

2122 - PERFECT in CHRIST - Heb 10:14,22,23

Xnity is a wonderful religion. It makes sinners **perfect for all time!** End of story! Those who **believe** in our Lord Jesus Christ with a **living** faith in His **atonement** sacrifice for their sins, are **perfected for all time!** That means **heaven** is a **certainty!** Eternal bliss for ever!

The Writer is **encouraging** Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, who have a **fear** of **approaching** God and of **drawing near** [1,22] to Him and to **enter the holy places** [19]! There were converted Jews who felt they were 'unclean' (sinful) and were **not worthy** of approaching God - even in prayer! They were under a **misunderstanding** of the **mercies of God!** They were 'brought up' under the **severe** teaching of the 'terrifying sight of God as a **blazing fire** at Mount Zion' [Ch 12]! They were lacking in **confidence** and **assurance** that God could be approached and was a God **eager** to have our fellowship and love. **APP** There are NT counterparts to this 'fear' of approaching God. We think of the few who will not come to the Lord's Table out of a misunderstanding about 'God in Christ' and His desire towards us!

Our chapter starts with the **subject** of making people **perfect!** *the law...can never...make perfect...those who draw near* to offer sacrifices [1]. Many people, even Jews, felt law-keeping **did** make people perfect! But God **neither desired nor** (has) **taken pleasure in sacrifices** [8] **But we (Xns) have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all** [10] Here, the Writer **contrasts** the false understanding that 'obedience to the Law' saved the soul, as against '**faith** in the **atonement sacrifice** of Jesus Christ'. You see there **IS** something in fallen man which believes that by '**doing good**' we gain redemption/acceptance with God. But no! Its **faith!**

The Writer goes on to confirm this by **quoting** from God in OT *I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more* [17+Jer 31:34] The Writer concludes **Therefore**, because there is **total/complete/perfect** salvation we **have confidence to enter the holy places** by the **blood of Jesus by the new and living way that HE opened for US** [19] Further, the Writer says *let US draw near with a true heart in full ASSURANCE* [22] he is encouraging them to have confidence in approaching God, therefore **hold fast the confession of our hope**

without wavering, for He who **promised** is **faithful** [23]! The whole passage is about **having full assurance/confidence** in drawing near to **God** on the **basis** of what **Jesus Christ** has **done** on the Cross!

The Writer is **establishing** the truth that salvation is complete and perfect in Christ! Nothing is to be added to what Jesus Christ has done, or added to our simple **faith** in His work on the Cross! Listen: *Now it is **evident** that **NO ONE** is **justified** before God by the law, for 'The righteous shall live **by faith**'...Christ **redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us** [Gal 3:11cf] **God put** (Christ) **forward as a propitiation...to be received BY FAITH...so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has FAITH in JESUS** [R 3:24cf] So '**faith in Jesus**' is the **gospel**, the Good News!*

Writer's particular point is: we **must** have **confidence** in **that truth** and **not** waver about it by adding 'ifs' & 'buts' and start to look at our **failings**, past or present as a ground for our salvation. There **IS** a real sense in which we, as believers **ARE** indeed **PERFECT - ready for heaven without sin** - and that can **never ever** change! This is the gospel - if we do **not** believe this, then we do not believe the gospel. We **must** have **confidence** in Christ's sacrifice, and **not** in our own holy way of living! Never worry about being Perfect - we are *in X!*

*Now, some people **see a problem** or a **tension** in our text [v14]! On one hand it speaks of those whom God has **perfected for ALL time**; - on the other hand it speaks of those **same** people **being sanctified** as if they have **not** been made completely **holy** yet and are not ready for heaven, but are only in the **process** of being made holy and perfect!

But there's **no tension/problem!** There are **two different subjects** being spoken of here. There is a **huge difference** between them. There is a real sense in which justification has **nothing to do** with sanctification, although they are connected! (1) There is the subject of salvation (getting to heaven - called **justification**). **That has been** achieved by Christ He has made us perfect **positionally** before God through X's righteousness. God accepts us **in Christ** as perfect. Then (2) there is the subject of **sanctification**, our being **made holy in character!** After **God** has justified us, He **works IN us** by His **Holy Spirit** to make us more and more holy while we are on earth.

