

Hebrews Chapters 8-10: "We Have Been Sanctified" Through the Better Sacrifice

by Karl Kemp; September, 2014

All quotations were taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [] or [[]] to make them more obvious. I am using straight quotation marks ("), hyphens (-) instead of dashes, and a few other things like this because some of the internet sites where I post these articles require it. Cf., e.g., means "compare, for example."

INTRODUCTION. Hebrews chapters 8-10 contain some of the most powerful teaching in the New Testament that deals with the full salvation provided for Christians. There is a strong emphasis on the fact that the sin problem, which was not solved by the old covenant, has once for all been fully solved through new-covenant salvation: The law has been written on our hearts (Heb. 8:10; 10:16). "We have been sanctified" (Heb. 10:10) in the ideal (but very real) sense that we have been set apart for God from sin and everything unholy and defiling, which includes the fact that we are called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. (As I demonstrate in the last chapter of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ," this understanding fits the typical use of the words holiness, holy, sanctification, make holy, etc. in a new-covenant context.) And our consciences are cleansed in the full sense that includes our knowing that we have been born again, that the law has been written on our hearts, and that we are enabled and committed to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ (Heb. 9:14; 10:22; cf. Heb. 9:9; 10:2), along with knowing that we have been forgiven for all our sins before we became Christians (Heb. 8:12; 10:17). We also know that we will be forgiven for any sins we commit after we become Christians, through the atoning blood of Christ, when we sincerely repent, but we must (we are required to) aim at the target of not sinning.

There is an equally strong emphasis in these chapters on the fact that this full salvation comes through the all-important atoning death of the Lamb of God. And the writer of Hebrews (I don't believe that the apostle Paul wrote this epistle, but there is a good probability that it was written by someone associated with Paul, someone like Apollos, for example) emphasizes the point that these things that are available under the new covenant were not available under the old covenant. This was a very important point to repeatedly make in that context, because, for one thing, the writer knew that at least some of the initial recipients of this epistle were being tempted/pressured to turn back toward the old covenant, which would be apostasy.

One primary reason that I wanted to discuss these chapters is because they contain such powerful teaching on Christians being called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, by His sufficient, saving, sanctifying grace in Christ. After prayerfully studying this topic far more than any other topic for the past forty-five years, I am totally sure that this is the Christian ideal to which we are called, and that it is not presented as an unrealistic ideal. (We will briefly discuss Romans 7 and 1 John 1:8 in this paper, the two passages that are the most often used to try to prove that Christians cannot walk with the victory over sin in this life. I believe they are totally misunderstanding those passages.) If you hear this right, this is very good news! God wants to transform us, not condemn us! God hates sin, and He paid an infinite price in the Sacrifice of His Son, His Son who was always with Him in glory, His Son who became the God-man through His incarnation, who lived a sinless life, and who died as the Lamb of God, bearing all our sins back to Adam with the guilt (so we can be forgiven) and with the penalties, including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin (so we can be born again and walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin).

Essentially all evangelicals understand that Jesus bore our sins with the guilt, so we could be forgiven, and evangelicals understand that we must be born again (though many wrongly understand the new birth in a way that doesn't have much to say about our living in the righteousness and holiness of God, with the victory over sin). However, based on my observations, it seems that very few Christians (including evangelicals) understand that the Lord Jesus died for us (in our place) so we could be set free from spiritual death and bondage to sin and actually walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin as much as it includes forgiveness. Of course, the victory over sin, etc. doesn't take place automatically because we become Christians. We must cooperate with God's saving, sanctifying grace through faith on a continuous basis, and we have enemies trying to keep us in sin: the world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil and his multitudinous hosts, but we are called to this victory and God's grace is sufficient. We must aim at this target with a high priority!

An understanding of the super-important things that I have been speaking about in this Introduction, which are at the heart of what Christianity is all about, is desperately needed by large segments of the Body of Christ in our day. Very few Christians, probably not more than ten percent, believe that we are called, enabled, required, and privileged to walk with the victory over all sin. (Many Christians mock that idea.) Another ten percent, or so, would probably agree that we need to make victory over all sin a high priority and aim at that target. It is certain that Christians are not going to hit the target very often, by faith, while they are believing and saying that they cannot do it.

My primary concern as I write this paper is with the fact that most evangelical Christians expect to sin (they have faith that they will sin). They are not making it a priority to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. They don't believe they have been called, enabled, or required to aim at that target. God hates sin, but I don't believe He has a hard time forgiving if sincere Christians slip into an

occasional act of sin when they repent. (I'm not saying we should expect occasional acts of sin, or make room for them in our hearts. We should have zero tolerance for sin.) But I am sure that God is very concerned when He hears Christians saying that we cannot stop sinning and are not even aiming at the target of not sinning. The believers under the old covenant were doing better than that. This is a serious distortion of Christianity! I believe God has clearly informed us that He hates sin and has provided the answer to this problem at a very high cost to Himself in the Sacrifice of His Son. And the answer doesn't center in forgiveness, as important as that is. I believe many of us need to reconsider this super-important topic. Sincere Christians can misinterpret the Bible, and the devil and his hosts have been, and are, eager "to help" us.

The only way we can walk with the victory over all sin is by faith, faith in God and in His Word. Our faith must be based on what God has called us to in the gospel. What He called us to do, He enables us to do! However, we cannot effectively appropriate or cooperate with God's sanctifying grace in Christ by faith when we don't believe that He has called us be sanctified (to live in an abiding state of holiness). It is extremely important that we rightly interpret and understand God's Word. What I am sharing in this paper is good news, very good news!

I was surprised by the very large percentage of commentators (more than 90 percent) on the Epistle to the Hebrews that I looked at for this study (more than fifty commentaries; not all of them were evangelical commentaries, and some of them were one-volume commentaries) who missed (what I'm sure is) the primary point that the writer of Hebrew was making about how new-covenant salvation differs from old-covenant salvation. (I spend a lot of space in this paper discussing the difference between old-covenant salvation and new-covenant salvation.) That "primary point" is that new-covenant believers are called, enabled, required, and privileged to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, by grace through faith, with the victory over all sin. Instead of that, most commentators emphasize the point that now we have been forgiven, are consecrated, accepted by God, and have access to Him. Some (including essentially all evangelicals) include the new birth, and you hear a lot about progressive sanctification, which is defined to mean that you will keep on sinning until you die, or the Lord Jesus returns, but you will sin less as you progress in holiness. You often hear that the believers were not forgiven under the old covenant, but they clearly were forgiven through the sacrificial offerings for all the sins that were not defiant, rebellious, with a high hand.

I don't want to minimize forgiveness. We are totally dependent on total forgiveness through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus, and the writer of Hebrews included that. However, he put most of the emphasis on the fact that the moral law of God has been written on our hearts and we have been sanctified through the all-important atoning death of the Lamb of God (through His blood). The writer of Hebrews didn't mean, of course, that all true Christians are automatically sanctified, or that we couldn't sin, or that a walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God will always be easy or fun, but he was showing that God has called, enabled, and required us to live in an abiding state of holiness. He certainly expected his readers to make it a top priority to walk in

the salvation to which He has called us, by His sufficient, saving, sanctifying grace in Christ.

This is the Christian ideal, and (based on the teaching of the New Testament) we must aim at this target! We need to think in terms of what we can do by God's sufficient grace, instead of leaving the door open for expected sin. (If we think God has told us to expect to sin, we will sin.) This is a door we must keep shut. (Some doors must be kept shut. If you open them a little you will be overwhelmed with the results.) God hates sin, and He paid an infinite price to set us free from sin. Yes, we must run to God with repentance if we should sin, but we shouldn't be saying that we know we will continue to sin. Something is seriously wrong here, no matter how we got to this place. (Many very committed, totally sincere, Bible centered Christians have gotten to this place.) Some say that we all sin daily in thought, in word, and in deed. (If we do, something is seriously wrong.) And we sometimes hear that all of our works are tainted with sin. (I don't believe the New Testament teaches this, not for those who are walking by faith and by the Spirit on a continuous basis, as we are called, enabled, and required to do.) I'm not speaking of super-saints. I'm speaking of those who have humbled their hearts before God, have made God the Father, His Son, His Spirit, and His gospel top priority, and who walk by faith and by the Spirit on a continuous basis.

The very widespread inadequate translation and misinterpretation of Heb. 10:18, which is a very important summarizing verse (which we will discuss in this paper), is a significant part of the reason why so many Christians miss the primary point that the writer of Hebrews makes in Hebrews chapters 8-10. The typical translation and interpretation of Heb. 10:18 leaves the very wrong impression that the writer of Hebrews was saying that now that we are forgiven, the issue is settled; the one sacrifice solved the sin problem. I'm confident that the writer would not agree with that understanding at all. Like I said, throughout chapters 8-10 (but not at all limited to chapters 8-10), he puts all the emphasis on the fact that now that we have been set free from spiritual death and bondage to sin (with an emphasis on the fact that God's moral law has been written on our hearts) through the blood of Christ and that we are called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God as born-again Christians. From this point of view the sin problem really is solved through the blood of Christ: I trust my readers will agree that there is a gigantic difference between being forgiven the guilt of sin and walking with the victory over sin (even all sin). And all the more so when we remember that God hates sin.

Now we will begin a verse-by-verse study of Hebrews chapters 8-10, starting with Heb. 8:1.

"Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest [[referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, having been resurrected and been "taken up to heaven" after "forty days" and "exalted to the right hand of God" (see Acts 1:2, 3, 9-11; 2:33); the book of Hebrews often refers to Him as "High Priest," "high priest," or "great high priest" (Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1, 3, 4; 9:11; 10:21); or "priest" (Heb. 5:6; 7:15, 21)], **who has taken His seat at the right hand** [on being

seated at the right hand of God the Father, which is the place of authority, cf. Psalm 110:1; God the Father is called Yahweh in Psalm 110:1] **of the throne of the Majesty** [Greek "megalosune"; also used in Heb. 1:3 of God the Father] **in the heavens, (2) a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.** [[The "the true tabernacle" in heaven here is contrasted with the tabernacle that Moses had built on the earth at God's instructions. God's presence was there in the second compartment of that tabernacle (in the Holy of Holies), and the temple that replaced that tabernacle, but it was a temporary earthly "copy and shadow" (8:5; cf. 9:11, 25) of the heavenly reality. Now, under the new covenant, through the shed blood of the Lamb of God and His high priestly ministry, we (as born-again children of God) have direct access to God and the heavenly reality. After we are glorified we will fully participate in the glory of heaven, even reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ.]] **(3) For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices** [under the old covenant]; **so it is necessary that this *high priest*** [the Lord Jesus Christ] **also have something to offer. (4) Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law** [[As the writer of Hebrews shows (Heb. 7:11-28), the Lord Jesus is a high priest of a different order (not of the Levitical order; for one thing, He was of the tribe of Judah, not Levi), of the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4 [Psalm 110 is discussed in chapter 19 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture"]; see Heb. 7:1-10 on Melchizedek).]]; **(5) who serve a copy** [cf. Heb. 9:23] **and shadow** [cf. Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:17] **of the heavenly things** [see under verse 2], **just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, 'See,' He says, 'that you make all things** [the tabernacle and all of the things associated with worship at the tabernacle] **according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain** [quoting Ex. 25:40].' **(6) But now He** [our great high priest] **has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator** [Gal. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:15; 12:24] **of a better covenant** [Heb. 7:22; cf. Heb. 9:15; 12:24], **which has been enacted on better promises.** [The new covenant has been enacted on better promises (much better promises) than the old covenant of Mt. Sinai.] **(7) For if that first covenant** [referring to the covenant enacted at Mt. Sinai] **had been faultless** [cf., e.g., Heb. 7:11; 10:1, 10, 14], **there would have been no occasion sought for a second** [referring to the new covenant].

DISCUSSION ON THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OLD COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT (including some prophecies of the new covenant in the Old Testament and some discussion on the foundational basics of new-covenant salvation):

God gave the old covenant through Moses, but (in accordance with His plans that were not fully revealed in the Old Testament) that covenant was only temporary. The old covenant was not designed to solve the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem. God had already planned before the foundation of our world (1 Pet. 1:20; cf. Gen. 3:15) to send His Son to become the Lamb of God and fully solve the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem forever through the new covenant established on the atoning death (and resurrection) of the Lamb of God.

The old covenant could not solve the sin problem because those under the old covenant were still spiritually dead; they were still under the spiritual death that came with the rebellion and fall of Adam and Eve. As Jeremiah prophesied (quoted in Heb. 8:8-12), Israel did not continue in the old covenant. In other words, they were often rebelling against the covenant and sinning against God. God had given the Law to those under the old covenant and told them to take the Law into their hearts and live by it, but all too often they rebelled (often in very serious ways) against God and His Law.

One gigantic difference between the old covenant and the new covenant is that believers are born again (which overthrows spiritual death) through the Spirit who is poured out/given under the new covenant, starting on the Day of Pentecost. The Spirit (the indwelling, Righteous, Holy Spirit of life) brings the new birth and spiritual/eternal life and enables believers to live in the righteousness and holiness of God, all in accordance with the promises God made under the old covenant, very much including the promises quoted in Heb. 8:8-11. Also see, for example, ISAIAH 32:15-17; 44:3-5; EZEKIEL 36:25-27 (I'll quote verse 37, **"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."**); EZEKIEL 37:14 (**"I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life...."**); MATTHEW 3:11; JOHN 1:12, 13; 3:3, 5-8; 6:63;

JOHN 7:37-39 (**"Now on the last day, the *great* day of the feast [the Feast of Tabernacles], Jesus stood up and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. (38) He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, "From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water." ' (39) But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."** The Spirit was given, starting on the Day of Pentecost. (See the next listings from the book of Acts.));

ACTS 1:4, 5, 8 (I'll quote ACTS 1:4, 5: **"Gathering them together, He [Jesus] commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised [(literally) 'wait for the promise of the Father'; the Father had promised the new-covenant coming of the Spirit in the Old Testament], 'Which,' He said, 'you heard from Me; (5) for John baptized with [in] water, but you will be baptized with [better, "in"] the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'** [I would translate "[baptized] in" here and in Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; and 1 Cor. 12:13 ("in one Spirit we were all baptized"). Baptism in the Spirit includes the new birth in Acts 1:5 and the other six verses I just listed; Jesus couldn't give/pour out the promised Spirit until after He had been glorified (see John 7:39, which is quoted above, and Acts 2:33, which is quoted next; on the meaning of John 20:22, John 20:21-23 are discussed as we continue, under Titus 3:5-7.).));

ACTS 2:33 (**"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God [after forty days (Acts 1:3)], and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear** [[referring to things that took place on the Day of Pentecost; the outpouring of the Spirit, which started on the Day of Pentecost, included the new birth (no believers were born again before the

Day of Pentecost), the promised power/enablement to be righteous and holy with the righteousness and holiness of God (cf., e.g., ISAIAH 32:16, 17; 45:8; 46:13; 53:11; 56:1; 60:21; 61:1-4 with LUKE 4:16-21; ISAIAH 61:10, 11; JEREMIAH 31:33; EZEKIEL 36:27); and the widespread distribution of the charismatic gifts]]); ACTS 2:38 ("[Receiving] the gift of the Holy Spirit" here (and other places) is the equivalent of being baptized in the Holy Spirit.); ROMANS 2:29; 5:5;

ROMANS 7:4-6 ((I'll quote ROMANS 7:5, 6: **"For while we were in the flesh [The apostle Paul is speaking of the time when he and his Jewish Christian readers were still spiritually dead, before they had become born-again Christians who had received the Spirit], the sinful passions, which were aroused by the [Mosaic] Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. (6) But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound [the Mosaic Law and the old covenant], so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter [the letter of the Mosaic Law]."**));

ROMANS 8:1-17 ((Essentially all of these verses are totally relevant to an understanding of the new covenant, and the major difference between the new covenant and the old covenant. See the verse-by-verse discussion of these verses in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ" and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com. I'll quote several verses from this passage that are super-relevant: **"(2) For the law [or, governing principle] of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus [all true Christians have the life of God dwelling in them through the Holy Spirit of life dwelling in them (cf. Rom. 8:9)] has set you free from the law [or, governing principle] of sin and of death. [We used to be under the governing principle of sin and of death; that is, we were spiritually dead and in bondage to sin.] (3) For what the Law [the Mosaic Law, which was the foundation for the old covenant] could not do [It could not give us the new birth or set us free from bondage to sin.], weak as it was through the flesh [Man in the flesh (man without the indwelling Spirit of God) does not have the power to overcome bondage to sin and demons.], God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh [God condemned and dethroned the sin and spiritual death that had reigned over us through new-covenant salvation.], (4) so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. [[That is, we fulfill the moral requirements of God's Law, which gives His definition of what is right and wrong, as we walk by the Righteous, Holy Spirit on a continuous basis by faith (cf., e.g., Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27; Rom. 2:26, 29; and 1 Cor. 7:19), which we are required (and privileged) to do as Christians (cf. Gal. 5:16).]] ... (9) However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit [as born-again Christians], if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ [referring to the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 16:7; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; and 1 Pet. 1:11)], he does not belong to Him. ... (12) So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh ["to live according to the flesh" includes doing the works of the flesh of Gal. 5:19-21, to live in sin] - (13) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die [[In other**

words, if born-again Christians, who have life by the indwelling Spirit of life, turn from their faith commitment to God, His Son, and the new covenant and begin to live in sin instead of living for God, they will forfeit eternal life and "[they] must die [spiritually]."; **but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body** ["The deeds [works] of the body" here is the equivalent of "the deeds [works] of the flesh" of Gal. 5:19-21, and "the works of the flesh" is the equivalent of the works of the old man, who wants to continue in sin. In Gal. 5:24 the apostle Paul speaks of our having crucified "the flesh" with its passions and desires; in Rom. 6:6 he speaks of our "old man" having been crucified with Christ. "Putting to death the deeds [works] of the body" "by the Spirit" here in verse 13 means to keep from doing sinful works, by the enablement of the indwelling Righteous, Holy Spirit, by grace through faith.], **you will live** [you will continue to abide in the eternal life of God and will inherit the fullness of eternal life at the end of this age]. **(14) For all who are being led by the Spirit of God** [[In this context the apostle is speaking of being led by the Spirit to "[put] to death the deeds [works] of the body" (Rom. 8:13); or, to put it in different words: they are to be dead to sin and to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God.]], **these are the sons of God.**" The thought is included that those who continue to live in sin, whether they had become born-again Christians, or not, are not "sons of God." The New Testament makes it clear, of course, that if Christians sin they will be forgiven when they sincerely repent, but we must be aiming at the target of not sinning; that is the heartbeat of the new covenant.); ROMANS 15:16;

GALATIANS 3:14 ((with 3:2, 21 [[GALATIANS 3:21 is extremely important for this study: **"Is the Law** [the Mosaic Law which was the foundation for the old covenant] **then contrary to the promises of God?** [Paul was speaking of the "promises" of new-covenant salvation, with the emphasis on the gift of the Holy Spirit, who brings the new birth, the power/enablement to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God, and the widespread new-covenant distribution of the charismatic gifts. God gave the Law and the promises, so they are not contrary to one another, but the old covenant was temporary.] **May it never be! For if a Law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.**" [The old-covenant Law could not impart life (the indwelling Spirit of life and of righteousness and holiness was not available under the old covenant); therefore the new birth and the imparted righteousness and holiness of God was not available under the old covenant. The fact that the apostle said that we must have the life of God in order to have this righteousness demonstrates that he was speaking of our living in the imparted righteousness of God, not just a legal, positional righteousness. This is very important in our day when so many Christians put all the emphasis in a legal, positional righteousness.]]));

GALATIANS 4:5-7; 5:5 ("**For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.**" Those who have (the imputed) and the imparted righteousness of God "through the [indwelling] Spirit, by faith" "are waiting for the hope" of glory/heaven (cf., e.g., Col. 1:5, 27). I'll quote the Amplified Bible: **"For we [not relying on the Law], through the (Holy) Spirit's [help] by faith anticipate and wait for the blessing and good for which our righteousness and right standing with**

God - our conformity to His will in purpose, thought, and action - [causes us] to hope."));

GALATIANS 5:16-25 ((These verses, which are extremely important for our present discussion, are discussed in my books that were mentioned above under Rom. 8:1-17. I'll quote a few key verses: "**(16) But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you [most certainly] will not carry out the [sinful] desire of the flesh.** [The desire of the flesh is to do the sinful works of the flesh; a long list of some of the sinful works of the flesh is included in Gal. 5:19-21.] ... **(22) But the fruit of the Spirit** [the fruit that the indwelling Spirit produces in us as we walk by the Spirit by faith (faith in God and His Word)] **is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self control; against such things there is no law. (24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh** [have crucified the old man; cf. Rom. 6:6] **with its passions and desires.** [It must be understood, of course, that we can only crucify the old man by the grace of God in Christ, which includes all the work of the Holy Spirit. We must also understand that the flesh/old man does not cease to exist. As the apostle Paul shows in Gal. 5:17, for example, we must wage warfare against the flesh/old man, which includes the work of demon spirits, throughout our lives in this world.] **(24) If we live by the Spirit** [as born-again Christians], **let us also walk by the Spirit** [better, "let us follow the Spirit"."]);

EPHESIANS 1:13 ("**In Him** [in Christ], **you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed** [We have to listen, to understand, and to submit to the gospel from our hearts (in faith) to be believers.], **you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise**" Being "sealed" with the Holy Spirit, who was promised under the old covenant, includes the fact that we receive the Holy Spirit and He dwells within us doing all the things He does during this age.);

EPHESIANS 3:16 ("**That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened [or, empowered] with power through His Spirit in the inner man.**" The Spirit enables us to be strong in faith, in righteousness and holiness, in all of the fruit of the Spirit, etc.);

EPHESIANS 4:23 ("**and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind**" [much better, "**be renewed by the Spirit in your mind/thinking**" (cf. Rom. 8:5-9; 12:2, 3); we cannot live right until we think right in our hearts (in line with the Word of God, being enabled by the indwelling Spirit of God))); 4:30;

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13, 14 ("**But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord** [the Lord Jesus], **because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation** [cf., e.g., Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4] **through sanctification** [or, "**through holiness**"] **by the Spirit and faith in the truth.** [Our faith is in God the Father, His Son, and the gospel; faith is our response to God's saving grace (see my "A Paper on Faith" on my internet site).] **(14) It was for this** [that we would live in an abiding state of holiness by the indwelling Holy Spirit through "faith in

the truth"] **He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory [of heaven] of our Lord Jesus Christ.**");

TITUS 3:5-7 ("**He saved us** [God the Father saved us from the sinful state pictured (pictured in part) in Titus 3:3], **not on the basis of deeds [works] which we have done in righteousness** [[We are saved by faith, not works, but if our faith is real our lives (including our works) will manifest the righteousness of God. As we walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis, in line with God's Word (especially the gospel), by God's grace/mercy through faith, the righteousness of God will be manifested. The works of righteousness are required; they are not optional. Many verses/passages that are discussed in this lengthy discussion under Heb. 8:7 demonstrate what I have said here, and many more could be listed.]], **but according to His mercy** [We did not earn or deserve our salvation; it came (in all of its aspects) by God's mercy/grace.], **by the washing of regeneration** [[(This double bracket goes on for thirty-two paragraphs before we come to the rest of Titus 3:5. We will be discussing water baptism, baptism in the Spirit, receiving the gift of the Spirit, righteousness and holiness by the Spirit, the charismatic dimension of the Spirit's work, and some other basics of new-covenant salvation.) The Greek noun translated "washing" here is "loutron." The only other use of "loutron" in the New Testament is Eph. 5:26. I believe this "washing" in both verses has at least some reference to water baptism. The New Testament presents a rather high view of water baptism. I discussed Titus 3:3-8 in some detail on pages 125-128 and in the endnotes on pages 134-139 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," which is available on my website and at amazon.com. See that reference for more details. Water baptism is discussed in endnotes 26-29. Ephesians 5:26 is discussed on pages 174, 175 of that book. There is plenty of room for exceptions, but in the typical New Testament pattern, the Holy Spirit comes to repentant believers immediately after, and in close association with, water baptism. (See endnotes 28, 29.) I also discussed water baptism under verse 29 in my paper on 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and under John 3:5 in my paper on John 1:19-4:54. Both papers are on my internet site.

The Greek noun ("paliggenesia") translated "regeneration" in Titus 3:5 means "rebirth," "new birth." (The NIV translates "rebirth" here.) It isn't surprising that water baptism would typically precede being born again by the Spirit (which comes with the reception of the new-covenant Spirit): Water baptism is the most appropriate occasion (according to the New Testament) to complete the transactions of being forgiven and washing away sins ((cf. Acts 2:38 ["Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Note that water baptism precedes receiving the gift of the Spirit, which includes the new birth]; Acts 22:16)); of becoming united with Christ and appropriating His atoning death as our death, since He died in our place (cf. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27); and of our dying to the old man and burying the old man (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:11, 12). It seems clear to me that these things would typically precede the reception of the life-giving, sanctifying Spirit.

