

What He's Done

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Date: 08 February 2026

Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] Would you stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together, Hebrews chapter 2, verses 9 through 18.

! But we see Him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

For it was fitting that He for whom and by whom all things exist, and bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source.

That is why He is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, I will tell of your name to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise. And again, I will put my trust in Him.

And again, behold, I and the children God has given me. Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

[1 : 23] For surely it is not angels that He helps, but He helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

For because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? If you've ever been in a position of leadership, you know how hard it can be to make decisions that affect other people.

For that reason, leadership is often lonely, because not only are you making decisions for others, which you believe is for the greater good, or because you can't fully disclose your reasoning or rationale for the decision to protect others.

It's lonely because you can't please everyone. And those people who aren't pleased often find each other and criticize. If they knew all you know, they'd probably understand.

If you're in a position to make decisions for others, you're going to be criticized, you're going to be questioned about the way you've decided to do things.

[2 : 43] It's just how it is. And you learn to get used to it. The greatest decision ever made was by God in eternity past to save sinners.

But even this decision, the greatest decision of all decisions, has been met with questions and criticism. Questions like, why did God give Adam and Eve the opportunity to disobey Him?

Or, why didn't God just snap His fingers and poof all the sin away? Why didn't God send Jesus immediately after Adam and Eve's sin to undo its curse?

This can lead to other questions. Why did God create the devil? Why does God permit evil? Even if you know God is sovereign, we still often question and criticize, saying, God, why me?

Or, why now? Or, why this? Or, why not? I've asked those questions, and to be totally honest with you, I still ask those questions.

[3 : 51] And God's Word still gives me peace. And knowing that though I don't know or receive the answers to my whys, I can trust the one who does.

Years ago, I committed Romans 13, 33 through 36 to memory. There the Apostle Paul says, Oh, the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are His judgments! How unscrutable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has been His counselor? Who has given a gift to Him that He should be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

To Him be glory forever. Amen. In the end, God gets the glory. What He does achieves His divine purposes.

He does work all things together for the good of those who love Him, as Romans 8, 28 says. The author of Hebrews is writing to a Jewish audience who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

[4 : 56] That confession brought persecution which tempted some of them to drift away from the faith, to drift back into Judaism, to drift back into what was familiar, to what was easier.

They were tempted to think that either following Jesus wasn't worth it or to think maybe that Jesus isn't enough. And question this decision this way in which God chose to save us from our sins. It seemed to many of them beneath God to become a man and to experience a humiliating death on the cross. And so I'm sure they probably were thinking or wondering why would God do this? Why would God permit such a thing to happen? Why did Jesus have to suffer and taste death for everyone? Why would God the apostle Paul often fielded these types of questions and criticisms and in 1 Corinthians 1 21-25 he says, For since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

[6 : 23] For the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. To this point, the author of Hebrews has been making the case for the superiority of Jesus Christ.

He's explained why Jesus is superior to angels. He's going to continue to explain why and how Jesus is superior to all things. But at this point in chapter 2 verses 10 through 18, his focus is on those who are questioning, wavering, and maybe criticizing and are in danger of neglecting the great salvation of Jesus Christ.

And so he's encouraging them here to not be humiliated by the fact that God humbled himself by becoming a man to save us or be humiliated by the fact that in order to save us, Jesus had to endure the humiliation of the cross.

In verses 10 through 18, he continues to make that case. He continues to urge them to not neglect this great salvation and to see the superiority of Jesus Christ through whom and only through whom we can be saved from our sins, redeemed by his life and his death, who rose from death to restore the place and the position we had with God before sin entered this world in the world to come.

In our text this morning, the author of Hebrews continues to make the case for the superiority of Jesus by showing all the things Jesus accomplished for us by tasting death for us.

[8 : 00] And so the main idea of this morning's sermon is that the superiority of Jesus is shown in what he could accomplish for us. The superiority of Jesus is shown in what he could and only he could accomplish.

for us. In this room this morning, I'm sure that there are some of you who have rejected this great salvation. You may not believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

You may not believe in God at all. We're not threatened by that. And we're glad that you're here.

We don't want you to leave. In fact, I believe that God brought you here and if anything today, you're going to hear why we, Christians, love Jesus so much.