Paul said to the Philippians God **BEGAN** the *good work* of **sanctification** in them but He **WILL BRING** it to **completion!** [Phi 1:6] Again Paul prayed for Thess, *may the God of peace sanctify you completely* **AFTER** saying they were **elect and chosen** [1Thes 1:4] and then he gives them the **assurance** *He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it* [1Thes 5:23] Don't doubt Him! So on one hand the Scriptures clearly state that Christ has **completed** everything for us and **trust in Him SEALS** the 'whole deal' for heaven, and on the other hand the Scriptures talk the process of 'being sanctified' on the earth! Drawing near to God, (eg in prayer, reading the Bible, worship, coming to the Lord's Supper) is something God has appointed to **help us** to become **holy** in character! There are **spiritual vitamins** in the Lord's Supper and in **all** the means of grace - which not only pleases God and is **obedience** to Him, but it **does strengthen** us!

Although X **has** received us, we are **still in the body/flesh** and **still have** a sinful nature! (Like a wife putting up with the faults of her husband). This sinful nature is **gradually** being made holy - **because** we become **more and more aware** and **conscious** of our sinfulness and our **DESIRE to quit sin** and become more conformed to the image of Christ. A Xn who is **not aware** of his sin is in a very dangerous place. Listen to the **Apostle** John *if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us* [1John 1:8]. Xns are **not perfect** in their daily walk as James says *we all stumble in many ways* [Jam 3:2]! But there is **this difference** between the Xn and the non-Xn, the Xn **DESIRES**, hungers after, and longs for freedom from his sin - which no unbeliever does! He loves his sin!

Again, we say the Writer's point is: we must **look** to Christ and **realise** our **security (salvation)** is in Him, but we must **press on** serving Him as best we can, albeit imperfectly! The **promise** of completed salvation in Christ should **spur us on!** *Therefore brothers, since we have confidence let us draw near... in full assurance of faith* [19-22] Paul: *Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable* [1Cor 9:25]. Non Xns do **not have assurance** of their sins being forgiven. They have **vain confidence** in **themselves**, not in Jesus Christ! They try to forget about their sins and just '**do better**' next

time. When we Xns sin we **immediately repent** before God and go to Christ! We seek **pardon** and **forgiveness** from Him. But you may argue, but we **have been** pardoned! Yes, **positionally**, in the plan/purpose of God but not in **history**! In **history**, you cannot be pardoned before you are guilty! We need to confess to God our sin. It was to Xns that John wrote these words *if **WE confess** [pres act] our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!*[1J1] This is what helps us to develop a **holy character**! We do not do it to ‘get saved’, we do it to become holy! Like **apologising** to your wife/husband. The **marriage** is ‘safe’ but the **mood/spirit** is **not sweet** and free! Frankness, honesty, humility needs to be **expressed** before there can be sweet flowing friendship!

We must **confess** our sins because it is the **only way** to have *our heart sprinkled clean from an evil conscience* [22]. It is wonderful to have a **clear conscience** in our relationships! It is in connection with relationships that Jesus said on the Sermon on the Mount? *First be reconciled to your brother, and then come* [Mt5:24] sort that out **before** you come to worship Me! It is **spiritually healthy** and **spiritual character building** to *confess your sins to one another* as James says in another context. **The Writer also wants them to...

Profess His Name! Make a public stand for Jesus. Be unashamed of believing Him, going to Church, keeping His commandments. *our bodies washed with pure water* [22]?? It **does** refer to **baptism**! Baptism is the **profession** of your faith in Christ (either of the individual being baptised, or of the **parents’ faith**)! The Lord’s Supper is the **continuance** of that profession of faith! The Writer was **encouraging** his readers *not to neglect meeting together* [25] That is why **everyone** who is baptised **should/ought** to be at the Lord’s Supper. If not, they are either under discipline by the church, or have **disciplined themselves**! And if they are trusting in Christ’s finished work, they are **reflecting badly** on His work, and don’t need the help that the Lord’s Supper **promises**! And so the Writer is saying that ‘having confessed that he/she is a sinner, and then having professed that his/her salvation is in Christ alone, we can **draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith** [22] We do it **humbly**, not **proudly**, **remembering** it was Christ who died for our sins and rose for **our...**