I'll quote part of what I said under 1 Cor. 15:29 in my paper on 1 Corinthians chapter 15 on water baptism: It's clear to me that the Bible teaches a higher view of baptism than

that held by many Christians today. I'm not bringing this up because I think this is one of the biggest problems we have in the Body of Christ. (I believe we have much greater problems to deal with in the Body of Christ, especially dealing with the basic truths of the gospel and the need to live in God's will - in His righteousness and holiness - by grace/the Spirit through faith.) Furthermore, I'm not bringing up water baptism because of some special interest in this topic, or because of some special experience I've had; I'm not emotionally involved regarding this topic, and I'm not obligated to any particular viewpoint - we are obligated to God and His truth!

I'm bringing this up strictly based on what the Bible seems to rather clearly say on this topic. I'm certainly not suggesting, nor do I believe, that people can't be saved or sanctified apart from water baptism. (The Salvation Army, for example, don't practice water baptism.) God has been very generous with His people (in blessing us in spite of our errors), but that's no excuse to maintain our viewpoints when they're wrong/when they don't line up with the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. The more we do things God's way, the more He will be glorified; His will will be accomplished in the church; the more He can bless us and use us; and the more we can unite around the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches.

It seems that many have formed their out-of-the-Biblical-balance view of water baptism mostly in reaction to someone else who was out of balance in a different direction, and we typically have several verses that we emphasize (on every topic). We need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches in this area, as in every area. It is quite significant that the Bible mentions forgiveness/washing away of sins at water baptism (Acts 2:38, 22:16). It mentions becoming united with Christ in baptism, including being united with Him in His death on the cross (cf. Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3). He died an atoning death in our place; we are to die to sin and to the old man in water baptism, and the old man is to be buried (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:11, 12). John 3:5 seems to speak of water baptism as a preliminary to being born of the Spirit. I agree with the widespread viewpoint that the words "born of water" in John 3:5 refer to water baptism, which was quite prominent in that setting. Not only was John the Baptist baptizing (even Jesus Christ was baptized by him), but Jesus (through His disciples) was on the verge of baptizing (John 1:25-34; 3:22-26; 4:1, 2). The baptism of John 3:5 is a baptism of repentance and faith. (I'll quote John 3:5 and comment further on this verse in the paragraph after the next one.) ... And 1 Pet. 3:21 even speaks of baptism saving us. As I mentioned, I'm not suggesting (as some dogmatically teach) that these things (like forgiveness, dying to the old man, salvation, etc.) can't be received apart from water baptism (as I mentioned God often is generous with His people), but baptism seems to be the most appropriate (Biblical) occasion to complete these transactions.

I believe it's necessary for us to understand that water baptism is meaningful and effective only if it is accompanied by the following indispensable things: We must hear the gospel and understand it (we must at least understand the basics of the gospel); we must repent and submit to the gospel (and God Himself) from our hearts in faith; and we must have all the necessary work of the Holy Spirit (including His drawing, convicting, revealing, regenerating, and sanctifying work). Without these things water baptism is

nothing more than another dead ritual. Some other verses to consider on water baptism are Matt. 3:1-17; 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41; 8:36-39; 9:18; 10:47, 48; 19:5; and Eph. 4:5.

I'll Include Some Excerpts From My Paper On John 1:19-4:54, Under John 3:5, That Deal With Water Baptism And Being Born Of The Spirit: JOHN 3:5: "**Jesus answered, 'Truly [amen], truly [amen], I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'**" I believe (in agreement with a large number of commentators) that the words "of water" refer to water baptism, which was quite prominent in that setting. John the Baptist was baptizing in water - even Jesus was baptized by him - and Jesus (through His disciples) was on the verge of baptizing in water (see John 1:25-34; 3:22-26; and 4:1, 2). The baptism in water of John 3:5 is a baptism of *repentance* and *faith* (if it isn't a baptism preceded and accompanied by true repentance and faith it isn't a valid baptism), and (typically in the New Testament) it is a preliminary step to being born of (receiving, being baptized in) the Spirit (cf., e.g., Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21, 22 [I had a footnote: These first three references refer to JESUS' BEING BAPTIZED IN WATER AND THEN (SHORTLY AFTERWARD) RECEIVING THE SPIRIT. THIS SEQUENCE ESTABLISHED A PATTERN. Jesus wasn't spiritually dead, so He didn't need to be born again like we do, but He did need to receive the Spirit in order to become the Anointed One/the Christ/the Messiah.]; Ezek. 36:25-27; Acts 2:38, 39 [these verses from Acts are quoted and discussed below]; 8:14-17; 19:5, 6; and Titus 3:5, 6). [I had a footnote: There is room for exceptions to this sequence (baptism in water *before* the life-giving, sanctifying, gift-dispensing Spirit comes), as Acts 10:44-48 demonstrate, but it is easy to see why God gave the Spirit to those Gentile believers *before* they were baptized in water. If God had not demonstrated His acceptance of those Gentiles by giving them the Spirit, Peter would have been very reluctant to baptize them. He got in trouble with the Jews as it was (Acts 11:1-18).] I am not suggesting that people cannot be born of the Spirit before, or apart from, water baptism, but I am saying that in the typical New Testament pattern water baptism precedes being born of the Spirit. [(This double bracket goes on for four paragraphs.) After being baptized in water (in the typical New Testament pattern), it is time to be baptized in, to receive, the life-giving, sanctifying, gift-dispensing Spirit (cf., e.g., Acts 2:38, 39; 19:5, 6). I have spent a lot of time seeking God for the *balanced* truth of what the Bible teaches about water baptism and baptism in the Spirit (and many other topics). We desperately need to believe the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. God does not call us to defend our viewpoints just because our denomination has taught it this way for five-hundred years, for example.

Many Christian groups have formed their viewpoint on water baptism (to some extent) in reaction to what other groups were doing (like the Baptist reaction against the view of baptismal regeneration, including the baptizing of infants, and the fact that many baptized "Christians" didn't believe the gospel). The Baptist viewpoint, which is followed by large numbers of Pentecostals, charismatics, and others, is that believers are forgiven, born of the Spirit, etc. and then baptized in water). Reacting against viewpoints out of balance very often leads to being out of balance in the other direction.

What about the Baptist viewpoint? Most of the Christians I have fellowshiped with hold this viewpoint, that our sins have been taken away; we have been born again; etc.; now we will be baptized in water in obedience to God's Word. I held that viewpoint until I spent some time studying what the New Testament has to say on the topic. I am confident that we can be solid, born-again Christians and hold the Baptist viewpoint on water baptism. For one thing, God has been very generous with us in many ways, even if we didn't fully line up with the Bible in every detail. I am also confident that it will work for good if we switch to a viewpoint that doesn't teach that essentially everything is done before we are baptized in water.

What I am saying about water baptism here I am saying for one primary reason: The New Testament seems to me to be quite clear in its teaching on water baptism. I haven't had some special revelation or some special experience, and I don't owe loyalty to any particular viewpoint. I simply want to please God and be a blessing to the body of Christ by trying, with a high priority, to teach the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. Trying to teach the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches doesn't make you popular with those who are sure that they have everything right and have closed their minds, and large numbers of Christians fit in that category. However, we can humble ourselves and open our minds, and especially if God is dealing with us in this area.]]

It should be obvious that it is the Spirit (not water baptism) that gives Christians spiritual life (starting with the new birth/birth from above) through Christ Jesus. Why did Jesus include "of water" here in John 3:5? For one thing, Christian water baptism *is* important; baptizing in water, including the baptizing of John the Baptist, came from God; it is something He said to do - that makes it important! The New Testament doesn't speak of water baptism as something optional. It is quite possible (even probable) that Jesus included this reference to water baptism (in John 3:5) when speaking with Nicodemus because he was a Pharisee, and the Pharisees rejected the baptism of John the Baptist (Luke 7:30).

By mentioning the need to be "born OF WATER and the Spirit" here, Jesus put some emphasis on the need to be baptized in water, with the emphasis on genuine repentance and submission in faith to God, His Messiah, and His new-covenant plan of salvation. First came the baptism of John the Baptist, but before long it would be Christian baptism. John's baptism was transitional between the time of the old and new covenants. The baptizing that Jesus was doing (through His disciples; John 3:22; 4:1, 2) before the new covenant was ratified through His atoning death and resurrection was also transitional. John the Baptist called people to a baptism of repentance and pointed them to Christ Jesus; Jesus (through His disciples) began to baptize His disciples in water (a baptism that included repentance and a heart commitment in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ); and before long (after Jesus' atoning death, His resurrection, His ascension, and His pouring forth the promised gift of the life-giving, sanctifying, gift-dispensing Spirit, starting on the day of Pentecost), Christian water baptism in the full new-covenant sense would be practiced. Believers couldn't be born of the Spirit before the Spirit was given, starting on the day of Pentecost. (This is the end of the excerpts under John 3:5.)

I'll quote two paragraphs that deal with one facet of water baptism from endnote 29 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin" (page 155): I agree with James D. G. Dunn ("Baptism in the Holy Spirit" [Westminster, 1977], pages 139-146, 154-157) that the apostle Paul does not speak of believers being resurrected to spiritual life through water baptism in either Rom. 6:3, 4 or Col. 2:12, 13. It seems that Paul only says that we died and were buried with Christ through baptism.

Colossians 2:12 says: **"having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."** I agree with Dunn that **"in which"** should be translated **"in whom,"** with "whom" referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. Without "faith in the working of God" and the actual "working of God" we will not be raised up with Christ.

On pages 126, 127 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," I quoted ACTS 2:38, 39 and had two paragraphs of discussion following the quotation. I'll quote the verses here and most of what I said in the two paragraphs. ACTS 2:38, 39: **"Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (39) For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God [God the Father (cf., e.g., Acts 3:19, 20, 22; 4:23-31)] will call to Himself."**

It seems appropriate that repentance and baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins would typically precede the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. ... "The promise" of Acts 2:39 speaks of "the gift of the Holy Spirit" of Acts 2:38. God the Father had often said (promised) that He would pour out His Spirit. I believe "the gift of the Holy Spirit" of Acts 2:38 (and Acts 10:45; 11:17) includes the impartation of spiritual life (the new birth), the sanctifying transformation wrought by the Spirit, and the widespread distribution of the charismatic gifts. [[I had a lengthy endnote (#30) that addresses this topic in some detail that covers more than three pages (pages 135-138). I believe this teaching is quite important. I'll include most of that teaching here in this double bracket:

Some teach that the promised gift of the Holy Spirit does not include the new birth and sanctifying transformation (the renewal) wrought by the Holy Spirit, but that it just deals with the endowment of power (especially referring to the gifts of the Spirit) that enables the church to spread the gospel across the earth (cf. Acts 1:8). For one thing, the power of God behind the new birth and sanctifying transformation of believers constitutes a big part of the power that enables the church to take the gospel to the world. [Being born again of God is no little thing. If we walk in the fullness of what it means to be born again, it certainly includes the sanctifying transformation that enables us to be dead to sin and to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God.] I'll list some key reasons for believing that the gift of the Holy Spirit (that was first poured out on the Day of Pentecost) includes the new birth and the sanctifying transformation:

The promises of God regarding the outpouring of His Spirit typically mention the life-giving and/or sanctifying work of the Spirit. ((Cf., e.g., Isa. 32:15-18; 44:3-5; Ezek. 36:25-27; 37:14; Joel 2:28-32 [Cf. Acts 2:16-21. Charismatic gifts are mentioned in Joel 2:28, 29, but it should also be noted that the outpouring of the Spirit of Joel 2:28-32 is set in a context that deals with calling people to repent and get ready for the day of the Lord.]; John 7:37-39; Gal. 3:13, 14; and Eph. 1:13, 14 [Ephesians 1:13, 14 say: "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of PROMISE [my emphasis], (14) who is given as a pledge (down payment) of our inheritance...." (Romans 8:23 speaks of Christians "having the first fruits of the Spirit.") The sealing of Eph. 1: 13, 14 (and "the first fruits of the Spirit" of Rom. 8:23) includes the life-giving, sanctifying work of the Spirit. Born-again Christians can testify (with much thanksgiving) that the Spirit bears witness with their spirit that they are the children of God, cf. Rom. 8:16.]))

The life-giving, sanctifying work of the Spirit is emphasized throughout the New Testament. ((Cf., e.g., Matt. 3:1-12; John 3:3-8; 6:63; 7:37-39; 14:16-20; Acts 15:8, 9; Rom. 2:26-29; 7:4-6; 8:1-17; 15:16; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 3:1-18; Gal. 5:5 [I believe the Amplified Bible communicates the apostle's intended meaning for this verse. It has: "For we [not relying on the Law], through the (Holy) Spirit's [help] by faith anticipate (and) wait for the blessing (and) good for which our righteousness (and) right standing with God - our conformity to His will in purpose, thought and action - [causes us] to hope]; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 3:16; 4:23 [See endnote 32; I'll include endnote 32 at the end of this endnote (endnote 30); it is important to this study and an understanding of the new covenant]; 2 Thess. 2:13; and Titus 3:5-8.))

The gift of the Holy Spirit is to be equated with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. ((See Acts 1:4, 5; 2:33, 38, 39; 10:44-47; and 11:15-18. Matthew 3:11, which speaks of baptism in the Holy Spirit, is set in a context (Matt. 3:1-12) that puts all of the emphasis on repentance and sanctification. Matthew 3:11 says: "As for me, I [John the Baptist] baptize you with [in] water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with [in] the Holy Spirit and fire." Note the "fire" in Matt. 3:11 and Acts 2:3.

The Lord Jesus Christ could not pour forth the promised gift of the Holy Spirit until after He had ascended (been taken up in glory) forty days after His resurrection, some ten days before Pentecost. (Cf., e.g. Luke 24:49-51; John 7:37-39; 14:16-20; 17:5; Acts 1:1-5; 2:1-4, 33; 1 Tim 3:16 ["taken up in glory"]. Acts 2:33 says: "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.")

I see no Biblical basis for saying that the disciples received the life-giving, sanctifying Spirit before the Day of Pentecost. (However, it is important to understand that the Holy Spirit does a lot of work in us convicting, drawing, revealing, enlightening, teaching, preparing our hearts, etc. before we are born again.) We'll discuss this topic when we discuss John 20:21-23 next.

Those who teach that the promised gift of the Holy Spirit does not include the new birth and sanctifying transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit typically refer to John 20:22. They believe this verse shows that the Lord Jesus Christ imparted the life-giving, sanctifying Spirit to His disciples some fifty days before the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. (It seems clear to me that the Lord Jesus did not receive the promised life-giving Spirit to impart until He was taken up to heaven after forty days.) Let's look at John 20:21-23. (These verses are discussed in my verse-by-verse study of John chapters 18-20 on my internet site.)

JOHN 20:21-23. "Jesus therefore said to them again, 'Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.' (22) And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. (23) If you forgive the sins of any, *their sins* have been forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they have been retained.' "

The resurrected Christ (on the evening of the day of His resurrection [John 20:1-20]) commissioned His disciples (His church) to take the gospel to the world (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:44-49). When He breathed on them (John 20:22), He set the stage for the outpouring of the promised Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. It seems to me that all the Biblical evidence points to the Day of Pentecost as the time when the life-giving, sanctifying, gift-dispensing Spirit was actually given. The New Testament doesn't support the idea that the disciples received the Spirit and were born again some fifty days before Pentecost. We don't see their lives changing at that time. ((See Matt. 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:24-21:25; and Acts 1:1-26. (Note that they drew lots to choose Matthias to replace Judas in Acts 1:26.) Especially significant for our present study are the verses following John 20:21-23 (John 20:24-21:25). John 20:24-29 show that Thomas was not there when the Lord breathed on His disciples. When the disciples told Thomas (one of the twelve apostles, eleven then, minus Judas) what had happened, they didn't mention that they had received the Spirit, which would have been a really big deal if it had happened, but only that they had seen the Lord. And there is no mention of Thomas receiving the Spirit when the Lord Jesus spoke with him a week later. Furthermore, John chapter 21 shows no evidence of their lives having been changed through receiving the Spirit and being born again.))

I'm not denying that many Christians in our day (even years after they have become born-again Christians) receive very definite second (or even third) experiences in the Holy Spirit. (These experiences could be called a gift of the Spirit, a filling with the Spirit, an immersion [baptism] in the Spirit, etc.) I'll give two illustrations that are very relevant for our day: Some, at a time after their conversion, begin to see that they have not received (or yielded to) much of the sanctifying work of the Spirit. (In many such cases, they had not known what the Bible says on this topic. Much of the teaching on sanctification/holiness in the Christian church is quite inadequate.) As they begin to seek God (and especially if they are being taught that they should have a definite sanctifying experience), such persons may receive a definite sanctifying experience (what some would call a crisis experience) in the Holy Spirit. What we need is the end result of Christians walking day by day in a state of holiness, by faith, based on what the New

Testament teaches, being enabled by the Holy Spirit, whether there is a definite second (crisis) experience, or not. However, being sanctified isn't presented in the New Testament as a second experience; being sanctified is a big part of the new-covenant salvation package that is available when we become Christians.

Some, at a time after their conversion, begin to see that the charismatic gifts (e.g., 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14) are for today, and they enter that dimension of the work of the Spirit through a definite second experience in the Holy Spirit. However, entering into the charismatic dimension of the gifts of the Spirit isn't presented in the New Testament as a second experience; entering the charismatic dimension of the work of the Spirit is a significant part of the salvation package that is available when we become Christians. Much of the church has not been open to the charismatic gifts. God isn't going to force the gifts on us, even though we desperately need them; we are told to desire the gifts [e.g., 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1]. I believe it is also true that many "Christians" who come to receive the Spirit through the charismatic renewal actually receive the Spirit for the first time, including the new birth. (I'm speaking mostly of those who come from Christian backgrounds that don't stress the need to believe the gospel and be born again.) I discuss the charismatic dimension of the work of the Spirit in my paper on 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 that is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching), for one place.

Let's make sure that we receive and walk in everything that God has provided for us (according to the Scriptures), even if it involves two (or more) experiences. We don't have to worry about receiving too much of the Spirit of God. Let's make sure that we are born again (cf. Rom. 8:15, 16; 1 John 5:13). It's not good enough to assume that we're born again just because we have been baptized in water, or because we are members of a church, or because somebody told us we were born again, etc. The new birth is far too important to treat as a trivial matter (cf. John 3:1-8). Then too, let's make sure that we are appropriating all of God's sanctifying grace and the gifts of the Spirit that God has made available to us. These things are very important in God's plan for His people. Anywhere we are coming up short, let's come in line with the will of God. (This is the end of endnote 30.)

Now I'll include endnote 32 from pages 138, 139 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ": I would translate EPHESIANS 4:23 as follows: "**and be renewed by the Spirit in your mind [or thinking/way of thinking].**" This verse explains, in large part, how Christians are transformed from their former sinful state (cf. Eph. 4:17-19, 22). Significantly, in EPHESIANS 4:17 the apostle Paul says: "**This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their MIND [or, THINKING/WAY OF THINKING; my emphasis].**" The NIV has, "in the futility of their thinking." The Greek noun "nous," which is translated "mind" by the NASB in Eph. 4:17, is also used in Eph. 4:23. The Holy Spirit enables Christians to think right (in line with the Word of God and His righteousness; the primary way the Spirit teaches and guides us is by the Word of God). (See under Rom. 8:5-9 in chapter 6 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." The apostle Paul discusses the fact that the Holy Spirit enables us to think right and live right in these verses. We will never live right if we don't

think right in our hearts.) The Holy Spirit enables us to have right priorities, attitudes, and motives, and to think (and live) in line with the truth of God, in His righteousness and holiness. (God's truth includes His righteousness and holiness; see Eph. 4:24.) This is all part of having a renewed mind. (The mind/way of thinking is not at all limited to our head. Our most important thinking takes place in our heart/spirit.)

ROMANS 12:2 says: "**And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by THE RENEWING** [better "**RENEWAL**," with the BAGD Greek Lexicon; Greek "anakainosis"] **OF YOUR MIND [THINKING/WAY OF THINKING]....**" The Greek noun "nous," which is used in Eph. 4:17 and 23, is also used in Rom. 12:2. The Greek noun "anakainosis" is only used in the New Testament in Rom. 12:2 and Titus 3:5.

I believe Eph. 4:23 and Rom. 12:2 both speak, in an ideal sense, of a once-for-all renewal rather than a lifelong process. (Note the once-for-all nature of the exhortations of Eph. 4:17-6:20 [see my paper that includes Ephesians chapter 4 on my internet site] and Rom. 12:1, 2.) This is not to deny that there should be a lifelong process of growth (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18), but (in the Christian ideal) the old man (who lived under sin and spiritual death) should be put off once for all and completely (cf., e.g., Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9; Gal. 5:24; Rom. 6:6; Col. 2:11, 12), and the new man should be put on once for all and completely (cf., e.g., Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10 KJV; Romans chapter 6; Rom. 7:6; 8:1-14; 2 Cor. 5:17). Christians are to no longer think the (sinful) ways of the old man and sin; they have been renewed in their mind/way of thinking by the Spirit of God (cf. Rom. 8:5-9). They are to think (and live) in line with the truth of God, which centers in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 4:20, 21). (This is the end of endnote 32.) The New Testament makes it clear that Christians can have wrong thoughts, even as we can sin, but wrong thoughts are not sin if we resist them by the grace of God in Christ. Also, the old man isn't put off in the sense that it ceases to exist during this age, but we keep the old man from manifesting itself by walking by the Spirit on a continuous basis by faith (e.g. Gal. 5:16).

Being baptized in the Holy Spirit of Acts 1:5 (and Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:15-18; and 1 Cor. 12:13 [1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 are discussed verse-by-verse on my internet site.]) is comparable in meaning with receiving the gift of the Spirit of Acts 2:38 (and Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-18). "What God had promised" of Acts 1:4 (which speaks of the being baptized in the Holy Spirit of Acts 1:5) is the same as "the promise" of Acts 2:39 (which speaks of "the gift of the Holy Spirit" of Acts 2:38). Acts 10:44-47, with Acts 11:15-18, also equate the giving of the gift of the Holy Spirit with baptizing in the Holy Spirit. (In some cases the coming of the Holy Spirit is associated with the laying on of hands [cf. Acts 8:17-19; 9:12, 17; 19:6; 2 Tim. 1:6, 7; and Heb. 6:2].)

(Now we'll continue with the rest of Titus 3:5. We are still in the lengthy discussion under Heb. 8:7. We will come to Heb. 8:8 after about three more pages.)] **and renewing** [Greek "anakainosis," which is only used here and in Rom. 12:2 in the New Testament. I would translate "renewal" with the NIV and the BAGD Greek Lexicon.] **by the Holy Spirit** [[These words speak of the fact that we are made righteous and holy new creations by the Holy Spirit as He comes to dwell in us, bringing spiritual life and His

renewing, transforming, sanctifying power (cf., e.g., 2 Cor. 5:17, 21; Matt. 3:11; John 3:5, 6; Rom. 2:29; 7:6; 8:2, 13, 14; 15:16; 2 Cor. 3:4-11, 17, 18; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 3:16; 4:23; 2 Thess. 2:13). The apostle Paul is speaking, as he and other writers of the New Testament so often do, from the somewhat oversimplified (but not unrealistic) point of view of a once-for-all transformation to a state of righteousness and holiness with the victory over all sin. I agree with the many commentators who take "regeneration" and "renewal" to be essentially equivalent in meaning here in Titus 3:5.

On this "renewal" see, for example, Col. 3:1-10, especially verse 10. COLOSSIANS 3:9, 10 (NKJV) say: "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with its deeds, (10) and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him." The Greek participle translated "who is renewed" was formed from the verb "anakainoo." The Greek noun "anakainosis" ("renewal") that is used in Titus 3:5 and Rom. 12:2 was derived from this verb.

The "washing of regeneration" and "renewal by the Holy Spirit" both take place with the reception of the Holy Spirit (being baptized in the Holy Spirit; receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit). Our receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit can take place because God the Father "poured out upon us richly" the promised gift of the Holy Spirit "through Jesus Christ our Savior" (see Titus 3:6). Many believe that Titus 3:4-7 constitute a "trustworthy statement" (see Titus 3:8; cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; and 2 Tim. 2:11-13) that was widely used on the occasion of water baptism in the early Christian church.], **(6) whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior** [see under Titus 3:5], **(7) so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**" [[The longest chapter (chapter 6) of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ," is titled, "A Study on the Meaning of 'Justify/Justification' as These Words Are Used in the New Testament." One primary purpose for that chapter is to show that the Greek verb "dikaioo," which is often translated "justify" in some form in the New Testament, is frequently used in a very full sense, including Titus 3:7, a very full sense that includes being forgiven and declared righteous, the resultant overthrow of spiritual death and bondage to sin, and the making righteous with the imputed and imparted righteousness of God. Being justified in Titus 3:7 by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ, includes the facts that we have been regenerated (born again) and renewed by having received the poured out Holy Spirit. It is very important for us to see that justified/justification is frequently used in this very full sense in the New Testament including Titus 3:7; Rom. 3:24, 26; 5:1, 9, 18; and 6:7; these verses are all discussed in their contexts in chapter 6 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." This concludes the study of Titus 3:5-7, but I'm going to add a six page section to supplement what I said on water baptism and receiving the Spirit.]]

