

Text: Heb. 10:1-18

Title: "God's will about our sin"

Time: 11/22/2015 pm

Place: NBBC

Introduction: How do we feel about sin in the lives of our children or others whom we love? We see how it destroys them. We see how blind they are to it. We see how it hurts us and others connected with those lives. When we see sin in the lives of others, we often wish it were not so.

God felt no better about the sin He saw in the lives of sinful man. His creatures rebelled against Him. They violated His law and cursed His holy name, and in the process they destroyed not only themselves but all the good that God intended for them.

But God did more than feel bad about our sin. God made a decision about it. He created a plan for it, and He decreed that it was His will that this plan be carried out. This passage is focused on this plan of the will of God in regard to your sin and mine. We read about God's will in this regard repeatedly here (vv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10).

We are reading here things that concern "God's will about our sin," and I want us to see three things in this regard.

I. It is God's will that our sins be taken away (vv. 1-4).

Illustration: I have some wonderful pictures of my wife. I am thankful for them because they remind me of her. But imagine that I became so attached to those pictures that I did not want to spend any time with my wife. I admired the great photography and the angle of the shot so much that I desired to be with the picture more than the one whom the picture depicts.

In fact, when I see my wife I actually tell her that she is not her picture. She is not two dimensional, and it is. She is not the same size. She speaks, and it does not. Then I say that I am not going to be with her because she is not the same as a her picture.

Application: Well, that is the kind of thing the author of Hebrews is dealing with in the Jewish attachment to the Old Testament pictures of Christ. Here again he speaks of a “shadow of the good things to come” (v. 1a). Shadows are indistinct outlines. It would be a sad thing if I only had the shadow of my wife.

When it comes to my wife, there are many things my wife’s shadow cannot do that my wife can, but when it comes to the good things to come, there is one thing especially that the shadow found in the Old Testament sacrifices could not do. They could not take away sins (vv. 1b - 4).

The “good things to come” do take away our sins. As believers in Christ, saved by His gracious cross-work, you and I have experienced a taking away of sin that is both perfect or complete (v. 1b) and permanent (vv. 2-3).

Even the fact that we still struggle with sin cannot change this. The sins I have yet to do this evening before I lay my head on my pillow have been taken away already. That verb is used in Luke 1:25, where Elizabeth says that her pregnancy with John had taken away her disgrace among men. This take away is perfect and permanent, and that truth should always be present in our conscience when we struggle with sin.

Verse 11 uses a different word translated *take away*, which has the idea that something that is all around us has been taken away. Think of our church’s mold problems over the

past years. It was all around us, and it was taken away. This is what Christ's work has done for us.

II. It is God's will that our sins be judged (vv. 5-14).

Illustration: *The Dartmouth Review* carried an article about an incident on campus that occurred on November 12 that was caused by the Black Lives Matter movement. 150 protesters clad in black invaded the evening quiet of the school's library and began to threaten students who were there studying. Some were thrown up against the wall; others were chased from the building. Epitaphs and racial slurs were screamed at people, and if you did not join the protest you were threatened with violence.

Application: The article said nothing about any of those students being disciplined for their actions. Evidently, they all just were allowed to do that to others on campus because that is the nature of a political protest.

But even *The Dartmouth Review* saw something wrong and unjust about the whole affair. God is not unjust in His dealings with our sin. It is His will that our sins be judged.

But that is not all, for that would have landed us in the hell fire we deserve. It is His will that our sins be judged in the person of His own Son. Three things had to happen in this regard:

1. God's Son had to become a man (vv. 5-7; see Ps. 40:6-8).

Our author is quoting from his Greek translation (the LXX) of this Old Testament passage. The Greek translators took the Hebrew phrase meaning *my ears have you dug out* as a reference to the creation of physical ears dug out of the ground

as it were, and so they put in their translation their correct interpretation of the Psalm, “a body have you prepared.”