At the very least, if you pay attention to what is said this morning, you'll walk out of here knowing why as Christians we think Jesus is worth living for and if necessary, worth dying for.

you'll walk out of here knowing what we believe about Jesus that makes Him superior to all things. And I hope, friend, that in hearing why we love Jesus so much, you'll walk out of here this morning believing and loving Him too.

[9 : 23] Some of you in this room are people who heard the gospel. You've heard it many times. you've heard it when you were a kid in VBS and Awana, when you were a teenager in youth group.

You've heard it from your Sunday school teacher, from your parents, from your spouse. You've heard it from me. But like some of these Hebrews, you may be tempted to neglect this great salvation.

Maybe you think one day I'll submit my life to Jesus but not today. Maybe you have questions, criticisms about the manner in which God provided this great salvation.

Maybe you think Jesus' death was cruel and unnecessary. Maybe you don't understand why Jesus had to taste death to save you. Or maybe you just aren't sure of what you've heard. Maybe, honestly, you just don't care. There are a million other things going on in your life and those things seem more important to you than this.

[10:34] Friend, there is nothing more important than this. Your soul is eternal and your eternity hinges on what you believe about Jesus.

And so, I hope today you stop neglecting salvation. And that today you'll see in all the things that Jesus did for you, your need to be saved.

And that today will be the day of your salvation. Some of you have received this salvation and you know it's great. You already know that. And you might be thinking, Pastor Mike, I don't need to hear another message about the superiority of Jesus.

I know that. Let me tell you, I love steak. And I've had some really good tasting steak before. And I've never thought, you know what, I know steak tastes good.

I don't think I need to eat steak anymore. If you've tasted salvation in Jesus, who tasted death for you, you can't ever get enough of Him.

[11:43] This truth saved you, it changed you, and you need to continue to hear it as the Holy Spirit who indwells you, conforms you into the image of Jesus Christ, your Savior.

Because, brother, sister, Jesus has saved you, He's called you, He's enabled you to be more like Him. And these things that you're going to be reminded of this morning that Jesus did for you are things He commands you to do for others.

To have the mind of Christ, to love others as yourself, to pray for those who persecute you, and to live humbly for the glory of the one who will glorify you one day.

The superiority of Jesus is shown in what only God, what only Jesus could accomplish for us. Well, what did He accomplish for us? Hebrews 2, 10 through 18 shows four realities about what Jesus accomplished for us, which should lead us to love Him more, serve Him better, and never neglect this great salvation.

So first, the first accomplishment, the first reality is that Jesus suffered for us. Verse 10, For it was fitting that He for whom and by whom all things exist in bringing many sons to glory should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

[13:07] Again, in the previous section of Hebrews 2, the author demonstrated the superiority of Jesus to angels in His redeeming us from our sins and restoring to us dominion over a world to come that is no longer going to be under the curse of sin.

Jesus accomplished this by humbling Himself. The eternal Son of God entered our sin-cursed world, becoming a curse on the cross to set us free from our sins.

Jesus' death, His suffering on the cross wasn't pointless. And it was not an accident. All four Gospels record Jesus telling people that He came to die.

Matthew 16, 21. From that time, Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

Mark 10, 45. Jesus says, For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. Luke 9, 22. Jesus said, The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

[14:23] John 10, 17 through 18. Jesus says, For this reason, the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down on My own accord.

I have authority to lay it down. I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father. In His sermon at Pentecost, Peter preached in Acts 2, 22 through 23, Men of Israel, hear these words.

Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst as you yourselves know. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. In Hebrews 2, 9, the author says, Jesus tasted death for everyone. In other words, He suffered and He died as a substitute for others.

Jesus' death was tragic in the sense that He who knew no sin endured the wrath of the Father for our sins, but Jesus' death was not a tragedy in the sense that it was senseless or without purpose. [15:34] God created man in innocence and gave Him dominion over the earth. Man sinned. Sin entered the world, negatively affecting everyone and everything. Jesus came to die and to remove the curse of sin to redeem and to restore to us what was forfeited because of our sin.