IN THE TYPICAL NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN, WHEN DOES THE SPIRIT COME BRINGING THE NEW BIRTH AND SPIRITUAL LIFE IN RELATION TO WATER BAPTISM). Some say the Spirit of life comes, bringing the new birth (and other things), in water baptism. That is, we die with Christ and are buried with Him when we are immersed in the water, and we become born-again Christians, who are raised up

(resurrected) spiritually in being raised up out of the water. (I'll limit this discussion to believer's baptism by immersion.) I said that I agree with Dunn that the New Testament teaches that we die to the old man and are buried with Christ in baptism, but that it does not teach that the Spirit of life comes and we are born again (raised spiritually) by the Spirit in water baptism.

It lines up better with the New Testament (with a rather consistent pattern) to say water baptism is preparatory for receiving the Spirit and that the Spirit comes after (typically right after) water baptism. Praying to receive the Spirit right after being baptized would be appropriate (the person doing the baptizing would be praying, so too the person being baptized, along with those witnessing the baptism); so too the laying on of hands (cf., e.g., Acts 8:14-17).

Keep in mind that I have shown that water baptism is the most appropriate occasion (according to the New Testament) to complete the transactions of washing away our sins and being forgiven, becoming united with Christ, dying with Him and being buried with Him. And we have discussed that before becoming Christians we must hear the gospel and understand it (at least we need to understand the basics of the gospel); we must repent; and we must submit in faith to God, His Son, and His gospel. We must also understand that the Holy Spirit is active in His drawing, convicting, revealing, teaching, etc. work before we receive and are born again by the Spirit. The things I have mentioned in this paragraph provide a solid preparation for receiving the all-important Spirit of life, truth, righteousness, holiness, etc.

Large numbers of Christians agree that we are not born again through the Spirit's coming in water baptism. For one thing, Calvinists (and those who agree with them on this point) believe that we are born again (regenerated) before we have faith in Christ and before we are baptized. (They believe we cannot have faith until after we are regenerated by the Spirit; they speak of God's giving us faith.) So they cannot believe that the Spirit brings the new birth in water baptism, since we have already been regenerated before we are baptized.

So too for the very large number of Christians who practice what I call the "Baptist view" of water baptism, that we must be born again before we are baptized. Those Christians cannot believe that the Spirit brings the new birth in water baptism, since we have already been born again. Most of the Christians I have fellowshiped with have followed the Baptist view of water baptism, and that was my experience too. I believe it has been demonstrated that the Baptist view will work, and it fits what happened in Acts 10 when God sent the apostle Peter to Cornelius and his household: They were born again by receiving the life-giving Spirit before they were baptized. I'll comment further on Acts 10 as we continue.

The Baptist view will work, and the view that the Spirit comes with water baptism can work too (if the Spirit can come before water baptism, He can undoubtedly come at the time of water baptism), **BUT WE SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE BALANCED TRUTH OF WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS ABOUT WATER**

BAPTISM (and in prayerfully considering if God would have us modify what we have been doing in any way). I am not interested in looking for new ideas or spending much time on topics that are not important. Water baptism is important, and in my teaching on this topic for the past 35-40 years I have been trying to present the balanced truth of what the New Testament teaches. I believe (as we have been discussing) that in the typical New Testament pattern, the Spirit comes to believers (which includes the new birth, the power to live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, and the distribution of the charismatic gifts [these things are all available to us, whether we appropriate them, or not]) after, but not long after, being baptized in water.

We are born again and raised spiritually when the Spirit of life comes to dwell in us. Does the Spirit come while we are under the water so that we emerge from the water born again? I don't know of any passages in the New Testament that speak of the Spirit coming in our being baptized (immersed). It would be OK to say the coming of the Spirit is typically associated with water baptism, but not that the Spirit of life comes to dwell within us in some automatic way when we are immersed in water. If everything else is right (hearing and understanding the gospel, repenting, submitting in faith to God, His Son, and the gospel, and being baptized in water) water baptism is preparatory for the coming of the Spirit in the typical New Testament pattern. As I have mentioned, the New Testament includes being forgiven (Acts 2:38, 39; 22:16); becoming united with Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27); and dying with Him (Rom. 6:3, 4) and being buried with Him (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12) in water baptism.

When I teach on these things I always emphasize that I am not saying that we must follow the typical pattern to be saved. For one thing, God has been very generous with His people and has not been rejecting believers over the details of water baptism, including believers associated with the Salvation Army who don't practice water baptism at all. However, I believe I am obligated before God to make it a top priority to teach the balanced truth of what God's Word teaches. And all of us (God's people) must make it a top priority to seek God for what He would have us to do.

One of the primary things I am always trying to do (I believe this is a primary assignment and gift that God has given me) is to do everything I can do to accurately interpret each passage of the Bible in the way it was intended by the writers who were chosen and anointed by God to give us the Bible. (Sometimes when they were speaking the exact words that God gave them, or reporting what they saw in visions, for example, God's spokesmen didn't understand what they were writing/saying.) I don't want to stir up controversy, but to accurately teach the Bible, to please God, and to be a blessing to the Body of Christ.

We Will Briefly Consider All Of The Passages In The New Testament That Refer To Water Baptism In A Way That Is Relevant To The Topic Of When The Spirit Comes (bringing spiritual life for one thing) In Relation To Baptism. (If I missed any passages it was not intentional.)

Receiving the Spirit right after water baptism fits the pattern of Jesus. The Spirit came to Him a short while after He was baptized, while He was praying, not in His coming up out of the water after being immersed by John the Baptist. (Jesus didn't need to be born again, but He did need to receive the Spirit to become the Anointed One, the Messiah [Hebrew], the Christ [Greek].) Luke 3:21 (I always quote from the NASB unless I mention otherwise) says, "Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, 'You are my beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.'" Glory to God the Son, the Lamb of God, our Savior!

Sometimes the New Testament speaks of the Spirit coming right after water baptism with the laying on of hands. See ACTS 8:5-17. In that case, which was special in that those believers were Samaritans, not Jews, there was a delay of a few days after they were baptized so that the apostles Peter and John could be involved in praying for them and laying hands on them "that they might receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:15). In ACTS 19:5, 6 the apostle Paul baptized those who had now heard and submitted to the gospel he had just proclaimed to them, and then he laid his hands on them (he undoubtedly prayed too) and the Holy Spirit came upon them (and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying). ACTS 2:38, 39 perfectly fit the pattern that the promised Spirit comes after water baptism. The apostle Peter mentioned repenting and being baptized in water; then he said "and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit [which includes the new birth]. For the promise [of the Spirit, which is a big part of what new-covenant salvation is all about] is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God [God the Father (cf., e.g., Acts 3:19, 20, 22; 4:23-31)] will call to Himself." ACTS 2:41 mentions that on that day, the Day of Pentecost, about three thousand people received the word that Peter proclaimed and were baptized and added to the Body of Christ. It doesn't mention that they prayed or that hands were laid on those believers or that they received the Spirit, but they surely received the Spirit and undoubtedly with prayer and quite possibly with the laying on of hands right after they were baptized. It doesn't mention that they spoke with tongues or prophesied, but many of them, if not all of them, probably did.

In JOHN 3:5 Jesus said that we must be "born of water and the Spirit," which fits the pattern of being baptized in water (a baptism that must include repenting and submitting in faith to God, His Son, and His Word), then receiving the Spirit. The life-giving, sanctifying, gift-dispensing Spirit could not come until Jesus had been crucified, resurrected, ascended, and received and poured forth the promised Spirit, starting on the Day of Pentecost (cf., e.g., John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33).

ACTS 10 was different in that the Spirit fell on the believers (and they were speaking with tongues) before they were baptized, but that was a very special case, dealing with the first Gentiles being saved. It does, however, demonstrate that the Spirit can come bringing the new birth, etc. before believers are baptized in water. (The Samaritans [Acts 8] were not accepted by the Jews, but they were much closer to the Jews, including circumcision, than Cornelius and his household.) If God had not demonstrated

His acceptance of those Gentiles who had now become believers by pouring out His Spirit on them, as on the Day of Pentecost, it would have been very difficult for Peter and the other Jews to accept those Gentiles as being accepted by God (without being circumcised, etc.) and to baptize them. Acts 11:1-19 show that Peter had to justify what he had done before the Jewish Christians when he went up to Jerusalem, and many Jewish Christians continued to reject Gentile Christians for a long time.

COLOSSIANS 2:12, 13 with some translations (including the NASB) have confused the issue and communicate an idea that I don't believe Paul intended, the idea that we are buried with Christ in baptism (this much Paul did intend) and then raised with Him spiritually (as born-again Christians) in baptism as we come up out of the water, which would fit the idea that the Spirit automatically comes while we are under the water or at least while we are being raised out of the water. For one thing that would be different than what Paul did in Acts 19:5, 6 (discussed above).

I'll quote COLOSSIANS 2:12, 13, **"having been buried with Him in baptism, in which** [(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) The translation "in which" ("en ho [omega, a long o]" in the Greek) would wrongly refer back to water baptism. It should be translated **"in whom,"** referring to the Lord Jesus, in whom (in union with) we are raised up (born again and resurrected spiritually; we will be resurrected bodily in the future; the near future I believe) "through faith in the working of God". (God is the One who makes us alive spiritually, etc., but these things do not take place apart from our faith in Him and His Word.) The idea is not that we are born again/raised up spiritually in baptism, but that we are born again/raised up (resurrected spiritually) in union with the Lord Jesus, with whom we become united, by faith, through water baptism, according to Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27. I am not suggesting that we cannot be united with Christ before being baptized in water. Cornelius and his household were united with Christ before they were baptized.

Our All-Important, Totally Necessary Union With Christ Is Emphasized In This Context, Not Water Baptism. (Colossians 2:8-15 is one sentence in the Greek.) Colossians 2:10 says that "in Him [in Christ (in union with Christ)] you have been made complete [in the margin the NASB says that "you have been made full" would be more literal]." And Col. 2:11 says "and in Him ["en ho" in the Greek, exactly as in 2:12] you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands [this is a work of God, not man], in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." [The "circumcision of Christ" (understood in the full new-covenant sense) is the "circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit" of Rom. 2:29, which enables the born-again Christian to keep the old man from manifesting itself in sin as we walk by the Spirit in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God on a continuous basis. It is clear that Christians cannot live as those who are dead to sin or walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God without the work of the indwelling Spirit. Paul didn't mention the Spirit's coming in Col. 2:12, 13, but according to the typical pattern in the New Testament, He would have come shortly after water baptism, not in water baptism. If we don't receive the Spirit we cannot be true Christians.

IT IS TOTALLY NECESSARY FOR US TO RECEIVE THE SPIRIT! If the Holy Spirit does not dwell in us, we aren't real Christians (cf. Rom. 8:9). We cannot have spiritual life or walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over sin apart from the indwelling Spirit of life, truth, righteousness, holiness, etc.]] **you were also raised up with Him** [With the translation "**in whom**" we would not translate the words "**with Him**" (which would be redundant in English and are not required by the Greek; for one thing, the Greek doesn't have a prepositional phrase here corresponding with the prepositional phrase "with Him.") **through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.** [God raises us up with Christ, in union with Christ, by the coming of the Spirit to dwell in us, through our faith in the working of God.] **(13) When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He** [God the Father] **made you alive together with Him** ["with Christ") The apostle Paul didn't mention the Spirit in these verses, but as I mentioned, we know, based on many other verses, that we are made alive by God the Father through the indwelling Spirit of life, the Holy Spirit.], **having forgiven us all our transgressions** [Being forgiven is obviously an important part of the preparation for receiving the Spirit. On forgiveness being tied to water baptism, see Acts 2:38, 39; 22:16. Again, I am not saying that believers cannot be forgiven and become Christians apart from water baptism.]."

ROMANS 6:3, 4 fit what I said regarding Col. 2:12, 13 perfectly: We are baptized into Christ, into union with Him (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27) and baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3), and we have been "buried with Him through baptism into death [the death of the old man], so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too [in union with Him] might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). These verses speak of becoming united with Christ through water baptism, but they do not say that we are born again and raised (resurrected spiritually) with Christ in water baptism. The emphasis of these verses is on what we have in union with Christ (by faith), not on water baptism. Paul doesn't mention the Spirit of life coming in these verses, but based on other passages of the New Testament, He comes in the typical New Testament pattern when we are born again and raised (resurrected spiritually), right after water baptism. The New Testament speaks of dying to the old man (and being buried) in water baptism, but it must be understood that the old man can continue to manifest itself in sin if we do not walk by faith in agreement with God's Word and by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis. We are enabled and required to do these things.

TITUS 3:5-7. (These verses are discussed in some detail in Parts 2 and 3 of this paper on Hebrews chapters 8-10.) I'll quote these verses: "**He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration** [The "washing" takes place in water baptism, which (in the typical New Testament pattern) is preparatory for being regenerated (being born again) by the Spirit.] **and renewing** [This Greek noun ("anakainosis") is only used twice in the New Testament, here and Rom. 12:2. I would translate "renewal" in both verses with the BAGD Greek Lexicon.] **by the Holy Spirit** [[The Holy Spirit's coming to dwell within us enables us to be renewed by the Spirit, a renewal that includes thinking by the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-9); walking by the Spirit in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God on a continuous basis (cf., e.g., Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:5, 16-25); producing the fruit of the Spirit

(Gal. 5:22, 23); and manifesting the gifts of the Spirit as God wills (cf., e.g., 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14; Rom. 12:1-8). But we must walk by the Spirit by faith on a continuous basis, in accordance with the Word of God (cf. Gal. 5:16).], **(6) whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior** [[We could not be born of, and renewed by, the Spirit if Jesus had not earned the right (through His all-important INCARNATION, SINLESS LIFE, and ATONING DEATH and RESURRECTION) to pour out (cf. Acts 1:4, 5, 8; 2:1-4; and especially 2:33) the promised Holy Spirit, starting on the Day of Pentecost.]], **(7) so that being justified** [[Being justified is used in the full sense here that includes being declared righteous; the overthrow of spiritual death and bondage to sin; and being made righteous and holy. (See under Titus 3:7 in the fuller discussion of Titus 3:5-7 in Part 3 of this paper.) Our salvation, which includes being born of the Spirit and renewed by the Spirit, comes to us by grace through faith, based on the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.]] **by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**" We will inherit eternal life in its glorious fullness at the end of this age, and it will never end.

This covers, I believe, all of the relevant passages in the New Testament. I don't believe I need to be dogmatic on all of these details, but I believe that what I have shared here should suffice to demonstrate that the New Testament typically speaks of believers receiving the Spirit shortly after water baptism, not in water baptism. As I mentioned, I don't know of any passages in the New Testament that speak of the Spirit coming in water baptism.

WERE THE BELIEVERS FORGIVEN THROUGH THE SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS UNDER THE OLD COVENANT? You often hear that a primary difference between the old covenant and the new covenant is that they were not forgiven under the old covenant, but now we are forgiven. The fact that so many evangelical Christians put the emphasis on being forgiven and having right standing with God, while denying that we have been called and enabled to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin through the atoning death of the Lamb of God and the outpoured Holy Spirit, probably is the biggest problem we have in the evangelical church of our day. (I have been saying this for at least forty years.)

The Old Testament makes it very clear that they were forgiven; they were told that they were forgiven, through the sacrificial offerings. See Lev. 4:13-6:7; Num. 15:22-29, for example. The sins (with the guilt and the penalties) were transferred to the sacrificial offerings (sometimes with the laying on of hands) before they were slain, or in the case of the second goat for the sin offering on the Day of Atonement (see Lev. 16:20-22), the sins, iniquities, and transgressions with the guilt and the penalties were put on the goat, with the laying on of the hands of the high priest, and the goat was driven from the camp (the place of life and the blessings of God) to the wilderness, taking the place of those who had sinned. The worshippers understood that if the goats had not taken their place, the sinners would have been driven from the camp of the people of God into the wilderness (where Azazel was god).

There are two qualifications to what I said in the preceding paragraph. For one thing, there were no sacrifices to cover sins that were committed under the old covenant in a deliberate rebellious manner before God, with a high hand. See Num. 15:30-36. In Num. 15:30 (NASB) "defiantly" is "with a high hand" in the Hebrew. In Num. 33:3 "boldly" ("boldly, defiantly" BDB Hebrew Lexicon) is "with a high hand" in the Hebrew. David didn't attempt to offer any sacrifices after his serious sins of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, her husband. This didn't mean that David could not be forgiven for those sins; he was forgiven, but there were serious consequences for his sins too (cf. 2 Samuel 11:1-12:22; 16:21, 22). (I'll say more about unintentional sins and deliberate rebellious sins under Heb. 9:7.)

The one sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ covered deliberate rebellious sins for those who truly repented and submitted to the new covenant in faith, and, it is extremely important, as we will discuss in the next paragraph, that He also bore the transgression of Adam (and Eve) with the guilt and the penalties. ((The first three chapters of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ," deal with three Hebrew nouns for sin, transgression, and iniquity (one of the nouns is often translated sin; one of them is often translated transgression; and one of them is often translated iniquity; all three nouns are used in Isaiah chapter 53). Those chapters show that these nouns include within their range of meaning guilt and (unlike the use of these nouns in English) the penalty, consequences, punishment for sin. Sacrificial offerings are discussed in those chapters, including many key verses from Isaiah chapter 53, which is one of the most important chapters in the Bible that deals with the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.))

For a second qualification, a very important qualification, we must understand that the sacrifices offered under the old covenant did not deal with the transgression of Adam and the consequences, including the major consequences of spiritual death and bondage to sin (see Rom. 5:12-21). The one super-important Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ had no such limitations. He bore all of our sin (iniquities, transgressions, etc.) with the guilt and with the penalties back to Adam. Since He bore our spiritual death, we can be born again. Since He bore our bondage to sin and earned the right for us to be born again and indwelt by the infinite Righteous Holy Spirit of God, we are called and enabled to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin. This is the heartbeat of the new covenant! This is a whole lot more than being forgiven and having a right standing with God. For the record, we wouldn't have a right standing with God if we were still living in rebellion against Him and His Law.

(Now We Will Continue The Verse-by-Verse Discussion of HEBREWS CHAPTERS 8-10, Starting with HEBREWS 8:8.) **(8) For finding fault with them** [because they were continually breaking the commandments of the covenant given at Mt. Sinai], **He says, 'BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD** [Yahweh in the Hebrew], **WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH** [[The New Testament makes it very clear that God had always planned to offer new-covenant salvation to the Gentiles too, for which we Gentiles will be eternally grateful.

This prophecy of the new covenant from Jer. 31:31-34 (38:31-34 in the Greek, Septuagint version) that is quoted in verses 8-12 is extremely important. (Jeremiah chapter 31 is discussed verse-by-verse, along with many other chapters, in my paper on selected chapters/passages of Jeremiah on my internet site [Google to Karl Kemp Teaching].) For one primary thing, Heb. 8:10 shows that God will change His people in their hearts and minds through the new covenant: He will put His laws (His moral laws) into their hearts and minds so that they will, from the heart, keep His commandments and live in His righteousness and holiness by His grace. We learn from other passages that God will accomplish this marvelous work of solving the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem for all who will submit to the gospel in faith through the all-important atoning death (and resurrection and ascension) of His Son and the resultant outpouring of the gift of the Spirit of life and righteousness and holiness, who comes to dwell in all born-again Christians.

EZEKIEL 36:25-27 are a very important cross-reference. I'll quote 36:27: "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." The New Testament makes is very clear that we must cooperate - by faith - with God's grace, which includes all the work of His Spirit, and "be careful to observe [His] ordinances," which equals walking in God's righteousness. Walking in faith (based on what God's Word says); walking by the Spirit of God; walking in the righteousness and holiness of God do not take place automatically, and (as long as we live in this world) the world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil and his hosts are working against us. We must cooperate with God's grace on a continuous basis by faith.]; **(9) NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD [Yahweh].** [Instead of "and I did not care for them, says the Lord," which follows the Greek, Septuagint reading, the Hebrew has "although I was a husband to them, declares the LORD [Yahweh]."] **(10) FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD [Yahweh]: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.** [[I'll quote part of what F. F. Bruce said regarding the "implanting of God's law in their hearts" ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1964], page 173): "Jeremiah's words imply the receiving of a new heart by the people - as is expressly promised in the parallel prophecy of his younger contemporary Ezekiel: 'I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God' (Ezek. 11:19f., RSV; cf. Ezek. 36:26ff.). When first they [Israel at Mt. Sinai] heard the covenant-law they said: 'All that Jehovah [Yahweh] has spoken will we do, and be obedient' (Ex. 24:7). But they did not have the moral power to match their good intention. ... The defect did not lie in the covenant-law; it was good in itself but, to borrow Paul's language, 'it was weak through the flesh' (Rom. 8:3) - because of the inadequacy of the human material which it had to work upon. [They were

spiritually dead.] What was needed was a new nature, a heart liberated from its bondage to sin, a heart which not only spontaneously knew and loved the will of God but had the power to do it. The new covenant was a new one because it could impart this new heart."

I'll quote most of a paragraph from what Thomas Hewitt said under Heb. 8:10-12 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1960], pages 136, 137): "The threefold superiority of the new covenant over the old is now revealed in the threefold superiority of the promises. The first promise made the new covenant spiritual and inward, for God says, 'I will put my laws into their mind, and write them on their hearts.' This dynamic was lacking in the old covenant, for though the law could reveal with vivid clearness the ways of good and evil, it failed to give to the Israelites the power which would have enabled them to do the good and resist the evil. On the contrary, as the forbidden fruit held real attractions for Eve [Genesis chapter 3], so the forbidden ways of the law held similar attractions [cf. Rom. 7:8, 11]. Romans 7 shows that it is possible to delight in the law of God with the inward man [cf. Rom. 7:22] yet at the same time submit to another law which makes war against the mind [cf. Rom. 7:23]. [Hewitt rightly understands that in Rom. 7:14-25 the apostle Paul was dealing with a person living under the old covenant, not with a born-again Christian. I discussed Romans chapter 7 in some detail in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com, and I have a paper dealing with Romans chapter 7 on my internet site.] A new power was needed and is supplied under the new covenant. The power is not impersonal, but is in fact the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, who enables the believer to resist the attractions and overcome the power of evil. It is the authority of the Spirit of life who through union with Christ Jesus makes us free from the power of sin which ends in death (Rom. 8:2, 3)."

I'll quote part of what Andrew Murray said under Heb. 8:10 ("The Holiest of All" [Fleming H. Revell, 1894 (in the public domain); Andrew Murray 1828-1917 was born in South Africa. His father was a Dutch Reformed Church missionary sent from Scotland to South Africa. Andrew Murray was ordained in the Dutch Reformed Church in 1848 and he pastored churches in South Africa. Murray was involved in the Keswick holiness, higher life movement. I have read quite a bit of their literature over the years, and I agree with most of it.]: "We have seen what the fault was of the old covenant, 'But they continued not in My covenant.' We have seen that the object of the new covenant is to repair the fault of the old. There is henceforth no more need of the word, 'But they continued not.' The one distinguishing characteristic of the new covenant is to be: There is grace for those who enter it to continue. ...

But are we not, someone will say, all living under the new covenant, and yet is not the ordinary experience of Christians still the same as of old, 'But they continued not'? Alas, it is so. And how, then, with the provision of the covenant? Is it really to be taken so literally? And if so, has not the new covenant failed just as the old did, of securing the continual obedience God desired? ... The new covenant does not do violence to man's will. It is only when the heart sees and believes what God has promised, and is ready at

any cost to claim and possess it, that any blessing can be realized. With most Christians there is not even the intellectual belief that God means His promise literally. [One major problem is that many Christians (even the majority) believe that there are passages in the New Testament that make it clear that Christians cannot stop sinning.] They are so sure that their views of man's sinfulness and the necessity of always sinning are correct that the teaching of God's word in regard to His purpose to make an end of the 'but they continued not' can never enter the mind. Others there are who accept the truth, but through unbelief [doubt] enter not into the full possession. And the whole state of the Church of Christ is such that but few live in the full experience of what the covenant means.

Let us meditate on its promises, and especially on its chief promise, its central blessing, 'I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts,' in the adoring faith of our great High Priest upon the throne, who as Mediator of the new covenant is its surety that every word will be made true. ..." (pages 271, 272).

" 'This is the covenant I will make, saith the Lord.' And God hath given His own Son with an oath to be of that covenant a surety! And of that covenant He, the High Priest upon the throne is the Mediator! Oh, what think you? Will God fail in the very thing the covenant was devised to provide? Will He disappoint us in the one thing in which, as it deals with our experience, the new covenant is better than the old? In the one thing His heart and our heart longs for, to serve Him in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life, - is this one thing the very thing we are not to realize? God forbid. He hath said - 'This is the covenant I will make'; and He will do it.