The creation of this body constituted a coming into the world (v. 5) – the One who would live in that body preexisted it. And this coming into the world was predicted throughout the Old Testament (v. 7). In its promises of a coming descendant, in the symbolism of its sacrifices and feast days, in its prophetic pronouncements of the future Messiah, and even in its descriptions of the history and rulers and songs of Israel, the Old Testament speaks of Jesus Christ, who became a man, and who did so to perfectly obey the will of His Father for us.

2. His Son had to obey unto death (vv. 8-10; Phil. 2:8).

God’s will said that Christ had to die a sacrificial death in our place (v. 10). He had to bear the judgment of our sins. This takes away God’s first covenant with us – “obey my law or I will destroy you,” and it brings in God’s second covenant with us – “I will write my law upon your heart” (v. 8-9).

And because it was the offering of the eternal Son of God, it was a sacrifice that can be described with the words, *once for all time* (v. 10). There is no further need of a sacrifice, and every time a Roman Catholic priest claims to recreate an atoning sacrifice of Christ for sins in the Roman Catholic mass, that priest denies the true work of Christ that was once for all.

3. His Son had to be glorified as Mediator (vv. 11-14).

We see here the resurrection, ascension, and session of Christ at the right hand of the throne of God ministering to our need for an intercessor. The ongoing reality of our atonement depends on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.

Charles Wesley put it well in “Arise, My Soul, Arise”:

“He ever lives above, for Me to intercede.
His all redeeming love, His blood avails for Me.
His blood availed for all our race;
His blood availed for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace” (v. 14).

His ongoing intercessory work of sanctifying us as our faithful priestly Mediator means that we are forever secure in Him. His did not fail to die, to rise, or to ascend. And He shall not fail to intercede. It is God’s will that our sins be judged, and they were thoroughly judged when Christ died for us.

III. It is God’s will that our sins be forgotten (vv. 15-18).

Illustration: Listen to a quote from aboutcatholics.com regarding the Roman Catholic mass: “When we receive the Eucharist we are receiving Jesus, God. In doing so we are making that commitment each time to live out our end of the bargain. By God’s gift of free will to us we always have the opportunity to choose to fall away from God through sin, and we need his grace and strength to maintain our relationship with him.”

Application: So the Roman Church teaches that because of sin we need another sacrifice of Christ and an ecclesiastical ceremony from that Church to be forgiven for those sins.

They are also clear that this should happen every Sunday, so ultimately there is never any assurance that sin has been forgiven and forgotten (cp. v. 3). By way of contrast, hear again the covenant of the Lord spoken through the Holy Spirit (vv. 15-18).

When it comes to atonement, the sacrifice of Christ is so powerful it causes God to remember our sins no more (v. 18); it

causes remission and forgiveness of our sins (v.18); and it means that no more offerings are necessary (v. 18).

Our flesh is still real, and our struggle with sin can require the confession that restores fellowship with our God; but our flesh is no longer the only principle of life within us. Now we also have new life in Christ, which has completely changed our heart. In addition, God views us as complete in Christ. Our sins, past-present-and future, He remembers no more. The author is emphatic about this (v. 17).

Conclusion: God's will regarding our sin is that it be taken away in Christ, judged in Christ, and forever forgotten because of Christ.

What is your will about your sins? As you think upon them, what do you desire about them?

Rather than taken way, do you desire that they continue left untouched, for they bring you pleasure, though only for a season?

Rather than judged in Christ, do you desire that they be justified and defended as really not so bad?

Rather than forgotten forever, do you find yourself remembering them constantly?

We need to recognize God's will about our sin and make His will about it our own will. When we do that, we practice the true confession of restored fellowship and walking in the light (1 John 1:9). To confess sin is to say the same thing about our sin that God says. God says He wants it taken away in Christ, judged in Christ, and forgiven and remembered no more in Christ. Do we say this is what we want too?

“A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction – the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

Preachers and Preaching