Verse 10 says that Jesus did this to bring many sons and daughters to glory. Jesus came to do many great things and we'll see in this text that case but right here what we read that Jesus came for is for our adoption to be a part of His family, sons and daughters of the Father, brothers and sisters of the Lord and of one another.

The final stage of our salvation is glorification. Our souls being united with resurrected bodies that no longer have the desire to sin, the ability to ascend or that will endure the effects of sin.

But this also means that for those of us whom God has been gracious to save, we are commanded by Him to magnify His glory in how we live right now.

Matthew 5, 14 through 16, Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount says, You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand and it gives light to all in the house.

[17:06] In the same way, let your light shine before others. Now hear this, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

We can't be lights in this world apart from the light of Jesus Christ being illumined by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us through salvation.

The better we understand what Jesus did for us, the better we will reflect His glory now in how we live and how we treat one another.

The more we see the superiority of Jesus, the more humble we become and like John the Baptist, the more we will say in our lives of Jesus, He must increase, I must decrease.

in verse 10, the author of Hebrews shows the superiority of Jesus in bringing many sons to glory through His suffering. The beginning of verse 10 says that it was fitting that He for whom all things and through whom are all things.

[18:09] This refers primarily to God the Father, though it obviously refers to Jesus Christ the Son as well. Colossians 1, 15 through 17 says of Jesus, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for by Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through Him and for Him and He is before all things and all things hold together in Him.

It was fitting is one word in the Greek and it carries the idea of being proper, of being suitable, of being consistent with one's character.

In the case of Jesus' suffering and dying and dying on the cross, the author of Hebrews makes the point that it was fitting. It was consistent with God's character.

It was consistent with God's holiness. It was consistent with God's wrath towards sin. It was consistent with God's power.

What Jesus endured on the cross for a few hours will take an eternity for unrepentant sinners to endure. It was consistent with His love in that He loved the world so much that He gave His only Son for its redemption.

[19:29] It was consistent with His grace because Jesus suffered as our substitute in our place for our sins.

We've got a warped sense of what grace is. Grace is something that cannot be earned. If you can earn it, it's not grace anymore. It's something given that isn't deserved.

During finals week, my freshman year of college, I was in the student center and I was eating lunch.

One of my classmates came to me and he said, why didn't you take our final?

And I thought he was playing a joke on me. I was just kind of, okay, you're joking, right? No, he wasn't joking. I said, but the final's tomorrow when we normally have class.

He said, no, it wasn't. We just had it. I just came from taking the final. All of us were there but you.

And so, I mean, I jumped up and I ran over to the building where the classroom was.

[20:34] I threw the doors open and thankfully, I saw my professor was still there. And he looked at me after I explained, you know, I made this mistake.

I'm really sorry. I'm ready to take my final and he looked at me and he said, the date of the final was posted in the syllabus and he's putting all of his stuff away.

Kept packing up his things and I thought, I'm going to fail this class. And then he pulled out the test and he handed it to me and he said, I'm going to show you some mercy.

Mercy was him stopping the penalty I justly deserved. Grace would have been him saying, and I'm going to take the final for you.

He didn't do that. But mercy stops a deserved penalty. Grace provides an undeserved blessing.

[21 : 40] God in his mercy stopped the penalty we justly deserve for our sins and he provides a substitute in his grace to give us a blessing we don't deserve.

God is holy and since God is holy he must punish sin. Thankfully for us he is also gracious providing a substitute providing his son to pay that penalty for us and to bless to credit to our account his sinless life thus bringing many sons to glory.

The end of verse 10 says that it was fitting it was consistent it was suitable with God's character to do this and he accomplished it through Jesus our willing substitute by making the founder of our salvation he says perfect through suffering.

Now you hear that we read that and we think well what does that mean? Jesus is the God man he's the second person of the Trinity he's sinless he's holy he is perfect. The author of Hebrews emphasizes the sinlessness of Jesus in chapter 4 verse 15 so how can Jesus be made perfect through suffering?