Let us look up to the Mediator of the covenant, our High Priest upon the throne in the heavens. When He was with His disciples on earth, the law was not yet *put into* their hearts. How often they failed in humility and love and boldness. But when He sat down upon the throne, He sent down the Holy Spirit from heaven in their hearts, and all was new. They were full of humility and love and great boldness. The law of God was in their hearts as the power of a life that knew, and loved, and did His will. Christ dwelt in their hearts by faith. The power of the endless life from the throne of God had taken possession of them. Oh, let us not doubt. Let us plead God's promise, 'I will make a covenant.' Let us trust God's Son, the surety of the covenant, and receive God's Spirit [Let us receive and cooperate with all the work the Spirit is sent to do in us, and through us, as we walk by the Spirit on a continuous basis, which we are commanded to do (cf. Gal. 5:16).] - we shall be brought into the covenant, and into the sanctuary together, and have grace to *continue to abide continually*" (pages 213, 214).

I'll also quote most of a paragraph that Murray has under Heb. 8:10, 11 (page 281): "There are not a few who know indeed what the greatness of God's pardoning love is, who yet never reach out to claim, as equally sure, the greatness of His sanctifying grace. The necessity of daily sinning, the impossibility of living for one day without actual transgression is such a deeply-rooted conviction, and there is such confidence that God's word teaches it, that the mind cannot for a moment enter into what the word has said of the radical difference between the old covenant and the new in this respect.

The confounding the freedom from any sinful tendency [[We need to know that born-again Christians have a "sinful tendency" (cf., e.g., Gal. 5:16; 19-21) - this is a point Murray is making here; the old man has not been annihilated; that is why we are required to walk by the Holy Spirit, by faith, on a continuous basis (cf. Gal. 5:16). We also need to know that being tempted to sin isn't sin, but if we yield to sinful desires, for example, it becomes sin.]] and freedom in the power of Christ's indwelling from actual sinning, even with the sinful tendency still remaining, is so universal, that every attempt to press home the promise of the law written in the heart, in its contrast to the Old Testament life, is regarded as dangerous. The wonderful promise is leveled down to the ordinary experience of the ordinary Christian life. No wonder then that the crowning promise, 'They shall not every man teach his brother, Know the Lord,' with its direct teaching [enablement, etc.] of the Holy Spirit, and its direct fellowship with God through the Spirit, is neither valued nor claimed, and the entrance through the rent veil into the Holiest of All and the presence of God postponed to another world."]] **(11) AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.** [[All born-again Christians have the privilege to know God through the indwelling Spirit; we literally have access to Him in Christ Jesus and by the Holy Spirit. After we are glorified we will know Him on a much deeper level (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 13:12); we will even be reigning with Him (cf., e.g., Rev. 22:5).]] **(12) FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEM NO MORE.** [[Total forgiveness for our past sins is a super-important part of the gospel. We will also be forgiven for any sins we commit after becoming Christians when we repent, but we must put the emphasis on what the writer of Hebrews said in verse 10, which is the heartbeat of the new covenant. God hates sin, and He paid an infinite price in the incarnation and sacrifice of His Son to give us the victory over sin (all sin) and Satan's kingdom of darkness.]] **(13) When He said, 'A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.'** [[The old covenant, which was established on the Mosaic Law, was terminated with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; the Law (and the old covenant) was nailed to the cross (cf. Col. 2:14). However, God is not done with Israel: For one thing, the time will come when the (remnant of) the nation will repent and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, and be saved with new-covenant salvation (cf., e.g., Zech. 12:10-14 with most of Zechariah chapters 12-14 [these chapters are discussed in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," which is available on my website and at amazon.com]; Matt. 23:37-39; and Rom. 11:25-32). The temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. I agree with the widespread viewpoint that Hebrews was written before the destruction of the temple.]]

Hebrews Chapter 9

"Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. (2) For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer [literally "first"] one, in which were the lampstand [Ex. 25:31-40] and the table [Ex. 25:23-29] and the sacred bread [Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5-9; Matt. 12:3, 4]; this is called the holy place. (3) Behind the second veil [Ex. 26:31-33; 40:3. This is the veil that was torn in two from the top to the bottom when Jesus died (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:45). His death opened the way, beyond the second veil, into heaven (the presence of God) for all believers.] there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies [Ex. 26:33], (4) having a golden altar of incense [[Ex. 30:1-10; 37:25-29. It is clear that the golden altar of incense was located in the "holy place," not in the "Holy of Holies." If it had been located in the "Holy of Holies," the high priests (Ex. 30:7, 8) or later, the priests (Luke 1:8, 9), would not have had access to the altar to offer incense on it every day (Ex. 30:1-7). Apparently the writer of Hebrews said it this way because the incense altar was closely associated with the presence of God and the ark of the covenant with the mercy seat and the golden cherubim at the ends of the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. 1 Kings 6:22 shows that the incense altar was closely associated with the Holy of Holies. The NIV translates "the altar that belongs to the inner sanctuary." The Hebrew could be translated "the altar for the inner sanctuary." The NASB translates, "the altar which was by the inner sanctuary" in 1 Kings 6:22.

The incense was clearly being offered before God. I'll quote Ex. 30:6 and 8, "You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over *the ark of the testimony*, where I will meet with you. (8) When Aaron [the first high priest] trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be perpetual incense before the LORD [Yahweh] throughout your generations." Exodus 30:6 and 40:5 show that the altar of incense was closely associated with the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies and the presence of God.]] **and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold [Ex. 25:10-16; 37:1-5], in which was a golden jar holding the manna [Ex. 16:31-36; this passage does not say that the golden jar was put into the ark, but that it was placed before the ark; so too for "Aaron's rod which budded"], and Aaron's rod which budded [Num. 17:1-11], and the tables of the covenant [Ex. 25:16; 31:18; 32:15, 16; Deut. 9:9-17; 10:1-5]; (5) and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat [Ex. 25:17-32; Lev. 16:2, 13-15; 1 Kings 8:6, 7]; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (6) Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer [first] tabernacle [the "holy place"] performing the divine worship, (7) but into the second [the "Holy of Holies"], only the high priest *enters* once a year [on the Day of Atonement], not without *taking blood, which he offers for himself* [the blood of a bull (see Lev. 16:6, 11-19, 27, 28; I'll quote Lev. 16:6: "Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin-offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and his household.") and [the blood of a goat (Lev. 16:15-19, 27, 28)] for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. [[(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) Above, at the end of the lengthy discussion under Heb. 8:7, under**

the heading "Were the Believers Forgiven Through the Sacrificial Offerings under the Old Covenant?" we discussed deliberate, intentional, rebellious, defiant sins (sinning with a high hand) and unintentional sins, "the sins of the people committed in ignorance." As I mentioned there were no sacrificial offerings under the old covenant to take away the deliberate, defiant sins. But as I also mentioned this did not mean that a person could not be forgiven by God, as King David, for example, was forgiven, after his sins involving Bathsheba and Uriah, her husband.

I mentioned that I would comment on unintentional sins ("sins of the people committed in ignorance") here under Heb. 9:7. Many sins committed under the old covenant were totally unintentional. For example, if a person was in the tent of a dead person, even though they didn't realize that a dead person was in the tent, they became unclean, and if they went to the tabernacle in that unclean state they committed a serious sin (see Num. 19:14). However, it is clear that many sins that could be atoned for by sacrificial offerings were not always fully unintentional or "committed in ignorance." Leviticus 6:1-7 provide several clear examples of serious sins that were far from being unintentional that could be forgiven through making restitution and guilt offerings. Those sins were not in the category of being defiant, rebellious, with a high hand against God; God knows the heart, and He is the One who forgives, or doesn't forgive. I'll quote LEVITICUS 6:1-7: "Then the LORD [Yahweh] spoke to Moses, saying, (2) 'When a person sins and acts unfaithfully against the LORD [Yahweh], and deceives his companion in regard to a deposit or a security entrusted *to him*, or through robbery, of *if* he has extorted from his companion, (3) or has found what was lost and lied about it and swore falsely, so that he sins in regard to anyone of the things a man may do; (4) then it shall be, when he sins and becomes guilty, that he shall restore what he took by robbery or what he got by extortion, or the deposit entrusted to him or the lost thing which he found, (5) or anything about which he swore falsely; he shall make restitution for it in full and add to it one-fifth more. He shall give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day he presents his guilt offering. (6) Then he shall bring to the priest his guilt offering to the LORD [Yahweh], a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation, for a guilt offering, (7) and the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD [Yahweh], and he will be forgiven for any one of the things which he may have done to incur guilt.' "

I'll quote what F. Delitzsch said regarding the meaning of the Greek noun "agnoemata," which was translated "sins committed in ignorance" in Heb. 9:7 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Klock and Klock, originally published in 1871], pages 64, 65): "is a general term for all such offences as are not committed with a high hand, in open defiance of the divine law, but through human infirmity, or with a half consciousness only of their moral turpitude, and for such as, when recognized, are truly repented of."] **(8) The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place** [see under the following verse] **has not yet been disclosed** [or, manifested] **while the outer tabernacle** [literally "the first tabernacle"; in verse 2 "the first [tabernacle]" is the outer compartment and in verse 6 "the first tabernacle" is the outer compartment] **is still standing (9), which is a symbol for the present time.** [[The exact meaning of these words, including verse 8, is not easy, and the interpretations differ in some details, but I believe

the overall meaning is rather clear. For one thing, it seems clear that by the words "the holy place" in verse 8 (words that were used to refer to the first, outer compartment in the tabernacle in verses 2 and 6) the writer is referring to the second, inner compartment, the Holy of Holies, and probably also to heaven (see the discussion that follows). (The presence of God was there in the Holy of Holies, but His presence was/is in heaven in a much fuller sense.) The NIV rightly translates "the Most Holy Place" in verse 8 (instead of "the holy place"; the NIV also used these words in verse 3 to refer to the Holy of Holies, but the Greek is different in verse 3. (In verse 3 the word "hagion" [which means "of holies"] was added to the word "hagia.") "The holy place" ("ta hagia"; "ta" means "the") is used in Heb. 9:12 of heaven. In 9:24 we read that "Christ did not enter a holy place ["hagia"] made with hands [referring to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle], a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." And in Heb. 9:25 "the holy place" ("ta hagia") refers to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. The second, inner compartment, the Holy of Holies, is called "the holy place" in Lev. 16:2, 3, 16, 17, 20, 23, and 27. (One last detail for those interested: "the holy place" in verse 8 is the equivalent of "ta hagia," but because of the grammatical structure of the sentence these words are used in a different case, the genitive case.)

It seems that the writer of Hebrews is making the point that like the first compartment in the tabernacle and the second veil at the entrance to the Holy of Holies blocked the way into the Holy of Holies (which was inaccessible to the worshippers, being accessible only to the high priest for a few minutes a year on the Day of Atonement; the worshippers, unlike the priests, were not permitted to enter the first compartment either), the way into the presence of God in heaven is clearly blocked by the existence of the old covenant with its tabernacle, animal sacrifices, etc. The old covenant had to be set aside to open the way for the new covenant established on the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God (cf. John 14:6).] **Accordingly** [literally "according to which"] **both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience** [[The old covenant with its gifts and sacrifices could not solve the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem. "The law made nothing perfect" (Heb. 7:19). "For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near" (Heb. 10:1). "Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood [which wasn't the case as the writer of Hebrews makes perfectly clear]" Hebrews 10:2 shows that the old-covenant sacrifices could not cleanse the worshippers so they would have no more "consciousness of sins" in that they could not solve the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem. The Greek noun ("suneidesis") translated "consciousness" in Heb. 10:2 is the noun translated "conscience" here in Heb. 9:9 and in 9:14. Hebrew 10:14 says, "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified," and Heb. 11:40 speaks of being "made perfect" through new-covenant salvation. We have been called and enabled to have, and to walk in, a relative perfection, which includes being forgiven, being born again, walking in an abiding state of the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, and having access to Him. This relative perfection, which includes walking in an abiding state of holiness, is the ideal to which

we have been called, and the New Testament does not present this as an unrealistic ideal. We must aim at this target! God's grace is sufficient!

I'll quote Heb. 11:40, "because God had provided something better for us [the new-covenant believers, Christians], so that apart from us they [the believers from the days of the Old Testament, who are spoken of throughout Hebrews chapter 11] would not be made perfect." As I mentioned, this (relative) perfection includes total forgiveness, the new birth, the authority and enabling grace to be sanctified (to live in an abiding state of holiness and righteousness), and to have access to God in heaven (as His born-again people). These super-important things were not provided under the old covenant, but they were promised in the Old Testament (see Jer. 31:31-34, for example).

The writer of Hebrews frequently shows that what the old covenant could not do, the new covenant accomplishes. Hebrews 9:14 speaks of "cleansing the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Hebrews 10:21, 22 say, "since we *have* a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." I'll also quote Heb. 13:18, "Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things [by the grace of God in Christ]."

To be "perfect in conscience" we must be forgiven (totally forgiven, and know it); be born again through the indwelling Spirit of life; be sanctified through the law having been written on our hearts and know that we are committed in our hearts (in faith) to live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over all sin and demons by the grace of God in Christ. This does not mean that we cannot be tempted to sin or that we cannot sin, but that we are no longer in bondage to sin and we are enabled to live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. We also know that if we should slip into sin, we will be forgiven when we sincerely repent. The new covenant provides the ability for believers to know God (person to Person and Person to person) and have access to Him, being His born-again children, which includes the Spirit of God literally dwelling in us in a very full (new covenant) dimension as God's born-again children.

I'll quote a paragraph that Gareth Lee Cockerill has under Heb. 9:9b, 10 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 2012], page 386): "It is essential that the modern reader grasp the intrinsic relationship between lack of cleansing and the inability to enter God's heavenly presence. Only those who have been forgiven and cleansed from sin **SO THAT THEY NOW LIVE IN FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE** [my emphasis] are able to enjoy such communion with our holy God. The pastor [writer] uses this description of inadequate sacrifices to prepare his hearers for what he will say about Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice in vv. 11-15. By his obedient sacrifice Christ can 'cleansed' the conscience (9:14) from the impurity of sin and write God's laws on his people's hearts as promised in the New Covenant (10:15-18 [and 8:6-13]). As believers we come through him to God's 'throne' in order to find grace for living this life of faithfulness (4:14-16; 10:19-25)."], **(10) since they relate only to food and drink and various**

washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. [Those external things could never solve the sin problem in the spiritual/Spiritual dimension.] **(11) But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come** [[Compare. Heb. 10:1. "The good things to come" refer to new-covenant salvation, which could not begin in the full sense until the Lord Jesus had been crucified, resurrected, and returned to heaven and received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, and then poured out the Spirit in the new-covenant dimension, starting on the Day of Pentecost.]], **He entered** [I would skip these two words ("He entered") that the NASB added in italics.] **through** [[or, "with," "in connection with." However we translate this Greek preposition ("dia" with the genitive case), the idea seems to be that Christ's High Priestly ministry was associated with "the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this creation," in heaven, at the Father's right hand, not with the earthly tabernacle. I'll quote Heb. 8:2: "[Christ] a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." A. T. Robertson ("Word Pictures in the New Testament," Vol. 5 [Broadman Press, 1932], page 398) says regarding the use of "dia" here, "Probably the instrumental use of dia...as accompaniment...." He gives 2 Cor. 2:4 as one example of this use of dia: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with [dia] many tears...." I'll also quote the view preferred by Zane C. Hodges ("Bible Knowledge Commentary" New Testament [Victor Books, 1983], page 801), which is essentially the same as Robertson's: "...instead of 'through' the word [dia] can be translated 'in connection with' and the total statement means that Christ's high priesthood is linked with 'the greater and more perfect tabernacle' rather than the 'earthly' one previously described (vv. 1-5)."]] **the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation** [[The High Priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus was not associated with the earthly tabernacle, nor (as verse 12 goes on to say) with the sacrificial offerings associated with Levitical high priest's ministry in the earthly tabernacle when he entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement.]]; **(12) and not through the blood of goats and calves** [{"young bull" (Greek noun "moschos"); note that verse 13 has "bull" (Greek noun "tauros"); Lev. 16:11 (and several verses that follow in that chapter) show that the high priest entered the Holy of Holies with/through the blood of a bull on the Day of Atonement and then with/through the blood of a goat; he entered with/through the blood; he could not have entered without the blood}], **but through His own blood, He entered the holy place** [[Greek "ta hagia," referring to heaven (the heavenly counterpart to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle/temple). The sacrificial blood of the Lamb of God was poured out in His all-important atoning death. His blood/His atoning death (which was offered before, and accepted by, God the Father) prepared the way (it opened the door) for His all-important resurrection and His all-important ascension to the Father's right hand in heaven, where He ministers as our Great High Priest.

Jesus did not take His physical blood into heaven. Regarding the idea that He ascended to heaven on the day of His resurrection for a short visit (to offer a container of His literal blood in heaven), see under John 20:17 (in my paper on John chapters 18-20) and the cross-reference cited there that is in my paper on John chapters 13-17. Both papers are available on my internet site (karlkempteachingministries.com).] **once for all** [[His one

Sacrifice was totally effective and does not need to be, and will not be, repeated. The Levitical high priest had to enter the Holy of Holies every year, because the sin, spiritual death, Satan problem could not be solved under the old covenant. The deliberate, defiant sins committed with high hand were not forgiven; spiritual death continued to reign; the people continued in bondage to sin; and the way into God's presence was not yet opened.]], **having obtained eternal redemption** [[Compare Heb. 5:9; 9:15. I'll quote John 5:24 and then 1 John 5:13, "Truly [amen], truly [amen], I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life"; "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." Our having redemption and life in the eternal (heavenly) dimension is one of the most important ways to picture what Christianity is all about. We were spiritually dead in bondage to sin and under the influence of evil spirits (cf., e.g., Eph. 2:1-3), but we have been redeemed out of that pitiful state and transferred to the eternal kingdom of God through the blood of the Lamb of God. The word "redeem" was often used in the ancient world of buying slaves to set them free. We were slaves of sin in the kingdom of spiritual death (cf., e.g., Rom. 6:6, 14, 17, 20; 8:2).]]. **(13) For if the blood of goats and bulls** [and the other animals that were sacrificed under the old covenant; the blood of a bull and of a goat were taken into the Holy of Holies every year on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus chapter 16).] **and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh** [[Forgiveness for the sins of believers that were not deliberate, defiant, and committed with a high hand was provided under the old covenant, and the old-covenant sacrifices could sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh. For one thing, the ashes of a sacrificed unblemished red heifer removed the defilement that came through contact with physical death (see Numbers chapter 19).]], **(14) how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit** [[I prefer the translation in the margin of the NASB: "His eternal spirit." I believe these words speak of the eternal spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who always existed with God the Father (and the Holy Spirit). The sacrifice of the Lamb of God was not just offered in the dimension of the flesh (the physical) - it was offered in the eternal, spiritual dimension. This was, to say the least, a totally effective, totally worthy, voluntary Sacrifice that has the power to totally save all believers with a very full salvation that ultimately includes our being glorified and beginning to reign with the Lord Jesus, and to totally remove the devil and all who follow him from God's universe and kingdom forever (cf., e.g., John 12:31, 33; Heb. 2:14).]] **offered Himself** [The voluntary nature of Christ's Sacrifice is a very important feature of His all-important atoning death (cf., e.g., John 10:11-18).] **without blemish to God** [[The old-covenant sacrificial animals had to be without blemish in the physical dimension. The Lamb of God had to be perfect in the spiritual, eternal dimension, which included His being the unique Son of God who condescended, in the will of God, to become a man (but not just a man; He never ceased being deity, God the Son, and He was not spiritually dead), and He was totally without sin (cf., e.g., 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26).]], **cleanse your conscience** [[The verb "cleanse" here builds on "the cleansing" of verse 13, but whereas the cleansing of verse 13 was primarily external (of the flesh), the cleansing here in verse 14 is primarily internal of the heart/conscience in the spiritual dimension. Significantly, the Greek verb ("katharizo") translated "cleanse" is frequently used of a transforming,

sanctifying cleansing in the New Testament (see Acts 15:9; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:26; Titus 2:14; James 4:8; and 1 John 1:7, 9). This is extremely important, but I find that large numbers of evangelical Christians have very little, if any, knowledge of this fact, and several similar facts. (Christians typically only speak of being cleansed of the guilt of sin.) The blood of Christ (His all-important atoning death) is a lot more powerful than many (or most) Christians realize. God hates sin, and He paid an infinite price in the incarnation and sacrifice of His Unique Son to, for one super-important thing, cleanse believers from being sinners, enabling them to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin.

Hebrews 9:9 shows that the old-covenant sacrifices could not "make the worshiper perfect in conscience." (Compare Heb. 10:2. See under Heb. 9:9 above.) The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, by contrast, solved the sin, spiritual death, Satan problem (cf., e.g., Heb. 9:26 ["...He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"; this included forgiveness, but "to put away sin" is a lot more than that, as we will discuss). As Heb. 10:22 says, "our hearts [have been] sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience [Greek "suneidesis"; same Greek noun used in Heb. 9:9, 14 and 10:2]." The conscience being cleansed here is to be contrasted with Heb. 9:9, which mentions that the old-covenant gifts and sacrifices were not able to "make the worshiper perfect in conscience."]] **from dead works** [[The "dead works" were the "works" of those still in spiritual "death" ("works" of the flesh/old man; works apart from the indwelling Spirit of life and holiness who dwells in born-again Christians). All sins are dead works, but the ceremonial works of the old covenant were dead works too. Hebrews 6:1 speaks of "repentance from dead works." The "dead works" of Heb. 6:1 has essentially the same meaning as here in Heb. 9:14. It is significant that the recipients of this epistle were being tempted to return to the ceremonial works of the old covenant (cf., e.g., Heb. 13:8-16).

The idea of cleansing from the defilement of contact with physical death is included in Heb. 9:13. The cleansing of the conscience [heart, inner man] "from dead works" here in 9:14 probably builds on the cleansing from death in 9:13. The cleansing of the conscience is included in the "eternal redemption" of Heb. 9:12 and the "new-covenant" salvation mentioned in Heb. 9:15.

The cleansing of the conscience from dead works includes the forgiveness of sins (cf. Heb. 8:12), the new birth, the writing of God's laws on hearts and minds (cf. Heb. 8:10) and the transformation to a state of righteousness and holiness. Since sin has been put away (e.g., Heb. 9:26), the worshippers have no more consciousness of sins (cf., e.g., Heb. 9:9; 10:2; contrast 10:4). For Christians to have a clear conscience is a lot more than the knowledge of the forgiveness of the guilt of sin; we must also know that we have spiritual life, that we have been set free from bondage to sin and are enabled and committed to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God. If we should sin, we can, and should, have a clear conscience after we have repented and been forgiven through the atoning death of Christ Jesus (cf., e.g., 1 John 2:1, 2), but we must make it top priority to avoid all sin; we must aim at that target; it is not OK to leave any room for sin. God hates sin! He paid an infinite price to give us the total victory over sin.

I'll quote a few sentences from what Gareth Lee Cockerill ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 2012], pages 400, 401) says here: "By cleansing God's people from sin the blood of Christ delivers them from the wrath of God, enables them to enter the true Sanctuary of God's presence, and empowers them to walk in obedient fellowship with him. [He has a footnote here, which I won't quote.] ... Any cleansing that does not deal with the hardened, 'evil unbelieving heart' (3:12; cf. 3:8-10) will not suffice. 'Cleansing' the conscience and 'perfecting' (v. 9 above) the conscience refer to the same reality. ... this cleansing [the cleansing provided by God in Christ] purges the true inner person of believers so that they can 'serve' or obey 'the living God. Thus, the dead works so purged will be replaced by God's 'laws' (10:15-18) written on the heart, empowering the cleansed for obedient living. Christ's sacrifice achieves a true inner moral and spiritual transformation that results in an obedient life in reliance on God."

I'll quote part a small part of what F. F. Bruce ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1964], page 207) says here: "so that men and women, emancipated from inward bondage, can worship God in spirit and in truth [cf. John 4:23]. This is the perfection which the ancient ceremonial was unable to achieve."] **to serve the living God?** [[To adequately know and serve "the [Righteous and Holy] living God" we must be born again and cleansed from sin and dead works. In the ideal, we will live in an abiding state of the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God through the sufficient grace of God in Christ. God paid an infinite price to save us, and He hates sin.

