.

It is then in **God's perfection** that He is working in us. **Hebrews 6:1** says, "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of **repentance from dead works** and of **faith toward God**". At the heart of of this epistle, as it is with the gospel of Jesus Christ, is the having an unwavering faith-regardless of our circumstances, be they good or bad, as we are promised that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." (**Romans 8:28**) It is really what the whole of God's Word, the Holy Bible, the Holy Scriptures, from the first book of Genesis to the last book of Revelation, is telling us, that God wants us to know Him and His Word, to trust Him, as all His ways and works are perfect, and to honor Him, by loving Him wholeheartedly, loving others, obeying Him, and giving Him the praise and worship He deserves, as He alone is the I AM, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment of God is to love Him with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind and that the second commandment is like it in that we are to love others as ourselves. That isn't just a suggestion, depending on how we feel that day, we are implored to love God with all that is in us and then to love

others as ourselves, which is saying to honor and respect others as we would want to be honored and respected. Jesus refined that for us, saying "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you." (Luke 6:27-28)

As mentioned, this letter was written to Jewish believers who were bound up in Jewish tradition, some good perhaps, such as the reading of the Torah, yet a lot of it was bad, as we can read from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus got to the core problem, the Jewish leaders were leading the people in tradition but not in knowing, trusting, and honoring God. A primary example of that was in how they had turned the temple into a marketplace. The book of John has Jesus clearing the temple early in His ministry and saying, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" (John 2:16) Toward the latter end of Jesus' ministry, Matthew, Mark, and Luke record Jesus as, once again, cleansing the temple, and saying, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" (Luke 19:46) Jesus' summation of those who were not really knowing God, trusting Him, and honoring Him was in what He said in response to the scribes and Pharisees, when they had complained to Jesus that His disciples hadn't washed their hands prior to eating. Jesus said, "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" (Matthew 15:7-9) Simply put, God wants us to know Him, trust Him, and to honor Him, not just be ritualistic in religion. He is sanctifying us in Christ!

Our passage of Scripture in **Hebrews 2** begins, "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. [Do you know someone who has drifted away?] For if the **word** spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" What we are to be believing on is that Jesus died on a cross for our sins, shed His blood for the remission of our sins, rose from the grave on the third day, conquering death, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. We too then, who believe on Him and receive Him will also overcome death and have eternal life in Him. As Jesus promised, "If anyone loves Me, he will **keep My word**; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." We are then believing on Christ Jesus AND on His Word, the Holy Scriptures, and then receiving Him into our hearts, to where He works in us, as Paul

tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:30**, His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

You cannot separate Jesus though from the Word, for He IS the Word. The Apostle John says in **John 1:1-5**, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." Then in **verse 14**, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" and "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1:12-13**) **Believe on Christ Jesus and receive Him, to be born-again, born of the Spirit of Christ. Then He begins His work in us, as we are to be living our lives IN CHRIST JESUS, regardless of our circumstances. The Apostle Paul said this, in Philippians 4:11-13, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all [things] through him who gives me strength."**

"I can do all [things] through him who gives me strength." It is in Christ Jesus who overcame this world, and it is in Christ Jesus that we too will overcome! "For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that **You take care of him?** You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. **But we see Jesus**, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone." We are not the first to have to suffer and endure and overcome this world in Christ Jesus. Almost 2000 years of brothers and sisters in Christ have gone before us. "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

If our Lord and Savior had to go through what He endured, I can

endure a bit of suffering and hardship too. "I can do all [things] through him who gives me strength." That is not some self-help, psychological mumbo-jumbo to fool our minds into overcoming. We are putting our wholehearted trust in Christ Jesus, regardless of where He leads us, whether through the valley of Baca, the valley of tears (**Psalm 84:6**), or the valley of the shadow of death (**Psalm 23:4**), or whether He sets us up on high upon a rock (**Psalm 27:5**) for a mountaintop experience. I will put my trust in Him! Jesus has conquered death. Jesus has conquered our enemy, Satan, the devil, the accuser of the brethren (**Rev. 12:10**). Yet, it is not yet fulfilled completely until He brings all of those who are called into His kingdom, into His saving grace. Then, in in God's perfect time, we are told to, "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen" (**Revelation 1:7**). If we are already "looking to Jesus" we won't be of those who mourn when He appears, we will be rejoicing in Him, as we see our beloved Lord, God, and Savior! Meanwhile we persevere in Christ Jesus. "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength!"

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham [of which, we are of the seed of Abraham, in Christ]. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make **propitiation for the sins** of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, **He is able to aid those who are tempted.**" That temptation is not just the type of temptation we may think of such as the lusts of the flesh, the love of money, drinking, or drugs. It is in the falling away not holding fast to Jesus and going on in His perfection. That, once again begins to take place when we aren't loving God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and not loving others. Jesus has accomplished His work, now He is accomplishing His work in us, "**IF we hold fast** the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." That is what the Word is telling us. WE WILL OVERCOME IN CHRIST JESUS. Say it with me, I WILL OVERCOME IN CHRIST JESUS! Will you put your wholehearted trust in Christ Jesus, no matter what?

Jesus promises us "**Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.**" (**Revelation 22:12**) "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6) That is a promise from God that if we put our trust in Him, He will complete His work of perfection in us, as we are sanctified in Christ!