What this refers to is the son's perfect submission to the father perfect obedience in every way to the father perfect obedience in the face of escalating difficulties in his earthly life which brought him intense suffering in salvation an exchange takes place Jesus takes our sin and we receive his righteousness this principle this doctrine is taught throughout the Bible theologians refer to it as the doctrine of imputation we are all born with a sin nature with a desire to sin none of us is righteous but righteousness is what God requires for us to be in right relationship with him because of our sin to live eternally in his presence to be spared the penalty of our sins we must be righteous the problem is we all sin and we all sin a lot and one sin is enough to be banished from God's presence in his sight but the good news is that God is gracious and we see

[24 : 20] God's grace and salvation where he credits to us to our count the perfect sinless righteous life of Jesus Christ which he purchased through his suffering he suffered because he was God and was holy and sinful people loved the darkness rather than the light worst of all Jesus suffered the agony of the cross as he absorbed the righteous wrath of the father for our sins in order to atone for our sins thus becoming the source the founder the pioneer of our salvation this is consistent this is fitting with God's holy character the cross and the suffering of Jesus on it perfectly captures the love and justice and the grace of God providing the only way for us to have peace with him and we love

Jesus because he did this for us he suffered for us second Jesus sanctifies us verses 11 through 13 says for he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source that is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers saying I will tell your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise and again I will put my trust in him and again behold I and the children God has given me in Christ because he suffered for us providing the righteous life we need to be in right standing with God we are sanctified positionally we are considered by God the Father to be holy based on the holiness of Jesus the Bible also says that believers are progressively being sanctified God has changed our standing before him in Jesus and the Holy Spirit indwelling us is changing us to make us more like Jesus sanctification is a translation of the Greek word meaning holiness or a separation in the past

God granted us justification in our salvation a once for all positional holiness in Christ in the present God guides us to spiritual maturity a practical progressive holiness becoming more like Jesus as we put sin to death in the future God will give us glorification a permanent ultimate holiness these three phases of sanctification separate the believer from the penalty of sin and justification the power of sin in spiritual maturity and the presence of sin one day in glory now I know this is a lot to think about this is a lot for us to comprehend hold on bear with me for a moment you'll be glad that you did the author of Hebrews says both the one who sanctifies Jesus and those who are sanctified believers come from one source the initiative and plan of God the father the father sent his son as our redeemer and those whom he's redeemed his church are united in the purpose and the plans of God for the history of redemption and Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers and his sisters the author of Hebrews then quotes two Old

Testament passages to confirm this Psalm 22 and Isaiah 8 both of which point to the reality of the Messiah's coming and that in his coming he would redeem people who would become children of God his brothers and his sisters because God the father chose to adopt us as his children he provided what we need in Jesus to be sanctified and live in his presence I read a story about a pastor whose family fostered a girl who they eventually adopted she came from an abusive home she did not feel loved she was in the foster care system for a while this family opened their home to her the pastor and his wife and his biological children had begun fostering this little girl and then eventually adopted her but they found out that this girl had been fostered by another family whose parents had biological children and when that family would go on vacation they took their biological kids with them but they left the little girl whom they were fostering at home in the care of someone else and so when this pastor and his wife informed their children and this little girl who was now adopted by them that they were going to Disney

World this little girl started acting awful she rebelled worse than before she said and did hurtful things the pastor and his wife couldn't understand the change in her behavior or the worsening of her behavior especially considering again that they had recently adopted her as the time to go to Disney World approached the little girl's behavior got even worse a few nights before they were scheduled to go on vacation the pastor was tucking the little girl into bed at night and he just had enough and he was like tell me what's wrong why are you so upset why are you so angry and finally she broke down and she told him because I know that you guys are going to Disney World and you're gonna leave me here and he said to her oh no you are my child and you're my child as much as your brother and sister are me and your mother chose you to be a part of this family and in choosing you

[30 : 32] I've given you my name and you are mine you are loved and you go where we go from that time on the little girl changed the fear the doubt the hurt subsided as a result of that conversation she changed her ways because she knew how much she was loved she knew that her parents her siblings would not leave her they would not unadopt her she was theirs as a result of her knowing that she was theirs they became hers too they were not ashamed to call her daughter they were not ashamed to call her sister her new position in this family changed her life it changed her attitude it changed her behavior it changed her love for her family