I'll quote part of what John Wesley says here ("Explanatory Notes" [Schmul Publishers reprint, Wesley's date 1754], page 581): " 'purge our conscience' - Our inmost soul, 'from dead works' - From all the inward and outward works of the devil, which spring from spiritual death in the soul, and lead to death everlasting; 'to serve the living God' - In the life of faith, in perfect love, and spotless holiness!"] **(15) For this reason** [For the reason that the old covenant could not dethrone spiritual death and sin (cf., e.g., Heb. 9:9, 10; 10:1-4).] **He is the mediator of a new covenant** [[I'll quote part of what F. Delitzsch said here ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Klock and Klock reprint, originally published in 1871], page 99): " 'On this very account,' viz. [that is] that the blood of Christ has an inwardly purifying power, and such as was wholly wanting in the sacrifices and purification of the law, even then *for this very reason* He is [mediator of a new covenant]. The emphasis lies on [new], and the sentence might accordingly be thus inverted: the [covenant] of which Christ is [mediator] must therefore be a new one...."]], **so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of [from] the transgressions** [with the guilt and the penalties] **that were committed under the first covenant** [[I would translate "redemption from" with the NIV. As we have discussed, the old-covenant sacrifices (including those on the Day of Atonement) could not atone for, and take away, the rebellious, defiant transgressions with the guilt and the penalties. Much more important (even though the writer of Hebrews doesn't clearly make this super-important point) is the fact that the old covenant, with its sacrifices, etc., could not atone for, or take away, the transgression of Adam with the condemnation that includes spiritual death and bondage to sin for Adam and all of his descendants, who were born outside of the Garden of Eden (cf. Rom. 5:12-21). The atoning Sacrifice of the Lord

Jesus Christ had no such limitations. He bore all our sins with the guilt and the penalties back to Adam and Eve and redeemed us out of the state of being spiritually dead and in bondage to sin and demons. You don't have to believe in demons to be influenced by them and in bondage to them.]], **those who have been called** [[I'll quote a paragraph from what I said under Romans 8:28 (in the paper on my internet site that includes Rom. 8:16-39) that deals with our being called by God. (We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches.): It is Biblical (and important) to say that God calls all mankind to repent and to submit to the gospel in faith (e.g., Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:47; John 3:16-21, 36; Acts 17:30, 31; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; 1 Tim. 2:4-7; and 1 Peter 4:17). The word "call" is used in this full sense in Matt. 22:14 (the "inviting" of Matt. 22:3-13 is the same as the "call" of 22:14). The word "call," however, is normally used in a special, limited sense in the New Testament, as it is here in Rom. 8:28, 30, of God's "calling" of His chosen/elect ones (e.g., Acts 2:39; Rom. 1:6; 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:9, 24; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 2:14; and Heb. 9:15; cf., e.g., Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8; and 17:8).

This epistle was written to Jewish Christians. It is not surprising, therefore, that the writer of Hebrews mentioned "the redemption from the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant [the old covenant]." For one thing it was/is important to understand that the old-covenant sacrifices did not atone for transgressions that were deliberate, defiant, with a high hand. The writer of Hebrews did not mention the Lamb of God offering redemption for the transgressions of Gentiles here; however, we can be thankful that the New Testament makes it super-clear that the Lamb of God bore all of the sins/transgressions of the Gentiles too, with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin). I didn't say that Jesus died spiritually; He didn't. I wrote an article, "Did Jesus Die Spiritually?" that is on my internet site. And I dealt extensively with that topic in my paper, "Shall We Write Off Kenneth E. Hagin? Dave Hunt? How About E. W. Kenyon?" that is on my internet site.]] **may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.** [[That is, that we may receive the "eternal inheritance" that was promised. The "eternal inheritance" starts (in a very real sense) when we are born again and inherit the first stage of eternal life (cf., e.g., John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 1 John 5:13). At the end of this age we will be born into the fullness of eternal life and glorified. (On this birth into the fullness of eternal life, see under Rev. 12:5 in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," and my recently published e-book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." Both books are available at amazon.com. You should read the e-book first, but the paperback book contains much information that is not included in the e-book.))] **(16) For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.** [Here in verse 16 and in verse 17 the writer of Hebrews builds on the fact that the Greek noun ("diatheke") that is translated "covenant" can also be translated "will." The NIV translates "will" in both verses.] **(17) For a covenant ["will" NIV] is valid *only* when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. (18) Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.** [The writer goes on in verses 19-23 to show that the old covenant, the covenant of Mt. Sinai, was inaugurated with the blood of sacrificial offerings. See Ex. 24:1-8.] **(19) For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law** [I'll quote Ex. 24:3, "Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD [Yahweh] and all the ordinances;

and all the people answered with one voice and said, 'All the words which the LORD [Yahweh] has spoken we will do!' "], **he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people** [[I'll quote Ex. 24:8, "So Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD [Yahweh] has made with you in accordance with all these words.' "]], **(20) saying, 'This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.'** **(21) And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. (22) And according to the Law, one may almost say** [[Leviticus 5:11-13 show that if a person was too poor to offer two turtledoves or two young pigeons they could bring "the tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering" and "the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin which he has committed from one of these [see Lev. 5:1-4], and it will be forgiven him."]], **all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness** [Greek noun "aphesis"]. [[I'll quote Lev. 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement." The Greek noun "aphesis" is extremely important, but it is not adequately translated or understood by most Christians in quite a few verses of the New Testament. This noun is typically translated "forgiveness" or "remission," which is typically understood to mean forgiveness, and forgiveness is typically understood to mean the cancellation of the guilt of sin and a right (positional, legal) standing with God. There are verses in the New Testament where forgiveness, or the equivalent, is satisfactory, but there are quite a few verses where this translation is totally inadequate. I devoted a chapter in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ," to the much fuller meaning of aphasis in quite a few super-important verses of the New Testament. I also dealt with the meaning of aphasis, but in lesser detail, in my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." The e-book serves as an introduction to the paperback book and should normally be read first. (Both books are available at amazon.com.)

I'll use Eph. 1:7 for an example where forgiveness as cancellation of the guilt of sin for the meaning of aphasis is totally inadequate. (The use of aphasis in Col. 1:14 is very similar to its use in Eph. 1:7, and one of the most important uses of aphasis is in Heb. 10:18, which we will discuss when we come to that verse. These three verses and others are discussed in both of my books that I mentioned.) I'll quote EPHESIANS 1:7 (NASB) with some comments, "In Him we have redemption [I would translate "the redemption"; the definite article is included in the Greek; this is the super-important redemption that was prophesied in the Old Testament and is at the heart of new-covenant salvation] through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." ((There is a lot of way-out-of-balance teaching about "grace" in our day. We must understand that God's saving grace in Christ includes the authority and power for Christians to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God. That authority and power come by God's grace as much as His forgiveness comes by His grace. (Grace means freely given, not earned; it comes as a gift.) We are not given the option to accept the grace of forgiveness while skipping the grace that enables us to live for God in His righteousness and holiness, with the victory over sin. That is a gigantic

misunderstanding of what new-covenant salvation is all about. God hates sin and He paid an infinite price to set us free from bondage to sin.))

As I discuss in my two books that I mentioned above, "aphesis" should be translated "release" or the equivalent in Eph. 1:7 (as it is used twice in Luke 4:18): We are released from our trespasses with the guilt (which is the equivalent of forgiveness) and with the penalties, including being released from the major penalties of spiritual death (which results in our being born again and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit of life) and from bondage to sin (which enables us to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over sin). Instead of "the forgiveness of trespasses" in Eph. 1:7, I would translate as follows (or the equivalent): "the release from our trespasses with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)." This makes a super-gigantic difference! Since He bore our spiritual death, we can be born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit of life, and since He bore out bondage to sin, we can walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin.

The words "being released from our trespasses with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)" follow the words "the redemption through His blood" in Eph. 1:7, and they expand on the meaning of this redemption. Redemption includes being bought out of the kingdom of sin, spiritual death, and Satan. It certainly means a whole lot more than being forgiven (using the word forgiven the way it typically is used by Christians, the cancellation of the guilt of sin). However, because of a misunderstanding regarding Eph. 1:7 (and other misunderstandings) many in our day define "redemption" as "forgiveness," which is a very serious distortion of the meaning of redemption and lends itself to the very serious error of putting most of the emphasis on being forgiven and having a right (positional, legal) standing with God based on that forgiveness, no matter how the Christian lives.

We are not doing people a favor (quite the opposite; we must know the truth to cooperate with the truth by faith; "the truth will set you free" [John 8:32]) by this wrong emphasis, which is a very serious distortion of the gospel. We need to have a super-solid faith (that must be based on what the Bible actually teaches) to appropriate and walk by God's grace in His truth, righteousness, and holiness. For one thing, the powerful enemies of the world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil with the evil angels and multitudinous number of demons are against us, but the saving grace of God in Christ is greater than our enemies.

The context in which Eph. 1:7 is found serves as a very strong confirmation that the apostle Paul was speaking of a whole lot more than the cancellation of the guilt of sin. (So too for Col. 1:14 and Heb. 10:18 and other verses.) I already pointed out that "aphesis" expands on the meaning of "the redemption" in Eph. 1:7. (So too in Col. 1:14.) I'll quote Eph. 1:3, 4 (NKJV), which is part of the same sentence with Eph. 1:7 in the Greek: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, (4) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT

BLAME BEFORE HIM IN LOVE [my capitalization for emphasis; this is a whole lot more than begin forgiven the guilt of sin]...."

Hebrew 9:22 is different than Eph. 1:7 (and some other verses in the New Testament) in that it is dealing with cleansing and release from sins with the guilt and the penalties under the old covenant. The old-covenant sacrifices could bear and take way penalties like sicknesses and other such penalties/problems, unless the sins were defiant, committed with a high hand. Under the old covenant it was understood that God promised health, for example, to those who were faithful to the old covenant (see Ex. 15:26; 23:24-26; Deut. 7:12-16), and chapter 4 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," is titled, "A Study to Show that Under the Old Covenant Sickness Was Typically Considered to Be Part of the Punishment, Penalty, Chastisement for Sin." I'll include a short paragraph from what I said on page 42 of that chapter. Typically throughout the Old Testament (but not always), whenever a sickness/plague came upon the people of Israel, the Scriptures spell out the particular sin(s) that led to that sickness/plague. The curse of sickness did not just arbitrarily come upon the sons of Israel. They had a covenant with God that covered that area.

As we have discussed in this paper, the difference between what the sacrifices under the old covenant and the One Sacrifice of the Lamb of God could accomplish is super-gigantic. This is to be expected, of course, when we consider the super-gigantic difference between animals and the Unique Son of God, through whom all things were created and who condescended, in the will of God the Father, to become the God-man and then to die His atoning death in our place as the Lamb of God. The old-covenant sacrifices, unlike the one Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, could not bear, and take away, the transgression of Adam with the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin that came upon all of his offspring (Rom. 5:12-21). (And, as we have discussed, the old-covenant sacrifices could not atone for the defiant transgressions of the people of Israel that were committed with a high hand.) We must, of course, submit to the gospel in faith (become believers and live as believers) in order to appropriate this salvation.

You often hear that sins were not forgiven under the old covenant, but it is clear that they were forgiven. In passage after passage in the Mosaic Law the people of Israel were told that their unintentional sins were atoned for and they were forgiven. Some refer to Heb. 9:15 to try to prove their point, but Heb. 9:15 just deals with the defiant transgressions that were committed with a high hand that were not atoned for under the old covenant. And they often refer to Heb. 10:4, but they are misunderstanding that verse. (We will come to 10:4 as we continue.) It would be reasonable to say that the reason the old-covenant sacrifices were effective to the extent they were effective was because of the fully effective Sacrifice of the Lamb of God that God knew was coming, but they were effective.

Here in Heb. 9:22 I would translate the last words, "and without shedding of blood there is no release from sins with the defilement, guilt, and penalties]," or the equivalent. The Amplified Bible is helpful here: "[In fact], under the Law almost everything is purified by means of blood, and without the shedding of blood there is neither release from sin *and*

its guilt *nor* the remission of the due and merited punishment for sins."]] **(23) Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens** [[referring to the tabernacle and the things associated with it, apparently including the people (cf. Ex. 24:5-8; Heb. 9:7, 13, 19-22), but speaking of the cleansing of the people that took place, for the most part, in the external dimension that did not bring about the forgiveness of the sins committed with a high hand, the new birth, or write the law on their hearts and enable them to walk in the imparted righteousness and holiness of God.]] **to be cleansed with these** [with the atoning sacrifices, with the blood of the sacrificial animals], **but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices** [Although the writer used the plural ("sacrifices") here, it seems obvious (and everyone seems to agree) that he is referring to the one all-important Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.] **than these.** [[The heavenly counterpart to the earthly tabernacle (that is, heaven; the presence of God) was not unclean, but the way into heaven had to be established, prepared, opened, and sanctified (set apart for God's saving purposes) through the atoning/cleansing blood of Christ. In order to understand what is being said here we need to see that the writer is including the idea of the inauguration of the covenants in his use of the verb "cleanse" (Greek "katharizo") here (cf. Heb. 9:18). And we need to understand that even under the old covenant a lot more was taking place than removing defilement, uncleanness from the tabernacle, etc.; God supercharged (so to speak) those things and made them holy (set apart for God) and able (within the prescribed, mostly external, physical limits) to sanctify/impart holiness (cf., e.g., Matt. 23:19; Ex. 29:37).

It seems that the most important point that the writer of Hebrews wanted to make here was that the spirits, hearts, consciences, inner man of believers must be cleansed before they can have access to heaven (the presence of God). Apparently he intended the spirits, hearts, consciences, inner man of believers to be (a big) part of what he meant by "the heavenly things" here in 9:23, even as the old covenant worshippers were included in the cleansing (that was mostly external) of Heb. 9:7, 13, 19-22. (Hebrews 12:9 speaks of God as the "Father of spirits.")

Throughout Hebrews chapters 8-10 the emphasis is on cleansing, sanctifying new-covenant believers, which includes total forgiveness, the new birth, putting God's Law in their hearts and removing sin from the hearts and lives of God's people, making them righteous and holy with the imparted righteousness and holiness of God. In Ex. 24:8 Moses sprinkled the people with the sacrificial blood, but (as we have discussed) that blood did not solve the sin/spiritual death problem; it clearly did not cleanse the conscience of the worshippers from dead works to serve the living God (see Heb. 9:14; cf. 10:2); the cleansing under the old covenant was real, but it was mostly limited to the external, physical dimension.

The unique blood of Christ, by contrast, does cleanse and bring spiritual life in the spiritual/Spiritual dimension through the Righteous, Holy, Spirit of life, who indwells believers. Hebrews 10:19-22 show that "we have confidence to enter the holy place [heaven] by the blood of Jesus" and that we have this access "with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED CLEAN FROM AN EVIL

CONSCIENCE [my emphasis] and our bodies washed in pure water." We have access to the presence of God in heaven now in a preliminary, but very real, sense through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, through our being united with Him, and through the indwelling Holy Spirit of life. We will enter heaven in a fuller sense if we die before the Lord returns, and we will enter heaven in the full sense at the end of this age when we are glorified.

The writer of Hebrews is putting the emphasis on our being cleansed from sin and spiritual death, so we can enter the presence of God and live in His truth, righteousness, and holiness now, but it is also true that we will be forgiven for any sins we should commit after we become Christians, when we repent, through the shed blood of the Lamb of God (cf., e.g., 1 John 2:1, 2).

I'll quote a sentence from what F. F. Bruce ("Epistle to the Hebrews," page 210) says here: "What required to be cleansed was the defiled conscience of men and women; this is a cleansing that belongs to the spiritual sphere."] **(24) For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands** [cf. Heb. 9:12; "not made with hands" (Heb. 9:11)], **a mere copy** [on "copy, copies," see Heb. 8:5; 9:23, 24] **of the true one** [cf. Heb. 8:2], **but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us** [cf. Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34]; **(25) nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year** [on the Day of Atonement; cf. Heb. 9:7 ("once a year"); 10:3 ("reminder of sins year by year"); contrast 9:12 ("entered...once for all"); 9:26 ("once at the consummation of the ages")] **with blood that is not his own. (26) Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer** [The verb "pascho" is used here of suffering death, as it often is in the New Testament; see Heb. 13:12, for example.] **often since the foundation of the world** [Having become a man (the God-man) through the virgin birth, Jesus could only die once, but, in accordance with God's salvation plan, that one Sacrifice totally solved the sin, spiritual death, Satan problem forever.]; **but now once at the consummation of the ages** [cf. 1 Cor. 10:11; Gal. 4:4, "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law."] **He has been manifested** [referring to His first coming; His coming again (His second coming) is mentioned in 9:28] **TO PUT AWAY SIN** [[my emphasis; the KJV; NKJV also translate "to put away sin"; the NIV has, "to do away with sin"; the Amplified Bible has, "to put away *and* abolish sin." These are some of the most important words in this epistle, but, in my opinion, most Christians miss the primary point, a super-important point, that the writer of Hebrews is making here. We will discuss these super-important words as we continue.] **by the sacrifice of Himself.** [[The One Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (on the day, Friday that year, when the Passover lambs were being slain in the temple in Jerusalem) totally solved the sin, spiritual death, Satan and his kingdom problem forever, which will have been totally manifested by the time of the creation of the new heaven and new earth, after the millennial kingdom and the great-white-throne judgment (cf., e.g., Rev. 20:10-21:1).

The primary point that the writer of Hebrews makes here, which is a point he makes often in Hebrews chapters 8-10 (but a point which the majority of Christians miss), is that the sin, spiritual death problem is solved for believers through new-covenant

salvation, which centers in the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that believers are called, enabled, and required to be dead to sin (in the Christian ideal, dead to all sin) and walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, by the sufficient saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ, through faith. Most Christians believe the writer of Hebrews in putting the emphasis on the fact that total forgiveness is provided for us under the new covenant. This is true, but it isn't the primary point that the writer is making.

I'll discuss this primary point as we continue, but I'll briefly comment on the things that the commentators on the book of Hebrews typically say under Heb. 9:26. At the most, ten percent of the commentaries on Hebrews that I have looked at for this study include the point that I am calling the primary point that the writer of Hebrews makes here. Most speak of forgiveness (often mentioning that the people were not forgiven under the old covenant). They speak of having a clear conscience, knowing that you have been forgiven and are accepted by God. They speak of having a positional sanctification (a legal consecration) that opens access to God. They speak of being in a sanctifying process, which means that you sin less as time goes on, but that you will never be able to live in an abiding state of righteousness and holiness in this life. They speak of God's eventually totally overthrowing sin and the kingdom of Satan. None of this is surprising to me, because I have learned over the years that most Christians (something like ninety percent of Christians) do not believe that we are called or enabled to walk with the victory over all sin until after we are glorified. I believe they are making a BIG mistake. We cannot appropriate and cooperate with God's sufficient sanctifying grace by faith if we don't believe it has been provided (is available).

In HEBREWS 8:10 we read that a major feature of new-covenant salvation is that the law will be written on the hearts and minds of new-covenant believers, which will enable them (in the ideal case) to walk on a continuous basis in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin. In HEBREWS 9:14 we read that the blood of Christ cleanses consciences from dead works (which includes being cleansed from doing sinful works and the religious works of those who are spiritually dead; believers have been born again), so we can adequately serve the living God. Here in HEBREWS 9:26 we read that Christ was manifested "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." "To put away sin" includes (it even puts the emphasis on) enabling Christians to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. This is at least the Christian ideal, and the writer of Hebrews (in agreement with the apostle Paul, the apostle Peter, the apostle John, etc.) consistently speaks in terms of this ideal. This "ideal" is solid; God will back up this ideal; it is worthy of our faith. HEBREWS 10:10 and 14 are super-important: "By this will [the will of God just mentioned in 10:9] WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED [(my emphasis) and live in an abiding state of holiness], through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" and "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." ((The writer presents this having been sanctified and perfected as accomplished facts for Christians, which is the Christian ideal (a realistic ideal through the sufficient saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ). Many commentators understand "we have been sanctified" in Heb. 10:10 to only mean "consecrated," which does not include walking with the victory over sin. I am quite sure

that the writer of Hebrews used the words "we have been sanctified" to mean we have been set apart by God and for God, which includes (in the ideal case, which we are called to) our walking in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, using God's definition of sin. The verb sanctified (and the closely related words like holiness, holy, make holy) are typically used this way in the New Testament when referring to Christians being sanctified, holy, etc. See the last chapter of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over All Sin.") After saying, in Heb. 10:11 that old-covenant sacrifices could "never take away sins" (with the emphasis on the fact that the old-covenant sacrifices could not give the worshippers the new birth and the ability to walk with the victory over sin), he says in HEBREWS 10:12 that the one sacrifice of the Lord Jesus does have the authority and power to do what the old-covenant sacrifices could not do. In HEBREWS 10:16 the writer refers a second time to the super-important prophecy of Jeremiah that the Law of God would be written on the hearts and minds of believers under the new covenant. In HEBREWS 10:18 he speaks of Christians being released from sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin), which results in sanctified lives, with the victory over all sin. In HEBREWS 10:22 he exhorts us to "draw near to God in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience ["Having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience" includes knowing that we have been forgiven, born again, set free from bondage to sin and that we are enabled and committed to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God (see under Heb. 9:14)] and our bodies having been washed in pure water [referring to water baptism]." In HEBREWS 10:26-31 the writer warns of the fatal consequences if the readers "go on sinning willfully" after they become new-covenant believers. And in HEBREWS 10:35-39 he warns that "those who shrink back" shrink back "to destruction." He is speaking of those who shrink back from being faithful to God (by grace through faith) in accordance with the new covenant. As I have mentioned, there is widespread agreement that the initial recipients of this epistle were Hebrew Christians who were being pressured/tempted to turn from the new covenant back toward the old covenant, which amounts to apostasy.

Now I'll List Some Verses from Hebrews Chapters 8-10 where the Writer Tells Us Some Key Things that the Old Covenant Could Not Do. (These verses, by contrast, help demonstrate and emphasize the point that the new covenant was designed to accomplish these super-important things. Forgiveness is included, but the primary emphasis is on being sanctified and perfected, a relative perfection that includes forgiveness, the new birth, being sanctified, and having access to God beyond the veil.): In HEBREWS 8:7-9 the writer shows that the primary problem with the old covenant was that the people did not keep the covenant (they rather consistently sinned against God and the covenant). The new covenant was designed to solve this primary problem. As we have discussed, the new covenant was planned by God before the world was created and Adam and Eve fell. HEBREWS 9:7 shows that defiant, intentional sin, sins with a high hand, were not atoned for, forgiven, taken away under the old covenant (cf. Heb. 9:15). HEBREWS 9:9 shows that the gifts and sacrifices under the old covenant could not "make the worshipper perfect in conscience" (cf. Heb. 7:19; 10:1; contrast with Heb. 9:14, 23, 26; 10:10, 14, 18, 22, 29 [especially 9:14; 10:22]). In HEBREWS 10:1-4 the writer tells us that the old-covenant sacrifices could not "make perfect those who

draw near" (10:1); that the worshippers still had consciousness of sins (10:2); that the old covenant sacrifices made it clear that the sin problem had not been solved and that the worshippers continued to sin, in that the sacrifices clearly needed to be repeated year after year (10:3); and "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (10:4). As we have discussed, the blood of Christ has the authority and power "to take away sins," including the fact that new-covenant believers are called and enabled to stop sinning. The sin problem certainly isn't solved if God's people continue to sin against Him. And HEBREWS 10:11 tells us that the old-covenant sacrifices "can never take away sins." They were forgiven under the old covenant (except for the defiant sins with a high hand), but the sin/spiritual death problem remained in the hearts and lives of the people.

1 JOHN 3:5 Is an Important Cross-Reference To Help Us Understand what it Means To PUT AWAY SIN; TO TAKE AWAY SIN. I'll quote 1 JOHN 3:5-10 and make a few comments ((These verses are discussed in context with 1 John 2:29-3:12 in more detail on pages 208-213 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ" and in my e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." (Both books are available at amazon.com.): Other key relevant passages from 1 John are discussed in those books too.)) **"You know that He appeared** [very much including His all-important atoning death and resurrection] **IN ORDER TO TAKE AWAY SINS** [[my capitalization for emphasis. The apostle John is speaking in this context ((as the following verses demonstrate; and how about verses like 1 John 3:3: "And everyone who has this hope [the hope spoken of in 1 John 3:2 of participating in the glory of heaven] *fixed* on Him, PURIFIES HIMSELF, JUST AS HE [the Lord Jesus Christ] IS PURE [which clearly includes the victory over all sin]." (My capitalization for emphasis here and in the next sentence.) Or how about 1 John 2:6, "the one who says he abides in Him [every Christian must abide in Christ] OUGHT HIMSELF TO WALK IN THE SAME MANNER AS HE [the Lord Jesus] WALKED.")) of TAKING AWAY SINS that includes the fact that God's people stop sinning by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ through faith, which is a common theme throughout this epistle and throughout the New Testament. Clearly this is the Christian ideal, and we must be aiming at this target! However, as I have mentioned, most Christians are not seriously aiming at this target because they don't believe the New Testament calls them to such a walk, or provides the grace for such a walk. As I have mentioned, they are making serious mistake.]]; **and in Him there is no sin.** [And we are "in Him," as verse 6 (1 John 3:6) shows; all true Christians are united with the Lord Jesus and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.] **(6) No one who abides in Him sins** [[The apostle John repeatedly makes the point that there should not be any sin at all (including in 1 John 2:1a), but he makes it clear in 1 John 2:1b, 2 that true Christians can commit acts of sin and be restored when they repent through the Lord Jesus and His atoning death.]]; **no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. (7) Little children, make sure no one deceives you, the one who practices righteousness** [better, "**THE ONE WHO IS DOING RIGHTEOUSNESS**"] **IS RIGHTEOUS, JUST AS HE** [the Lord Jesus] **IS RIGHTEOUS** [(my emphasis) The apostle clearly is not speaking of positional/legal righteousness, and he is not speaking of a lifelong sanctifying process where the Christian continues to sin.]; **(8) the one who practices sin** [or, "the one who

is doing sin"] **is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning** [[The devil has been sinning since the time of his fall. What John is speaking about here is that he has been sinning through people since the time of the fall of man, when man joined the devil in his rebellion against God (cf., e.g., Eph. 2:1-3).]]. **The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.** [[The primary work of the devil that the Lord Jesus came to destroy is sin. As the apostle John has been saying, God's people should not be sinning (not at all), and by the time God is done judging the world, all sin will have been removed from God's kingdom forever.]] **(9) No one who is born of God practices sin** ["will continue to sin" (NIV); "Whoever has been born of God does not sin" (NKJV); a more literal translation would be, "is not doing sin."], **because His seed** [referring to the Holy Spirit] **abides in him; and he cannot sin** [better, "**HE IS NOT ABLE TO CONTINUE IN SIN**" [(my emphasis); see under 1 John 3:6], **because he has been born of God.** [Being born of God and indwelt by the Righteous, Holy Spirit of God, by definition, should result in the victory over all sin.] **(10) By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness** [better, "**THE ONE WHO IS NOT DOING RIGHTEOUSNESS**" (my emphasis)] **is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother."**

I'll quote what H. Orton Wiley says under Heb. 9:26b ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Beacon Hill Press, 1959, 1984], page 276). He is one of a very few commentators that I have looked at for this study who (in my opinion) understands the primary point that the writer of Hebrews was making here. (Andrew Murray is another such commentator; I'll quote from him next.) The writer's primary concern (a very practical concern) was that his readers continue to hold the truth of the gospel in their hearts and continually appropriate the grace of God in Christ to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over all sin. "The purpose of this one offering was 'to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself' (9:26b). This is a climactic statement. By it the writer means that Christ has put away sin and all that is connected with it - its nature and effects, its roots and its fruits. He has removed its guilt, destroyed its power, and cleansed away its very being. [[I would at least say that He has overthrown sin and we are called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over all sin. We still have the old man to contend with until we are glorified, but as long as we walk in line with God's Word and by the Spirit, which we are called to do on a continuous basis, we will walk with the victory over all sin.]] Sin was apostasy from God. No man was able to destroy it. But Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. His atonement has abrogated and disannulled 'the law of sin and death' and brought in 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8:2). [Yes!]

Here is the inner transformation by the Holy Spirit that puts the life in harmony with the will of God and makes true obedience possible. The words 'put away sin,' therefore, not only declare His purpose but affirm its effects. He was manifested to take away our sins (1 John 3:5, 8), and this purpose He has fully and triumphantly accomplished." Yes!

I'll quote part of what Andrew Murray says under Heb. 9:26b ("The Holiest of All" [Fleming H. Revell reprint; originally published in 1894 (now in the public domain)], pages 323-325): "He was manifested...to put [sin] away so that it has no more power

over us, and we enter upon an entirely new state of life, with sin removed and God's law written in our heart.

... But this truth is seldom fully understood or accepted by believers. And as their knowledge limits their faith, and their faith their experience, the human exposition and witness of what God means seldom if ever reaches to the fullness of what the word contains. We limit the Holy One of Israel perhaps most when we think we honour Him, by thinking we know and hold in our formulas all His word means. ... It is as we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, whose it is to reveal the power of the blood and the opening of the way into the Holiest, that we shall be led to inherit the promise too, in all its divine significance - sin put away by the sacrifice of Himself."

I'll quote what A. R. Fausset says here ("A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments" by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, Vol. 3 [Eerdmans, 1984 reprint], page 558): "abolish: doing away with sin's power, as well as the guilt and penalty, so that it should be powerless to condemn, as also its yoke, so that believers shall at last sin no more. 'sin' - singular: all the sins of men of every age are *one mass* laid on Christ. He hath not only atoned for *actual sins*, but destroyed *sin itself*. John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the *sin* (not merely *the sins*: [sin is] singular [in John 1:29]) of the world.' "

I need to point out that Fausset is not including the idea that Christians can walk with the victory over sin now, but he is speaking (as so many evangelicals speak) of a sanctifying process where the amount of sin is decreasing. Note that he said, "so that believers shall at last [but not now] sin no more," and he makes his viewpoint clear in comments on other verses (Heb. 10:10 and 14, for example). The writer of Hebrews understood that true Christians can sin (cf., e.g., Heb. 4:14-16; 10:26), but I believe he (like the other writers of the New Testament) also knew and taught that we are called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over all sin, through the sufficient saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ. Our faith cannot rise above what we have been taught; our faith must be based on God and what His Word actually teaches; it is totally necessary for us to correctly interpret His Word. All of us need to humble ourselves before God and consider the possibility that we may be misunderstanding what His Word teaches in important ways. This is ultra important! For one thing, we ministers are going to have to answer to God for what we teach! This is a very serious matter. We are affecting the lives of other people.

If we don't see that God has called us to walk with the victory over all sin in His Word, we don't have a basis to have faith for that victory, and the only way we can have that victory is by grace through faith. It is super-important for us to aim at the target of walking in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. We certainly are not going to hit the target very often if we are not even aiming at it. This is important, very important!]] **(27) And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, (28) so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many** [[The words "to bear the sins of many" probably build on the use of these words in Isa. 53:12. The Greek, Septuagint version of Isa. 53:12 even uses

the same verb translated "to bear" here and the same word for "many." Christ died for all (e.g., 1 Tim. 2:4-6; 1 John 2:2), but all will not be saved. Many reject God's offer of salvation.], **will appear a second time** [[Christ was a man (but He was much more than just a man) and He died, bearing our sins (with the guilt and the penalties, including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin), including any and all sins we commit after becoming Christians. His death is followed by judgment, His judgment and ours, since He was bearing our sins and our salvation is totally dependent on the effectiveness of His atoning work.

For those who have eyes to see, it has already been demonstrated that God the Father judged Jesus as being totally Righteous (even though He was put to death supposedly because He was a great sinner) through His resurrection, His ascension, and His work as our great High Priest at the Father's right hand, which included His pouring forth the promised Holy Spirit, starting on the Day of Pentecost. When He appears a second time, at the end of this age, it will demonstrate before all people that He has been judged Righteous, AND it will be manifested that those who are united with Him by faith and have appropriated the salvation from sin, spiritual death, and the demons that He earned for them through His all-important atoning death will inherit the fullness of eternal life.

The words that follow in the Greek would be literally translated "without sin." I would follow the word order of the Greek and translate "**without sin**" (Greek "choris hamartia"). When He comes the second time He will be "without sin," and "those who eagerly await Him" and have been living for Him will receive "salvation" in its full and final form that includes being glorified and beginning to reign with Him. I'll give my translation for the rest of this verse as we continue discussing this verse, but I'll include the rest of this verse from the NASB here, "for salvation without *reference* to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."], **without sin, resulting in** [Greek preposition "eis," which is often translated "resulting in"; the NASB translated it "resulting in" ten times] **salvation, for those who eagerly await Him.** The writer of Hebrews exhorted his readers with the need to make it top priority to always be ready for Christ's return with these last words, "for those who eagerly await Him." Those who eagerly await His return will live for Him with top priority in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, by His grace, through faith. The writer doesn't mention the judgment of His enemies here; he is dealing with salvation here; but the day of His wrath is coming too. The Lord Jesus is coming to save and to judge.

Hebrews Chapter 10

"For the Law [the Mosaic Law, which was the foundation for the old covenant], **since it has *only* a shadow** [Heb. 8:5] **of the good things to come** [referring to new-covenant salvation] **and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near** [[See under Heb. 9:9 above. To "make perfect" here includes total forgiveness, the new birth, being sanctified (which includes our being enabled to live in an abiding state of holiness; especially see Heb. 10:10, 14 below), and our having access to God in heaven, all by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ, through faith. None of these things were provided under the old covenant. Essentially all evangelical Christians would agree with what I said here, except for the fact most evangelicals deny that we are called and enabled to live in an abiding state of holiness in this life. (Also, many evangelicals believe that the believers under the old covenant were born again.) Most evangelicals believe that we are called to a sanctifying process (where we will progress in holiness and have less sin as time goes on, but that we cannot stop sinning this side of glory; I believe we are called to live in a state of holiness, with the victory over all sin - this is the ideal - and to keep on growing, which is a process), or they speak of a positional holiness (which doesn't deal with how the Christians will live). They don't believe the New Testament gives us the basis to have faith for the victory over all sin now. (We certainly won't have the victory over all sin if we don't have faith for that victory.) We will speak more of these super-important things as we continue, and we have discussed these things under Hebrews chapters 8 and 9.]]. **(2) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?** [[The worshippers under the old covenant understood in their hearts and consciences that the sin problem had not been solved; sin had not yet been dethroned. The fact that the sacrifices had to be offered day by day, and year by year (on the Day of Atonement, Passover, etc.), in itself, demonstrated that the sin problem had not been solved, and would not be solved, under that covenant. They clearly could not stop offering the sacrifices for sin while the people continued to sin, and they understood that they would keep sinning day after day, and year after year.

As Jeremiah had prophesied, it would take the new covenant, which includes, for one thing, the Law being written on the hearts of the worshippers, which will enable them to fully keep God's moral law. I'll also list some other verses from the Old Testament that prophesied of God's ultimately solving the sin problem and making His people righteous and holy through new-covenant salvation: Isa. 32:15-18; 45:8; 46:12, 13; 52:13-53:12; 56:1; 60:21; 61:1-3, 10, 11; and Ezek. 11:19, 20; 36:25-27. These prophecies include the Messiah, His atoning death, and the outpoured Holy Spirit that come with the new covenant.

I'll quote two sentences from what Gareth Lee Cockerill (see under Heb. 9:14) says here (on his page 430): "The cleansing in question is the true inner cleansing of the person effected by Christ according to 9:14. ... The perfect tense of the participle

[translated "having been cleansed"] suggests a definitive cleansing that determines the subsequent lives of the cleansed." See what I quoted from Cockerill under Heb. 9:14. I bought this commentary and a few others for this study. Based on what he says on chapters 8-10 I highly rate this commentary, which is the replacement edition for the Epistle to the Hebrews in the scholarly, well respected, "New International Commentary on the New Testament" series by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.]]

(3) But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. [[No matter how much the believers in Israel would rejoice on the Day of Atonement, for a prime example, they knew in their hearts that those sacrifices were scheduled to be repeated the next year, and the year after that, etc., because the people were going to continue to sin - God did not give the old covenant to solve the sin/spiritual death/Satan problem. They also had sin offerings on a daily basis under the old covenant.]] **(4) For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.** [[It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins," but "He [the Lamb of God] has been manifested to PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF [my emphasis]" of Heb. 9:26, which we discussed in some detail above. And as I mentioned there, less than ten percent of the commentaries on Hebrews that I looked at (more than fifty commentaries) understand the primary point that the writer of Hebrew meant by "to take away sins" in Heb. 9:26. The same thing is true here in Heb. 10:4 and in 10:11. (The Greek verb for "to take away" in 10:4 is "aphaireo"; for 10:11 it is "periaireo"; these verbs have essentially the same meaning in these verses.)

As we discussed under Heb. 9:26, the writer was speaking of the glory of new-covenant salvation that is built on the foundation of the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ that once for all solves the sin/spiritual death problem, very much including the super-important fact that new-covenant believers are called, enabled, and required to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ. The taking away of sin(s) includes stopping the sinning. (In the Christian ideal there won't be any more sinning by believers, and it is clear that there won't be any more sinning after we are glorified through new-covenant salvation.) God hates sin! Sin destroys divine order and works to destroy everything it touches.

The writer's emphasis throughout chapters 8-10 is on the fact that God has dethroned sin and spiritual death through the Sacrifice of His Son and that Christians are called, enabled, required, and greatly privileged to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. (As I have mentioned, total forgiveness, the new birth, and access to God beyond the veil are included in new-covenant salvation.) This is the Christian ideal, and it is very important for us to be aiming at this target by faith. This is what God has called us to do and provided the grace for us to do it, by faith (faith that is based on God, on what His Word says, and on His ability to back up His Word). These things constitute a very real, but incomplete form of perfection, a relative perfection. (For one thing, now we have to contend with the old man who wants to continue to sin, but the Holy Spirit enables us to keep the old man from manifesting itself in sin, as we walk by the Spirit on a continuous basis, by faith [cf. Gal. 5:16].) When we are glorified we will begin to experience perfection in a much fuller form, an

absolute perfection, but apparently even after we are glorified there will be room for growth.

I believe that Hebrews 10:10 and 14, by themselves, should suffice to make the point that Christians are called and enabled to live in an abiding state of holiness, with the victory over all sin. This is a really big deal! It is very good news! Yes, we can sin (and we will sin if we don't fully cooperate with God's grace by faith), and forgiveness is provided if we should sin when we sincerely repent (cf. 1 John 2:1, 2), but like the apostle John said in 1 John 2:1, he was writing these things to his readers so that they would not sin, not sin at all, not even commit an act of sin. (See my discussion of 1 John 1:5-2:6 and 2:28-3:12 in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ" and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com.)

I'll quote one sentence from what Cockerill (see under verse 2) says under verse 4 (on his page 432): "Those sacrifices could not 'take away' sin and thus remove its pollution and dominion from human life." He has a long footnote here, which I won't quote.

The writer goes on to speak of the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ in verses 5-14, 18-22, 29; also see 9:12-17, 23-28.]] **(5) Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says** [The quotation in verses 5-7, which is a prophecy of the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, was taken from Psalm 40:6-8 (Psalm 39:6-8 in the Greek (Septuagint).], **'SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME** [[Compare Heb. 2:14; 5:7; 1 Pet. 2:24. The Septuagint has the words, "But a body you have prepared for Me." The Hebrew has, "My ears You have opened," which apparently refers to His having ears to hear the Father, with the full intention of doing the Father's will at all times, and especially with reference to the extremely difficult assignment of His atoning death (cf. Isa. 50:4-10).]]; **(6) IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE.** [[God required the sacrificial offerings under the old covenant as a temporary measure, but He always planned to send His Son to solve the sin, spiritual death, Satan problem through the Lord Jesus Christ and His all-important atoning death (cf., e.g. Gen. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:19, 20). So too, God was offended with (and He rejected) sin offerings when His people had given themselves over to sin, without real repentance (cf., e.g., Isaiah Chapter 1, especially verses 11-15; 1 Sam. 15:22). Nothing can work right while we are violating the first commandment of the ten commandments, which requires God's people to love Him and make Him and His will (righteousness) top priority from the heart.

All the sacrificial offerings under the old covenant pointed to (prefigured) the One Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, and we can probably say that the old-covenant sacrifices were effective, to the point that they were effective, because of the One Sacrifice yet to come that had been ordained by God.]] **(7) THEN I SAID, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD."** ' [[The Lord Jesus Christ always made it top priority to do the Father's will, very

much including His incarnation (His becoming the God-man) through the virgin birth, His sinless life, and then His atoning death, which was an extremely difficult assignment (cf., e.g., John 4:34; 6:38; Phil. 2:5-8; Matt. 26:38, 39; Luke 22:41-44; and all the passages that speak of His trials that culminated with His vicarious death on the cross, bearing our sins with the guilt and the penalties, including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin, and a whole lot more).] **(8) After saying above** [see Heb. 10:5-7], **'SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them'** (which are offered according to the Law), **(9) then He said, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.'** He takes away the first in order to establish the second. [[He takes away the first covenant (the old covenant, with the animal sacrifices) to establish the second covenant (the new covenant in the blood of Christ, the Son of God). This is a dominant theme in the Epistle to the Hebrews.]] **(10)** [This verse and verse 14 are very important verses to learn the primary meaning of the words we have been sanctified, sanctification, make holy, holiness, holy, and saint (holy person) in the New Testament.] **By this will** [referring to the "will" of God just spoken of in verse 9] **WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED** [(my capitalization for emphasis) These words are in the perfect tense in the Greek: They convey the idea that we are living (we are called and enabled to be living; we are supposed to be living; in the Christian ideal, and it is not presented in the New Testament as an unrealistic ideal, we will be living) in an abiding state of holiness, having been sanctified/made holy through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the powerful saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ. Writing from this ideal, positive, what-God-has-called-us-to viewpoint ("we have been sanctified"; which is a big part of what it means to be a Christian by God's definition), while realizing that some of the recipients of this epistle were not living in an abiding state of holiness, is comparable with what the apostle Paul said in 1 Cor. 1:2 ("to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling [better, "called to be saints"]") and 1 Cor. 6:8-11 ("but you were sanctified") for example. 1 Corinthians shows that there was a lot of sin taking place among some Christians at Corinth, but Paul repeatedly made it clear that this was unacceptable, and they needed to repent and appropriate and cooperate with the sufficient, sanctifying grace of God in Christ. They are called, enabled, and required to be sanctified/saints, to be what Christians are supposed to be. (It isn't safe to live outside of the will of God.) The gospel isn't going to change! I Cor. 1:1, 2 and 6:8-11 are discussed on pages 172-174 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ."

I'll cite a few more examples where the New Testament speaks in an ideal, positive point of view, while realizing that the lives of some, or many, of the recipients of that epistle didn't fully match what was being said. This is very common. [We must make it a top priority to live in line with God's will, which isn't going to change.] In Rom. 6:2 the apostle Paul said, "How shall we who have died to sin still live in it?" and in 6:6 he said, "knowing this, that our old self [(our old) man; Greek "anthropos"] was crucified with Him...." But Rom. 6:11 (and a large number of verses in the New Testament) makes it clear that these things don't take place automatically and it isn't always easy; we must appropriate these things by faith, and continue in these things by faith, or we will not be

dead to sin and the old man will be manifesting itself in sin. In Rom. 8:2 the apostle told the Christians at Rome "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set [them] free from the law of sin and of death," while knowing (as his readers understood) that some, or many, of them were not fully walking in this reality. He was giving them God's definition of what is supposed to be the reality, and anywhere their lives don't match God's definition they are going to have to change with a high priority. We must make it a top priority to learn what God has made available to us and what He requires of us and then walk in these things on a continuous basis by grace through faith!

I'll give one last example, 2 Cor. 5:17. This verse is very important for us to discuss because many Christians, very much including many ministers, misunderstand and misuse what the apostle Paul said in this verse, and it causes considerable confusion. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature ["creation" NIV, NKJV]; the old things have passed away; behold new things have come." Paul didn't write these words so that all the Christian recipients of this epistle would feel good about themselves and boast in the fact that they were new creatures (creations). Quite the contrary! In that context he was exhorting all his readers who needed to repent to repent and become what they are supposed to be, by God's definition, and "not receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1), for example. This problem is all the more serious where Christians who are living in sin have been taught that they are saved and there is no way they could lose their salvation. Many teach "Once Saved, Always Saved" in a way that makes it impossible to take the many warnings in the New Testament seriously, warnings like repent or lose your salvation. See my paper, "Once Saved, Always Saved?"

Hebrews 10:8-18 are discussed on pages 156-163 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," and there are extensive endnotes. And all of the last chapter of that book (pages 169-220), is totally relevant to this topic: It deals in large part with the meanings of the Greek words translated holiness, holy, make holy, saint, sanctify, sanctification, etc. My recently published e-book includes some of this information, but not as much as the paperback book. The e-book is intended as an introduction to the paperback book; it is easier to read and typically should be read first. (Both books are available at amazon.com.)] **THROUGH THE OFFERING OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST ONCE FOR ALL** [my capitalization for emphasis]. [[See Heb. 2:11; 9:13, 14; 10:14, 29; and 13:12. Full salvation - (which includes relative perfection for this present age: see Heb. 7:19; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40) includes being forgiven for all of our past sins when we become Christians, being set free from spiritual death and bondage to sin, being born again and made righteous and holy (having been sanctified), and having access to God beyond the veil as His born-again children - comes to us through the all-important atoning death (and resurrection) of the Lord Jesus Christ, along with forgiveness for any sins we should commit after we become Christians when we repent.

Expressions like "we have been sanctified" or relative "perfection" fit the positive, ideal, what-God-has-called-us-to point of view and exclude all sin. Doesn't that sound good? Isn't that what you want in your heart? As I mentioned, the writer of Hebrews understood that some Christians, including some of the original recipients of this epistle,

were not living in the state of holiness that had been provided for them, and to which they had been called, but he was powerfully reminding them of what God had provided for them and required of them. Where any readers whose hearts and lives didn't line up with God's call, those readers were being called to repent, with a top priority. God isn't going to change His gospel call.

Much of the material that follows through Heb. 10:18 was borrowed from the verse-by-verse discussion of Heb. 10:8-18 in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ." This will result in some repetition, but I believe this topic is so important that we need some repetition, especially in light of the fact that so many Christians (even the majority) don't believe we have been called to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin. As I mentioned, I looked at more than fifty commentaries on Hebrews chapters 8-10 for this study. Most of them write from the viewpoint that the words "we have been sanctified" should be understood to speak of positional holiness/consecration (which doesn't deal with how Christians live) or of a lifelong sanctifying process (where we never gain the full victory over sin as long as we live in this world - where we don't have faith for victory over all sin, and we don't think we are supposed to have faith for victory over all sin, but at least we make some progress while we keep on sinning). Sin, if it really is sin, is a serious word; it is rebellion against God and His divine order. We should have zero tolerance for sin.

A Discussion on the Meaning of the Words, "We Have Been Sanctified" of Hebrews 10:10. THESE WORDS, "WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED," SPEAK OF THE SANCTIFIED STATE IN WHICH ALL CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED (AND ARE ENABLED) TO DWELL. To say the same thing using different words, WE HAVE BEEN MADE HOLY; WE ARE SAINTS; WE HAVE BEEN SET APART FROM SIN BY GOD FOR GOD; WE LIVE IN AN ABIDING STATE OF HOLINESS WITH THE VICTORY OVER ALL SIN. The NIV translates, "we have been made holy." The New Testament very often uses the words, sanctify, sanctification, holiness; holy; saint, etc. in the ideal (but not unrealistic) sense I have briefly summarized in this paragraph. See pages 156-163 and pages 169-220 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin."

Christians are called to live in an abiding state of holiness, but Christians are not automatically sanctified, and sanctified Christians do not automatically maintain a state of holiness. ((See, for example, Heb. 2:18; 3:16-19; 4:1-16; 5:11-14; 6:1-12; 10:19-39; 12:1-29; 13:1-25. Hebrews 12:5-13 speak of God's chastening/disciplining His children (as required) that they may share His holiness (see Heb. 12:10); that they may be righteous (see Heb. 12:11). The Bible makes it clear that God's people do not always respond with repentance when they experience His chastening/disciplining. Hebrews 12:14 (NIV) says, "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; WITHOUT HOLINESS NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD [my capitalization]." To be holy (to live in an abiding state of holiness) must be a top priority for Christians.

It should be pointed out, and emphasized, that the holiness of Christians comes from God by grace through faith, based on the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by

the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the triune God must receive all the glory. We certainly don't want to say that chastening/disciplining is the basis for our holiness, but it can help motivate us to repent if such motivation is required, etc.))

We must walk by faith (based on what the New Testament teaches), and we must walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis; otherwise, we will not live in an abiding state of holiness. The world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil and his multitudinous hosts of evil angels and demons are waging warfare against us, sometimes intense warfare. Satan and his hosts work to keep us from the truth of God and His righteousness and holiness, or to get us out of His truth and righteousness and holiness. One major problem we have in our day is that most Christians (at least the Christians in our part of the world) don't have much insight in dealing with, and resisting, demons, or the gifts of the Spirit that we need to be effective in dealing with demons. Living righteous, holy, and fruitful lives in the truth involves spiritual warfare whether we want that warfare, or not. Many Christians wrongly believe that we are automatically protected from the influence and workings of demons. We need all the help that God makes available to us, including through other Christians, especially ministers.

The ideal presented in the New Testament is for Christians to be sanctified from the time of conversion. Then throughout the Christian life there will be growth as we are changed from glory to glory (see 2 Cor. 3:18). This need for growth is not sin, and in general, the New Testament does not use the verb "sanctify" (or the closely related words) to speak of this growth. In the ideal case we will live in an abiding state of holiness and we will be growing. That sounds good, doesn't it?