Ephesians 5 1 says therefore be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God and if you're a parent and you have kids you know one of the things that grieves you the most is when your kids don't act like they love one another when your kids are constantly at one another when your kids say mean things to one another when your kid tells your other kid I hate you and I wish you weren't a part of this family it breaks your heart as a parent doesn't it it's grieving because there's nothing you want more than your kids to love each other as much as you love them is it any different with our heavenly father with us as his children breaks his heart when we don't love each other in the way that he's enabled us to having suffered for us having sanctified us and now third having saved us we love

Jesus so much because he sanctified us because he's given this new position we never could earn before being adopted as children of God and we love Jesus because he saved us verses 14 through 17 since therefore the children share in flesh and blood he himself likewise partook of the same things that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death that is the devil and delivered all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery for surely it is not angels that he helps but helps the offspring of Abraham therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of his people in his suffering in his sanctifying work Jesus saved us from death and the devil what we read here for us to receive his righteousness he had to become like us to live the sinless life that we couldn't live so that it could be exchanged for our sins on the cross to defeat death he had to die and rise again and Jesus did this by becoming our faithful high priest our intercessor our mediator our representative who offered himself to the father as a sacrifice as the lamb of

God to propitiate which means to remove the wrath of God that was justly due to us against us because of our sins thus as children of God as Jesus' brothers and sisters we can and should live without fear of the enemies that Jesus defeated for us Satan knows that if people remained as they are they will die and go out of God's presence forever in hell that's his weapon to deceive a person

His grace and what Jesus has done here is sufficient for you. Believer, God's grace is also sufficient for you. Whatever it is that you're going through.

Whatever it is that you're tempted by. Whatever it is that is causing you to suffer. What you need to do is to remind yourself and preach to yourself the gospel.

Look at all the things that Jesus has done for me. Okay. If in understanding all the things that Jesus has done for you, how can you understand that and not smile?

[41 : 05] Like, oh my gosh. You've done this for me? It changes the way you think. It changes the way you live. It changes the way that you view other people.

We are part of God's family. We've been united to Christ. We've been united to one another. And so we should be gracious to each other.

Like Christ, we should be willing to suffer with each other and for one another. We should seek to be used by God in His sanctifying work to help each other become more mature and to be more like Jesus.

We should help each other stay focused on the saving power of Jesus. Reminding each other of the gospel and all that Jesus has done for us. Since Jesus has loved us so much, since Jesus has done so much for us, He's called us, He's commanded us to love one another as He's loved us.

John 13, 34-35. A new commandment, Jesus says, I give to you that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another.

[42 : 29] By this, all people will know that you are my disciples. By how much you know the Bible. By your frequent attendance in church.

By how much you give to the church. If you love one another. That's how they'll know. If you love one another.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, forgive us that so often, I think in our lives, we allow ourselves to be distracted by the things that are of this world.

And Lord, we forget all that you've accomplished for us. And oftentimes, we let those other things overshadow just that knowledge of what you've accomplished to save us by suffering.

To sanctify us. And that you sympathize with us. Lord, you've given us so much to be thankful for.

[43 : 44] And so God, as we've gone through your word and as we've seen all these things that you've accomplished for us, I pray that it would just fill our hearts and our minds with joy. And that we would seek even more so to live our lives like you and for your glory.

Lord, I pray for those who are here this morning who you brought here and they are not saved. And I pray, Lord, that they'd see all that they're missing out on. And I pray even worse than that, they'd see the danger of giving in to the devil's weapon of being deceived and of dying in their sins and suffering eternally in hell as a result.

So God, I pray in your grace that you would continue to just reveal your goodness and your grace and your love towards them that they would be saved by you. And Lord, I pray for those in our church who may know the right things to say, but Lord, you know the heart.

And there may be some, Lord, who you know have neglected this great salvation. And I pray, God, that today you would just continue to put this word before them, this truth before them, that they would see their desperate need for Jesus and that they would turn to you and be saved.

And again, Lord, for those of us whom you've been gracious to save, I pray that we would have more of the mind of Christ, thinking of ourselves less, thinking of others more, that our lights would shine and that people would see by the love that we have for one another that we're your disciples, that we are yours, we're part of your family, and you're not ashamed to call us your children, to call us your brothers and your sisters.

[45 : 29] Thank you, Lord, for what you've done. Be glorified in our lives, be glorified in this church. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.