I'll briefly comment on what H. Orton Wiley says under Heb. 10:10-14 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Beacon Hill Press (Nazarene), 1959, 1984], pages 286-293). I appreciate the fact that Wiley believes that Christians are called to walk with the victory over all sin, but I believe he confuses the issue somewhat with his viewpoint, a second work of grace viewpoint. The sanctification that he teaches (they often refer to it as entire sanctification, which typically is received as a second, crisis experience) includes the removal of the sinful nature. I don't believe the writer of Hebrews (or the other writers of the New Testament) included the idea of our being able to eliminate the influence of the old man/the sinful nature while we are still living in this world, or that he included any idea of being sanctified as a second experience. He was speaking of the state of holiness that is provided for all true Christians as a big part of what it means to be a Christian. The New Testament includes holiness in the basic full-salvation package, and we shouldn't think in terms of entering that state in the future (it is available now, not that it is automatic or always easy, far from it); but I'm very thankful for all the Christians who enter that state as a second experience. Those who teach that viewpoint, like Wiley, are some of the only Christians who understand and teach that God has called us to live in an abiding state of holiness, with the victory over all sin.

I'll quote part of what Richard S. Taylor says under Heb. 10:10 ("Beacon Bible Commentary," Vol. 10 [Beacon Hill Press (Nazarene), 1967], page 119): "We are not merely consecrated by the death of Christ, in the sense that His death brings us into a

new and sacred relationship with God. This would be positional holiness only, and that was available before. [Yes, but in a lesser sense.] ... The [Greek participle] verb form "hegiasmenoi," is perfect tense, which means that we, the worshippers, are, through Christ, in a state of sanctification [holiness], resulting from a past sanctifying. [Taylor, like Wiley above, is thinking of "entire sanctification," which, from their point of view, typically takes place as a second, crisis experience and includes the removal of the sinful nature.] But with most of these Hebrew Christians this was not yet subjectively a fact of experience. [We know, at least, that some of the recipients of this epistle were being tempted to compromise the gospel of the new covenant by turning back toward the old covenant.]. We may call this therefore a 'perfect of prophecy,' having a futuristic force. [I believe calling this a " 'perfect of prophecy,' having a futuristic force," misses the intent of the author/Author. The author/Author was speaking of what all Christians are called to now. The fact that many Christians in the ancient world and in our day were not living in an abiding state of holiness did not change the gospel. We are called and enabled to walk in an abiding state of holiness.] 'Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ' we are provisionally sanctified, and may be personally and inwardly sanctified." We are called to be "inwardly sanctified," and we should not put it in the future, God has provided this for us now. I believe that Wiley and Taylor would agree that this inward sanctification is available to us now by grace through faith.

I am sharing very good news! We need to make it a top priority to walk in the full salvation to which we have been called. Yes, we can be forgiven if we repent, but we need to be aiming, with a top priority, to walk (by faith) on a continuous basis in the Word of God and by the Spirit of God, with the victory over all sin. I'M SPEAKING OF OUR WALKING WITH THE VICTORY OVER EVERYTHING THAT GOD WOULD CONSIDER TO BE SIN FOR US. I'm not speaking of a state of holiness that excludes having wrong thoughts or wrong desires (being tempted). Those things are not sin if we resist them by the grace of God in Christ. When we are tempted we need to look to God in faith, based on His Word (see Heb. 4:14-16, for example). And I'm not speaking of our ever arriving at a state where we don't need to keep on growing as long as we live in this world.

Nor am I speaking of a state where our motives, attitudes, love, priorities, etc. are always perfect, where there is no difference between the Lord Jesus and us. God is not quick to call imperfections sin, but we must make it a top priority to avoid anything, and everything, that God would consider to be sin for us. If we are making it a top priority to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, by grace through faith, I believe He will let us know if we are in sin but unaware of it. Sin is a big deal to God.

God hates sin! And He paid an infinite price to give us the victory over all sin. Again, this is good news! This is what every true Christian wants! And again, I am not saying (and the New Testament does not teach) that the victory over sin is automatic or always easy. The world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin) and the devil and his hosts are against us, but THE GRACE OF GOD IS GREATER! We will never walk with the victory over all sin (by grace through faith) until we see that this is what God's

Word calls us to NOW. Nobody is going to make it a top priority to walk in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God with the victory over all sin if they don't believe that God has called and enabled them to do it. Also, it is a very serious problem when we say that we cannot do what God has called us to do. Numbers chapters 13 and 14 provide a powerful illustration, where the people of Israel said they could not take the promised land and suffered disastrous results. God wasn't telling them to take the promised land by their strength any more than He brought them out of Egypt by their strength.

Many Christians (about half of evangelicals) are telling us that Romans 7 proves that we cannot have the victory over sin in this present life, but that doesn't make it so. (It would be difficult to overstate how much damage to the Body of Christ interpretations like that have caused, no matter how sincerely they are held.) There is a reason that essentially no Christians the first few hundred years believed that Romans 7 says anything about Christians continuing to sin. (I don't know of any Christians until after AD 400.) I discuss this super-important topic in my paperback book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin," and I have a paper on my internet site that deals with the interpretation of Romans 7.

I also deal with 1 John 1:8 in some detail in both books. Romans 7 and 1 John 1:8 are the two passages that are the most often used to argue for the viewpoint that we cannot stop sinning while we live in this world. I am quite sure that 1 John 1:8 (like Romans 7) does not teach that we cannot have the victory over sin, and, in fact, that epistle is one of the strongest in the New Testament that teaches victory over all sin (even as Romans chapter 6 is one of the most important chapters, if not the most important chapter, that teaches victory over all sin, and Rom. 8:1-14 is strong on victory over sin; Romans chapter 6 and Rom. 8:1-14 are discussed in both of my books):

In 1 JOHN 3:3, for example, it says, "And everyone who has this hope [the hope of the glory of heaven, including being able to see God as He is (1 John 3:2)], PURIFIES HIMSELF [by the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ through faith], JUST AS HE [the Lord Jesus] IS PURE [my emphasis]." 1 JOHN 3:7 says, "Little children, make sure no one deceives you, the one who practices [better, "THE ONE WHO IS DOING"] RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RIGHTEOUS, JUST AS HE [the Lord Jesus] IS RIGHTEOUS [my emphasis]." One more, "the one who says he abides in Him [the Lord Jesus] OUGHT TO WALK IN THE SAME MANNER AS HE [the Lord Jesus] WALKED [my emphasis]." In spite of verses like these and very widespread agreement that the apostle John wrote this epistle against an early form of the heresy of Gnosticism (for one thing, the Gnostics denied that sin is the problem and the reality of the atoning death and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ), the majority of Christians (something like 80 to 90 percent) believe that 1 John 1:8 proves that Christians cannot live with the victory over sin in this world. Some even say that all of our thoughts and actions are tainted with sin. I'm thankful that the New Testament doesn't back up the idea that God thinks in terms of all of our thoughts and actions being tainted with sin.

Number 3 on the lists of verses that are used to try to prove that we cannot walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin while we live in this world is Gal. 5:17. I'm sure that they are misinterpreting that verse too. Galatians 5:17 is discussed in its context on pages 195-200 of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." Those verses are also discussed in my e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." **[(11) And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; (12) but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, (13) waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.]** [[The old-covenant sacrifices were effective to a point, but they could "never take away sins." (Heb. 10:11; see under Heb. 9:26 and 10:4 in this paper.) For one thing, they could not atone for (bring forgiveness for, or, better, bring release from) the willful and defiant sins of the people of Israel. Hebrews 9:7, for example, speaks of the high priest making atonement "for the sins of the people committed in ignorance" on the Day of Atonement. And it is extremely significant that the old-covenant sacrifices could not take away the transgression of Adam with the penalty of spiritual death and bondage to sin. As the apostle Paul showed in Romans chapter 5, for example, bondage to sin came when spiritual death came.

The old-covenant sacrifices could not take away spiritual death and bondage to sin, so they certainly could not solve the sin problem and sanctify God's people. They could "never take away sins" (10:11) from God's people in the full, required sense that they stop sinning. The sin problem was not solved; sin remained in the hearts and lives of God's people; sin(s) were not taken away. The writer of Hebrews makes the point in 10:3, 4 that the fact that the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement (and all the other sacrifices) needed to be repeated year after year demonstrated that those sacrifices could not solve the sin problem and sanctify the hearts and lives of God's people.

By contrast, the "one sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:12) of the Lord Jesus Christ does have the authority and power to "take away sin(s)" and sanctify the hearts and lives of God's people. Hebrews 9:26, for example, says, "He has been manifested TO PUT AWAY SIN [my capitalization for emphasis] by the sacrifice of Himself." He took away our past sins with the guilt and with the penalties back to Adam (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin) through His atoning death; He dethroned spiritual death and sin; and, significantly, HE TOOK AWAY SIN(S) IN THAT HE GAVE US SPIRITUAL LIFE AND ENABLES US TO LIVE IN THE VERY RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS OF GOD, WITH THE VICTORY OVER ALL SIN. In the ideal case there won't be any more sinning after we become Christians. That sounds good doesn't it? WE MUST AIM AT THAT TARGET! And it is very clear that we will not be sinning after we are glorified through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unlike the old-covenant high priest and priests, our Great High Priest was able to sit down because (in one very real sense) His work was finished (He sat down at the right hand of God the Father [see 10:12]). He is waiting for the Father's time for Him to return (to fully save His people, including the resurrection, glorification, and rapture) and subdue His enemies in His end-time judgment of the world. He will make His enemies

(and the enemies of His people) a footstool for His feet (see Psalm 110, especially verse 1: this Psalm is discussed verse-by-verse in chapter 19 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture"; 1 Cor. 15:20-27: these verses are discussed in the paper on 1 Corinthians chapter 15 on my internet site).

The Lord Jesus is actively working at the present time, doing all that He is required to do, including doing all that is involved with functioning as our Great High Priest.]] **(14) For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** [[The old-covenant sacrifices could not perfect the worshippers, because, as we have seen, they could not atone for the defiant, with a high hand sins of the people of Israel, they could not dethrone sin, impart spiritual life, sanctify the hearts and lives of the believers (see Heb. 7:11, 19; 9:9; and 10:1), or give them access to God beyond the veil. I'll quote Hebrews 10:1 again, "For the Law [the Mosaic Law, which was the foundation for the old covenant], since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come [referring to new-covenant salvation, which is based on the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ] *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, MAKE PERFECT [my emphasis] those who draw near."

"By one offering" (Heb. 10:14), however, the Lord Jesus Christ has provided "perfection"(for this age it is a relative, not an absolute, perfection) for believers that includes the facts that they have been forgiven, and He dethroned sin and spiritual death, imparted spiritual life, sanctified believers, and removed the veil at the entrance to the heavenly holy of holies, thereby opening the way into the presence of God. As we discussed under Heb. 10:10 regarding the words "we have been sanctified," the words "He has perfected for all time," are written from a positive, ideal point of view showing what God has provided for all Christians and requires of all Christians. If our lives don't match God's definition, we are going to have to change with a top priority (and God knows our hearts, including our priorities). This is good news, because this is what all true believers want. For Christians to be sinning against God is not OK! No true Christian wants to ever sin against God.

On the words "He has perfected," see Heb. 11:39, 40. I have an endnote in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," that discusses these verses. Since these verses (Heb. 11:39, 40) are quite important, and since their meaning is not especially obvious, it will be helpful to discuss them. I'll quote that endnote:

I'll read HEBREWS 11:39, 40, "And all these [the believers from Old Testament days, who are spoken of throughout Hebrews chapter 11], having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because God had provided something better for us [for *us* new covenant believers], so that apart from us they would not BE MADE PERFECT [my emphasis]." The believers who lived in the days of the Old Testament could "not receive what was promised" until it became available through the atoning death (and resurrection) of the Lord Jesus Christ and new-covenant salvation. "What was promised" includes the being "made perfect" spoken of in Heb. 11:40 (and in Heb. 10:14 and other verses). Hebrews 11:40 says that "apart from us they could not be made perfect." They had to wait for the Lord Jesus Christ to overthrow

spiritual death and sin by His atoning death and to open the way into the presence of God. Now that this salvation has become available, these believers "HAVE BEEN MADE PERFECT" along with us, the new-covenant believers.

Although this PERFECTION has been provided for new-covenant believers, many (most) Christians have not been walking in the fullness of this perfection. Many (most) Christians do not even believe that this relative perfection is available. For one thing, THIS PERFECTION INCLUDES BEING SANCTIFIED AND LIVING IN AN ABIDING STATE OF HOLINESS. True Christians can sin, but to the extent we sin, we are not living in a state of holiness, or walking in the perfection spoken of here. But as long as we are living in the center of God's will, by His saving grace, by faith, it can be said that we have been perfected (with a relative perfection), even though it is understood that we still have the potential to walk in the flesh and to sin; even though it is understood that we still have a need to grow in the things of God; and even though it is understood that we have not been glorified yet. We always have to cooperate with God's grace through faith, a faith that is based on God and what His Word actually says.

Let's briefly discuss what it meant for those Old Testament believers to be perfected through the Lord Jesus Christ and new-covenant salvation. Hebrews 12:23 speaks of those believers with the words, "the spirits of righteous men made perfect," and it shows that they are now in heaven. They are called "spirits" because they died physically and have not yet received their resurrection bodies. They are called "righteous" because they were believers and were accepted by God; and as Hebrews chapter 11 and many other passages show, those believers lived (relatively) righteous lives (by grace) through faith (see Heb. 11:4, 7, 33; and Gen. 6:9, for example). I'll read part of Gen. 6:9, "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God."

Although those believers lived relatively righteous lives (by faith), they are saved by grace through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they need the righteousness and holiness of God provided as a big part of what new-covenant salvation is all about. (I'm sure that all the believers in the Old Testament who were called "righteous" will testify that they are in heaven because of the Righteousness of God which is imputed and imparted to them through new-covenant salvation.) Before He had dethroned sin and death (both spiritual death and physical death) and MADE them PERFECT, those believers were in spiritual death, like all the descendants of Adam. At death they went to Sheol/Hades (the abode of the dead), but not in the sense that it was a place of punishment for them (see, for example, Gen. 37:35; Psalm 16:10; Isa. 38:10; Luke 16:22-31; 23:43; and Acts 2:27-32). ("Sheol" is a Hebrew word; "Hades" is a Greek word.) The names "Paradise" and "Abraham's bosom" were sometimes used for the believer's compartment in Sheol/Hades. (These things are discussed in more detail in my verse-by-verse discussion of Ephesians chapter 4 on my internet site: Google to Karl Kemp Teaching. See under Eph. 4:8 and the relevant section that starts on page 41 of that paper.) Now that the sin problem has been solved and spiritual death has been overthrown through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, those believers have been taken to heaven. Being taken to heaven certainly includes having access to God, and they aren't spiritually dead; they have been set-

apart for God in a full sense and they are righteous and holy in their hearts and lives - they aren't sinning. This is a big part of what it meant for the Old Testament believers to be "MADE PERFECT."

Those believers are still waiting for their resurrection bodies (with the exception of the select group mentioned in Matt. 27:52, 53), even as new-covenant believers are waiting. The glory reserved for us in the future, including reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ, will come to us (all believers) through His all-important atoning death. (I recommend the commentary by F. F. Bruce on Heb. 11:39, 40 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1964) and the commentary by F. Delitzsch ("Epistle to the Hebrews," [1978 reprint by Klock and Klock]). That completes the endnote, now I'll turn back to our discussion of Heb. 10:14.

I'll quote HEBREWS 10:14 again, "**For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.**" This "one offering" solved the sin problem for all believers "for all time," including the believers from Old Testament days (see Heb. 11:39, 40). Every person who enters God's new Jerusalem will enter because of this one offering (see Rev. 21:27, for example). And if a Christian should slip into sin, restoration is provided when they sincerely repent through this same "one offering" (see 1 John 2:1, 2, for example).

I'll comment briefly on the words "**those who are sanctified**" of Heb. 10:14: "Those who are sanctified" are the one who "have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" of Heb. 10:10. They have been set apart by God for God, set apart from everything unholy and sinful. The present tense in the Greek could be translated "those who are being sanctified" or "those who are being made holy" with the NIV, but in Heb. 10:10 the writer has already shown us he is speaking of an abiding state of holiness. The present tense in the Greek here in 10:14 communicates the idea of a continuous abiding state, as does the translation of the NASB ("those who are sanctified"). The KJV has "those that are sanctified." The writer isn't speaking only of a legal, positional holiness, and he isn't speaking of a process of sanctification where we keep sinning to some extent as long as we live in this world. I trust you can see it makes a gigantic difference how we understand verses like these.]] **(15) And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us** [[The writer of Hebrews means that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the truthfulness of what has been said in the preceding verses about the sin problem (which was not solved by the old covenant) being solved now through new-covenant salvation. The idea is that the Holy Spirit bears witness in that He was the One who spoke through Jeremiah the prophet, who is loosely quoted in the two verses that follow, verses 16, 17.]]; **for after saying, (16) 'THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM.' He then says, 'AND THEIR SINS AND LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.'** [[This loose quotation from Jer. 31:31-34, which was quoted in fuller form in Heb. 8:8-12 (verses that are quoted and discussed under chapter 8), confirms that the sin problem has been fully solved by the new covenant. In Heb. 10:16, 17 the writer just loosely quotes that part of Jer. 31:31-34 that directly deals with salvation from sin.

Especially relevant is his loose quotation with the words, "I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM" in verse 16. This "quotation" effectively shows that the dominant feature of new-covenant salvation is the inner transformation (sanctification) of believers. Total forgiveness for our past sins is a key part of new-covenant salvation, but I believe we should put about ninety percent of the emphasis on the fact that we have been set free from the authority and power of sin and enabled to live in the righteousness and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. God puts His righteous laws upon the hearts and minds of Christians, and as we walk by the Holy Spirit (by faith, in accordance with the gospel, which we are required and privileged to do), we fulfill the requirement of God's moral Law (see Rom. 8:4; 2:26, 27; and Ezek. 36:26, 27), which excludes sinning. That part of Jer. 31:31-34 that is quoted in Heb. 10:17 speaks of complete forgiveness as God remembers our former (pre-Christian) sins and lawless deeds no more. It is also true that we can be forgiven for sins we commit after we become Christians when we repent, but we must aim at the target of not sinning, with a high priority.

At the end of verse 16, the NASB has the words "*He then says*" in italics. The KJV has nothing to correspond with these added words, and my United Bible Societies' "Greek New Testament" (fourth revised edition) does not include these words. The manuscript evidence for these added words is extremely weak. I believe it is very important that we do not include these added words. If we add these words, we set the stage to misunderstand verse 18 (which is very often done as we will discuss), which is a very important summarizing verse. The super-important words "I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM" of verse 16 are wrongly isolated from verse 18, which is a very important summarizing verse, by these added words.

It is true that we expect some words like "He then says" because verse 15 ends with the words "for after saying," and we expect the counterpart for these words. However, if we were to add words like "He then says," we should add them in the middle of verse 16, just before the words, "I will put my laws upon their heart." That way the added words would not lead to a misinterpretation of verse 18. As quite a few commentators have pointed out, apparently the writer of Hebrews used the words that were translated "says the Lord" - which could be translated "the Lord says" - in the middle of verse 16 to serve as the counterpart for the words at the end of verse 15.]] **(18) Now where there is forgiveness [Greek "aphesis"] of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.** [[I'm not at all satisfied with this translation of verse 18. Rightly understood, this verse well summarizes the fact that the sin problem has been fully solved in the One Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, very much including the inner transformation (sanctification) spoken of with the words, "I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM." Those are weighty words! They are weighty like the words, "WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED [my emphasis] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" of Heb. 10:10, for example.

"Forgiveness" is not an adequate translation for the Greek noun "aphesis" here in verse 18, at least not if we think of forgiveness in the widely accepted narrow sense of the

forgiveness of the guilt of sin. "Aphesis" is sometimes used in a much fuller sense in the New Testament. I devoted a chapter in my book (pages 141-167), "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ," to "A Study on the Meaning of the Greek Noun 'Aphesis.'" Much of that important information is also included in my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com. I also recommend the article "Ephesians 1:3, 4, 7; Holy and Blameless; Redemption and 'Aphesis'" that is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

I believe an expanded translation like the following conveys the intended meaning: **"Now where there is RELEASE from these things** [that is, release from being under our sins with the guilt and the penalties (back to Adam), including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin - WITH THE EMPHASIS ON GOD'S LAW BEING WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS AND MINDS in 10:16, with the strong emphasis on our having been sanctified in verse 10:10 and perfected in 10:14, for example, but very much including our being forgiven the guilt of our sins] - **there is no longer any offering for sin.**" Since His one Sacrifice fully solved the sin problem, there is no longer a need for further sacrificial offerings. Isn't that a beautiful picture?

The two uses of "aphesis" in Luke 4:18 demonstrate that this noun should sometimes be translated "release," or the equivalent. And the meaning of aphasis as it is used in the Septuagint is significant. I'll quote the three sentences (supplemented a little) that I have under the heading, "The Meaning of 'Aphesis' as it is Used in the Septuagint," from my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." "The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament that was done by Jewish scholars. The Septuagint was widely used by the Christians across the Roman world who knew some Greek, but not Hebrew. Most people knew some Greek then, like most people around the world know some English in our day. It is quite significant that the Septuagint prepared many Greek words to communicate the Christian gospel across the Roman world in the Greek language. The New Testament was written in Greek.

Aphesis is used approximately forty-five times in the Septuagint, but I didn't find one clear example where it is used of forgiveness. It is used about twenty-five times of THE RELEASE of Jubilee. (Some fifteen of these uses are found in Leviticus chapter 25.) Approximately ten uses deal with the seventh-year RELEASE, which is different than the RELEASE of Jubilee (cf. Deut. 15:1-18). Other uses are 'fountains' of water (Joel 1:20; 3:18) and the 'torrents' of water coming forth from the eyes of Jeremiah (Lam. 3:48).

I am not suggesting that aphasis should never be translated forgiveness in the New Testament, but a translation like RELEASE is often required."

Actually, if all we had was the forgiveness of the guilt of sin, we would still need a Savior to set us free from bondage to sin, spiritual death, and Satan. We would still be spiritually dead sinners in rebellion against God and His laws. However, since the One Sacrifice was fully effective and met every need, as the writer of Hebrews (and the other

writers of the New Testament) says again and again, there is no need for any further sacrifice. This includes the fact that if a Christian should slip into sin, forgiveness and restoration are provided through the One Sacrifice (see 1 John 2:1, 2, for example).

I'll quote part of what Gareth Lee Cockerill ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 2013], page 459) says under verse 18: " 'Where there is release from these' refers to Christ's sacrifice that provides freedom from the 'sins' and 'lawless deeds' mentioned in v. 17. 'Where' also has causal significance: since 'release' from disobedience has been effected by Christ's offering, 'there is no longer' any other 'sacrifice for sins.' English versions normally render the term ["aphesis"] we have translated 'release' by 'forgiveness' throughout the New Testament. The LXX [Septuagint] regularly uses this term in the broader sense of 'release.' [I say quite a bit more regarding the use of aphasis in the Septuagint (in the chapter on aphasis in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin") than what I said in the three paragraphs quoted above.] In the present context we cannot restrict 'release' to a mere forensic or legal 'forgiveness.' The [writer] is not dealing with a verdict given in court but with cleansing provided in a sanctuary. By His sacrifice Christ 'cleanses the conscience' of his people 'from dead works to serve the living God' (Heb. 9:14). Christ's own obedience has produced a covenant in which he has written his law's on his people's hearts so they can now live in obedience (10:16). ... The cessation of sacrifice implies purification (cf. 1:3) as well as forgiveness." Amen!

The way we understand Heb. 10:18 will typically very significantly affect the way we understand much of Hebrews chapters 8-10, very much including Heb. 10:10 and 14. If we wrongly believe that the writer of Hebrews limited what he said in Heb. 10:15-18, which is strongly connected to Heb. 10:1-14, to forgiveness (of the guilt of sin) it tends to have the power to very wrongly put the emphasis of Heb. 10:1-14 on forgiveness. That is undoubtedly a significant part of the reason why so many Christians misunderstand 10:1-14, which are some of the most important verses in the Bible that show that the heartbeat of Christianity is being transformed (by the saving, sanctifying grace of God, through faith), so we can walk in the truth, righteousness and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. I suppose though that the greater part of the reason why so many misunderstand Heb. 10:1-14 is that they have already determined that the New Testament teaches that we can never have the victory over all sin in this life. Large numbers of Christians have decided that we should put the emphasis on being forgiven and having a right, legal, positional righteousness and holiness along with progressive sanctification, with an understanding that we will continue to sin (even though many agree that sin is a very serious matter). Numbers 32:23 ends with the words, "your sin will find you out" and Heb. 12:14 (NKJV) says, "Pursue peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." And the writer didn't mean positional holiness or progressive sanctification (holiness). However, he would agree that we do need to keep growing in the good things of God. We always need to keep pressing on by grace through faith; we never get to a place where we can coast. We certainly have not arrived; we have not been perfected in an absolute sense.

Expansion On The Study Of The Greek Noun "Aphesis." This is very important, so I'm going to supplement the chapter that deals with the meaning of aphasis that is in my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." I decided (actually I believe I was led) to do a somewhat brief study to find out if the Ante-Nicene Fathers (who lived before the Nicene Council of AD 325) sometimes used "aphesis" in a full sense that goes far beyond the forgiveness of the guilt of sin. I was able to find five examples (there could be quite a few more examples), which I'll present here. (I'm quoting the passages from "The Ante-Nicene Fathers" (ANF) translated by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, 10 volumes [originally published in 1865-1887; I have the Eerdmans edition].):

Justin Martyr (about AD110-165), "Dialogue with Trypho", who was a Jew, Vol. 1 of ANF, chapter 44, page 217. "... But there is no other [way] than this [for people to be saved and have "a hope of inheriting the promised good things"], - to become acquainted with this Christ, to be washed in the fountain spoken of by Isaiah for the remission [aphesis] of sins [In this context I would translate "for the release from sins (with the guilt and the penalties, including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)," or the equivalent.]; AND FOR THE REST, TO LIVE SINLESS LIVES [my emphasis]."

Note that after this "remission of sins" ["release from sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)"] when we become Christians, WE ARE TO LIVE SINLESS LIVES. This seems to clearly show that Justin was using aphasis to mean a lot more than the remission (or forgiveness) of the guilt of sins here, but that is included. However, Justin wasn't writing from the naive point of view that all Christians were living sinless lives, but that we are called, enabled, and required to live sinless lives. This is the Christian ideal. God's grace is sufficient. We must be aiming at this target. Justin, like all of the early true Christian writers, exhorted his readers to resist temptation and walk in the righteousness of God with a high priority, and he warned of the consequences of continuing to live in sin.

Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho," Vol. 1 of ANF, chapter 111, page 254. "... ...the blood of Christ, by which those who were at one time harlots and unrighteous persons out of all nations are saved, receiving remission [aphesis] of sins [release from sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)], AND CONTINUING NO LONGER IN SIN [my emphasis]."

Note that after this "remission of sins" ["release from sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)"] Christians are to CONTINUE IN SIN NO LONGER. The "harlots and unrighteous persons" are born again and become righteous persons. Therefore aphasis means a lot more than the remission (or forgiveness) of the guilt of sins here, but that is included.

"Epistle of Barnabus" (possibly written before AD 100), Vol. 1 of ANF, chapter 5, section 1, page 139. "For to this end the Lord endured to deliver up His flesh to corruption, THAT WE MIGHT BE SANCTIFIED [my emphasis] through the remission [aphesis] of sins ["through the release from sin with the guilt and the penalties (including the major

penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)], which is effected by His blood of sprinkling."

The fact that we are enabled (and required) to be a SANCTIFIED (holy) people through the aphasis of sins shows that the writer is including a lot more than the remission (or forgiveness) of the guilt of sins, but that is included. In the preceding chapter (and other places in this epistle), the writer exhorted his readers with the requirement for God's people to fear Him and keep His commandments, and he warned, "Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are called [of God], we should fall asleep in our sins, and the wicked prince, acquiring power over us, should thrust us away from the kingdom of the Lord." It is clear that Barnabus understood that Christians are not automatically sanctified and that sanctified Christians do not automatically maintain a state of being sanctified or holiness or of having salvation.

"Epistle of Barnabus," Vol. 1 of ANF, chapter 6, page 140. "Since, therefore, HAVING RENEWED US [my emphasis] by the remission of our [the word "our" is not included in the Greek text that I have] sins ["by the release from our sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)] He hath made us after another pattern, [it is His purpose] that we should possess the soul of children, inasmuch as HE CREATED US ANEW BY HIS SPIRIT [my emphasis]."

The fact that we HAVE BEEN RENEWED and HE CREATED US ANEW BY HIS SPIRIT and BEEN MADE AFTER ANOTHER PATTERN through aphasis of/from sins demonstrates that aphasis means a lot more than the remission (or forgiveness) of sins here, but that is included. Being released from our sins with the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin that came upon mankind through the transgression of Adam and Eve) was also required.

"The Pastor [Shepherd] of Hermas," Vol. 2 of ANF, Book 2, chapter 3, page 22. "... For he who has received remission [aphesis] of his sins ["release from his sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin)] OUGHT NOT TO SIN ANY MORE, BUT TO LIVE IN PURITY [my emphasis]."

The fact that Christians are called, enabled, and required to NOT SIN ANY MORE, BUT TO LIVE IN PURITY demonstrates that aphasis means a lot more than remission (or forgiveness) of the guilt of sin here, but that is included.

BEFORE WE CONTINUE THIS VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY OF HEBREWS CHAPTERS 8-10 WITH HEBREWS 10:19, I'LL QUOTE A LITTLE FROM THE LAST CHAPTER OF MY BOOK, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," THAT DEALS FOR THE MOST PART WITH THE MEANING OF THE GREEK WORDS THAT ARE TRANSLATED HOLINESS, HOLY, SAINT, SANCTIFY, SANCTIFICATION, ETC. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Most of this lengthy chapter (pages 169-220) is devoted to studying key passages that use these Greek words. (The most important way to study the meaning of Greek words used in the New Testament is to study the words in the contexts in which they are used in the New Testament.) Three pages of that chapter are

devoted to the topic "What is Sin?" We need God's definition. Anything that He considers to be sin, we must consider to be sin, but it seriously confuses the issue when we call things sin that God doesn't, and this happens a lot.

This chapter originated with the study of the meaning of the words "we have been sanctified" of Hebrews 10:10. The Greek verb behind the words "we have been sanctified" is "hagiazō." This Greek verb, which is used twenty-eight times in the New Testament, is normally translated "sanctify" (in some form) by the NASB and the KJV. The NIV translates it "sanctify" (in some form) thirteen times. The NIV also translates "hagiazō" as consecrated, hallowed, made holy, make(s) holy, makes sacred, and set apart.

"Hagiazō" was derived from the adjective "hagios," which is used over two hundred times in the New Testament and is normally translated Holy/holy or saint(s) by the NASB, KJV, and the NIV. The Greek noun "hagiasmos," which was derived from the verb "hagiazō," is used ten times in the New Testament and is normally translated holiness or sanctification by the NASB and KJV. The NIV has holiness four times. It also has be sanctified, holy, holy life, and sanctifying. The Greek noun "hagiosune," which was derived from the adjective "hagios," is used three times in the New Testament and is translated holiness by the NASB and KJV. The NIV has holiness two times and holy one time.

It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the range of meaning of hagiazō, hagios, hagiasmos, and hagiosune. This study will be limited to one often used, very important, but not well understood, New Testament use of these words. These Greek words are frequently used to communicate the idea that Christians are actually to be SET APART from sin and to live for God in an abiding state of holiness (basically) from the time of conversion. This is the ideal, and the New Testament does not present it as an unrealistic or unattainable ideal. Not at all!

I have observed over the years that many Christians do not have an adequate understanding of the meaning of words like holiness, holy, saint, and sanctify. There are at least two ways in which these words are often misunderstood:

1. Some reduce holiness to the mere positional or ceremonial. From this point of view, Christians are automatically holy, even if they are living in sin. I'm not saying that these words are never used in a positional, ceremonial sense, but this usage is far from the typical New Testament use of these words.

2. Others agree that holiness means that Christians are actually to be set apart from sin for God, but they deny that Christians can be holy now, during this present life. According to this widespread viewpoint, the best a Christian can hope for (have faith for) is to be in a process (a sanctifying process) in which the amount of sin is decreasing as the years go by. I agree that Christians must be growing (see 2 Cor. 3:18, which speaks of our being transformed from glory to glory), but the New Testament doesn't normally use the words sanctify, holiness, etc. to speak of (or to include) this growth. And,

significantly, THE NEW TESTAMENT MAKES IT VERY CLEAR THAT CHRISTIANS ARE ACTUALLY TO BE SET APART FROM SIN - TO BE DEAD TO SIN AND TO BE SET APART FOR GOD. In the ideal case, WE WILL BE LIVING IN AN ABIDING STATE OF HOLINESS, AND WE WILL BE GROWING. This is good news!

Our faith must be based on what the Bible actually says. If we believe that the Bible says that we cannot have the victory over sin now, we certainly will not have the victory over sin now. The world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil are very real opponents, and we cannot walk in victory over them apart from the sufficient grace of God in Christ, which is appropriated by faith. I'm not talking about the power of positive thinking; I'm talking about trusting God and being sanctified by His saving power and for His glory. It is necessary for us to understand the Word of God, but we will never understand it (to a satisfactory extent) if we wrongly define key words like sanctify and holiness. (Now Heb. 10:19.)] **(19) Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place** [[referring to the heavenly counterpart to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, as in Heb. 9:12; the NIV translates "the Most Holy Place" in Heb. 9:12 and here] **by the blood of Jesus** [We have access to the presence of God through the atoning blood of the new covenant.], **(20) by a new and living way** [[Compare Heb. 9:8. The "way" is "living" through the life of God made available through NEW-covenant salvation. For one thing, the Spirit of life dwells in all born-again Christians (cf., e.g., Rom. 8:2, 9). "Jesus said to him, 'I am the WAY and the truth and the LIFE; no one comes to the Father but through Me' " (John 14:6; cf. Eph. 2:18).]] **which He inaugurated** [cf. Heb. 9:18] **for us** [[The "new and living way which He inaugurated for us" is new-covenant salvation, which has opened the way for us into the presence of God in heaven. We (all true Christians) have this access now, and we will have it in a much fuller sense after we are glorified and enter heaven in a much fuller sense and even begin to reign with the Lord Jesus.]] **through** [I prefer, "by means of"] **the veil, that is, His flesh** [[These words are difficult and the interpretations differ substantially. We have already been informed that we have access to the presence of God in heaven (see 10:19 for example); however, it seems that the writer chose to use the words "the veil" in the special sense that he describes for us here; that is, "the veil" is "His flesh" (the flesh of the Lord Jesus). We have access to God "by means of the veil, that is His flesh," which includes His incarnation, sinless life, all-important atoning death, resurrection, and His entering heaven to be seated at the Father's right hand as our great high priest. Assuming this is the right idea, the point that the writer makes here is extremely important and amplifies the point that he made in verse 19, that our access into the presence of God has come for us "by the blood of Jesus." I'll comment further on this interpretation in the following paragraph.

The words, "that is, His flesh," go with the fact that the means God used to save us (which includes giving us access to His presence) included the all-important incarnation of His Son, where the Son took upon flesh (cf. John 1:14) and became the God-man. He became a veil (or a door, or a bridge) between God and His people (the believers) **THAT WOULD BE OPENED WHEN HE DIED FOR US** and was resurrected and ascended to the right hand of God the Father. His sinless life, and His all-important atoning death, resurrection, and His entrance into heaven as our great high priest could

not have been accomplished if He had not become a man (but much more than just a man; He was deity, and He wasn't spiritually dead).

It is very significant that "the veil of the temple [in Jerusalem] was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matt. 26:51; Mark 15:38; cf. Luke 23:45) when Jesus died. Formerly there was a "veil" (or a closed door) between us and God in heaven, separating us from Him.], **(21) and since we have a great priest over the house of God** [The Lord Jesus is our great high priest (cf. Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 19; 6:20; 7:26, 28; 8:1, 3; and 9:11), and we are "His house" (Heb. 3:6; cf. 3:1-5) and the house of God (Heb. 3:4).], **(22) let us draw near** [cf. Heb. 7:19] [[I'll quote Heb. 4:14-16, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. [To "hold fast our confession" includes continuing to believe the truth (of the Word of God, especially the gospel) in our hearts and to walk in the "righteousness and holiness of the truth" (cf. Eph. 4:24). This is the primary theme of this epistle. The writer was TEACHING, ENCOURAGING, EXHORTING, and WARNING his readers throughout this epistle.] (15) For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin. (16) Therefore, LET US DRAW NEAR WITH CONFIDENCE [my emphasis] to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." The writer was encouraging and exhorting his readers to come before God the Father and our great high priest to repent anywhere repentance was required and to receive the saving, strengthening, sanctifying grace of God in Christ (which also gives us direction, wisdom, correction, etc.) that will enable us to come into and to stay in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God. For one super-important thing, we are to draw near to God and our great high priest with confidence (a sincere heart in full assurance of faith) when we are tempted, so that by His sufficient grace we won't sin.]] **with a sincere heart in full assurance** [cf. Heb. 6:11] **of faith** [[The words of this verse and the verses that follow to the end of the chapter are apparently intended first and foremost for the Christians who had begun to waver in their faith and faithfulness. Faith is of the heart. For one thing, having faith in our hearts is the opposite of doubting/wavering in our hearts (cf. Matt. 14:31; 21:20-22; Mark 11:22-24; and James 1:6-8). Faith is the most important word used in the New Testament (not to minimize repentance) that shows our role in God's plan of salvation (cf., e.g., Heb. 11:6).

We do not earn salvation by faith, not at all; but we receive salvation by faith, and we work out our salvation by grace through faith. Faith includes making God, His Son, and His Word top priority and submitting to and cooperating with His grace. We couldn't have faith if He didn't take the initiative in our salvation, including sacrificing His Son to save us; sending the gospel to us one way or another; drawing, convicting, revealing, transforming, etc., and restraining the evil one, but it goes too far and misses the balanced truth of what the New Testament teaches to say that God gives us saving faith (but many teach that God gives us saving faith). We submit to, and cooperate with, His saving, sanctifying grace by faith. See my "A Paper on Faith."

The fact that we have to cooperate with God's saving, sanctifying grace doesn't detract from the fact that we are saved 100 percent by grace. The apostle Paul, in Rom. 4:16,

said, "For this reason [since we couldn't be saved by the Law], *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace...." Everything we receive by faith comes by God's grace.]], **having our hearts sprinkled** [[cf. Ezek. 36:25 ((Ezekiel 36:25-27 put all the emphasis on God's sanctifying His people through new-covenant salvation, with the result that they will live for Him in His righteousness and holiness, with the victory over all sin. I'll quote EZEKIEL 36:25-27, "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols [Then they won't be filthy any more, which includes the fact that they won't be worshipping idols or committing other sins.] (26) Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." The New Testament makes it very clear that God doesn't force us to submit to new-covenant salvation with faith, or to continue in faith to the end, or force us to "walk in His statutes," but He sets us free from spiritual death and bondage to sin and Satan and enables us to "walk in His statutes.")); Heb. 9:19; 12:24; and 1 Pet. 1:2.]] **clean from an evil conscience** [[We discussed what it means to be cleansed from an evil conscience through the blood of Christ (through new-covenant salvation that comes through the atoning death of Christ, His resurrection, and His ascension to the right hand of God the Father) under Heb. 9:14. As we discussed there, this means a whole lot more than knowing that we are forgiven, as important as that is.

I'll quote a sentence from what Chrysostom (AD 347-407) says under the words, "having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience" ("Epistle to the Hebrews," Homily XIX, "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers" [Eerdmans, 1975 reprint], page 455): "He shows that not faith only, but a virtuous life also is required [We live in the righteousness and holiness of God by grace through FAITH.], and the consciousness to ourselves of nothing evil.]] **and our bodies washed with pure water** [[These words refer to water baptism ((cf., e.g., Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5 [Titus 3:5-7 are quoted and discussed in some detail under Heb. 8:7 in this paper. Titus 3:3-8 are discussed on pages 125-128 (plus the endnotes) of my book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." Water baptism is discussed there. Also see under verse 29 in my paper on 1 Corinthians chapter 15, and under John 3:5 in my paper on John 1:19-4:54; both papers are on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching); and 1 Pet. 3:21)).]]. **(23) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering** [[I'll quote HEBREWS 3:1 and 6: "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling [We have been called to inherit heaven at the end of our life on earth. Our hope is to inherit heaven with all of its glory and the fullness of eternal life (cf., e.g., Col. 1:5, 27; 3:7; Heb. 3:6; 6:11, 18, 19). "Hope" does not infer that there is any doubt (like we typically use the word "hope" in English) whether we will inherit the glory of God, but it is understood that we must continue to be faithful (by God's enabling grace) to the new covenant; we have to continue to be believers (by God's definition of believers).], consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." And (Heb. 3:6) "but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house - whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end." Hebrews 3:6-4:6 and many other parts of this epistle contain powerful exhortations and warnings to the original

recipients of this epistle (and to all Christians) that they must repent as required and stay faithful to the new-covenant lest they miss heaven. It is clear, for one thing, that some of them were entertaining the thought of turning back toward the old covenant. Like the writer of Hebrews shows in Heb. 10:28, for example, there was the danger that some of those Christians would do what this verse warns against: "has trampled under foot the son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant [the blood of Christ of the new covenant] by which he was sanctified."

The writer is speaking of those who had been saved and sanctified through new-covenant salvation in the blood of Christ, but who were being tempted/pressured to be unfaithful to that covenant in a very serious way (apostasy) that would result in the loss of salvation. The epistle to the Hebrews contains several clear passages that powerfully warn Christians that they can lose their salvation (see Heb. 3:5-4:3; 6:4-12; 10:26-39; and 12:14-17). These passages are all discussed, and many other passages, in my paper, "Once Saved, Always Saved?" I suggest you read that paper whether you agree that true Christians can lose their salvation, or not. I attempted to give the balanced truth of what the New Testament teaches in that paper. We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. It isn't good enough for us to have a few proof texts that supposedly "prove" our point of view, while other texts "disprove" our point of view.], **for He who promised is faithful** [[Since God is faithful we can, and we must, have a full assurance of faith that the gospel is the truth and that we are standing on the only solid foundation, namely God and salvation in His Son, Christ Jesus. His faithfulness ensures, for one thing, that He will always provide a way for us to resist temptation and stay faithful to Him (cf. 1 Cor. 10:13). God is not trying to get rid of any of His born-again children, quite the opposite, but the New Testament makes it quite clear, I believe, that true Christians can turn from God and become (by His definition) unbelievers. Rather than trying to explain away the large number of powerful warnings in the New Testament that we can lose our salvation, we must take His warnings seriously. It is dangerous to assume that the warnings need not be taken seriously based on the extremely shaky doctrine that believers cannot lose their salvation. ((I have a quotation from a Calvinistic scholar that states that "this doctrine was first explicitly taught by Augustine" (AD 354-430) in my paper, "Once Saved, Always Saved?" That new doctrine came along with Augustine's new (but out of the biblical balance) viewpoint that mankind has fallen to such an extent that we have no capacity to cooperate with God's grace or to have faith, so God must give faith to His elect. From that point of view, since everything depends on God, He also makes sure that His elect will come to faith and stay in faith. Augustine also taught that if we had to cooperate with God's grace and submit to His saving grace with faith, it would go against the fact that we are saved by grace. As we discussed above under Heb. 10:22, the fact that the New Testament teaches that we must cooperate with God's saving grace by faith doesn't detract from the fact that we are saved 100 percent by grace (our salvation doesn't cease being a gift because we begin to cooperate with God's saving grace and receive it), and I quoted some key words from Rom. 4:16. I highly recommend you read "Once Saved, Always Saved?") The Bible makes it very clear that God will not, and cannot, tolerate His people being unfaithful to Him in very serious ways that amount to abandoning His covenant.]]; **(24) and let us consider how to stimulate one another**

to love [cf. Heb. 13:1] **and good deeds** [or "good works"; cf. Titus 3:8], **(25) not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some** [[It is dangerous to separate ourselves from the Body of Christ. We are God's/Christ's house (cf. Heb. 3:3-6). We need one another, for one thing. God designed the Body of Christ in a way that we need one another, including the fact that we all have our assigned contributions to make to the proper functioning of the Body. See 1 Corinthians chapter 12. All true Christians have been given the grace to make our necessary contributions to the proper functioning of the Body. And it is super-important that those who have begun to waver in faith and faithfulness to God do not separate themselves from the Body of Christ.]], **but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day** [["the day" of judgment. We must get ready, and always stay ready, to stand before God with a top priority, and all the more so when that day is "drawing near." It seems that we are living very near the time for the Lord Jesus to return, but even if we aren't, we must make sure we are ready for His return at all times.]] **drawing near. (26) For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth** [The writer is speaking of those who have received "the truth" of God's Word, especially referring to the gospel of new-covenant salvation, into their hearts and live by faith.], **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins** [[There is widespread agreement that the writer of Hebrews was dealing with the sin of apostasy when he wrote this epistle, which includes denying foundational doctrines of Christianity and/or giving oneself over to serve sin. He was speaking of rebellion against the new covenant by those who had become true Christians; they had been born again and established in the things of Christ. They were not babes in Christ, but babes in Christ need to be warned too. As verse 29 shows he was speaking of those who were being seriously tempted to rebel against God and the new covenant in a way that would amount to trampling under foot the Son of God, regarding as unclean the blood of the covenant by which they had been sanctified, and insulting the Holy Spirit of grace, who dwelled within them as born again Christians.

The warning that "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" if they become guilty of "sinning willfully" is quite strong; it was certainly designed to put the fear of God in the recipients of this epistle who were in danger of going off into apostasy. It should put a healthy fear of God in all Christians. We need to walk humbly before God, making Him, His truth, salvation, righteousness and holiness top priority. We all have to contend with the world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin and is not afraid of apostasy), and the devil and his hosts.

Many of the verses that follow in this chapter (10:27-31, 38b) powerfully amplify the message that his readers need to fear God and repent NOW, where repentance is required. He emphasizes the point in this epistle that born-again Christians can get to a place where "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" for them; in other words they can get to a place where there is no way back to salvation. These are awesome words, aren't they? If you turn from the new covenant established on the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, there is no other "sacrifice for sins." The NIV translates, "no sacrifice for sins is left." As I mentioned, words like these were certainly designed to put the fear of God in Christians. See Heb. 3:5-4:3; 6:4-8; 10:26-39; and 12:14-17. These passages are all discussed in my paper, "Once Saved, Always Saved?"

Hebrews 6:4-8 is a very important cross-reference in that it also includes an awesome warning comparable to the words "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." I'll quote HEBREWS 6:4-6 and make a few comments: "For in the case of those who have been enlightened [At a minimum, they have come to understand the basic truths of the gospel in their hearts. In Heb. 10:32 the writer uses the words "after being enlightened" of his readers having become Christians.] and have tasted of the heavenly gift [They have tasted of (which included experiencing) new-covenant salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.] and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit [[These words include the fact that they had received the Spirit of life as born-again Christians, who came, for one super-important thing, to enable them to live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God. The words of verse 5, "tasted...the powers of the age to come," confirm that they had also entered into the charismatic dimension of the work of the Spirit (including the gifts of the Spirit [cf., e.g., 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14].)], (5) and have tasted the good word of God [They had learned the good word of God and experienced the reality of their salvation to a significant extent; they were not babes in Christ; this made their sin all the more serious.] and the powers of the age to come [This at least includes tasting (experiencing) the charismatic dimension of the work of the Holy Spirit. We, as born-again children of God, already live (in a preliminary, but very real sense) in the age to come. We still live in this world, but we have also been caught up into the age to come (cf., e.g., John 5:24; Rom. 6:1-11; Eph. 1:14, 19-23; 2:5-7; Col. 3:1-3).], [[Many Christians deny that the writer is speaking to/of those who had become born-again Christians, but these verses, by themselves, along with the overall content of this epistle, confirm that they had become true Christians. The only reason that I know of for Christians to deny that these Christians had become true, born-again Christians is the felt need to defend the doctrine that true Christians cannot lose their salvation. As I mention in my paper, "Once Saved, Always Saved?," that doctrine follows quite naturally if you limit yourself to the verses in the Bible (especially in the New Testament) that emphasize God's role in our salvation (which, taken by themselves, fit the idea that we don't really have a role in our salvation; it is all God; God gives us faith; He makes sure we stay saved; etc.), but we cannot limit ourselves to those verses. We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches, and a very large number of passages demonstrate that our sovereign God has left a very definite role for us. A very large number of passages show that we must cooperate with God's grace on a continuous basis through faith. See my "A Paper on Faith."]] (6) and *then* have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame." The words "it is impossible to renew them to repentance" (along with the words, "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins") need to be taken quite seriously; however, THE NEW TESTAMENT CONSISTENTLY CALLS CHRISTIANS IN SIN TO REPENT, EVEN AS THE WRITER OF HEBREWS CALLS HIS READERS TO REPENT WHERE REPENTANCE IS REQUIRED.

I wouldn't tell backslidden Christians that they have crossed a line where repentance is impossible. In general we should encourage backslidden Christians to repent, no matter how far they have fallen. I have heard many stories of those who have repented after

what seemed to be total abandonment of God and the gospel for lengthy periods of time; however, we need to take very seriously the warning that you can get to a place where there is no way back. It happens! If people have a desire to repent, it is a sign that God hasn't abandoned them and will accept them when they repent. It is significant that the writer of Hebrews includes some encouraging words throughout this epistle, including in Heb. 6:9-12 and 10:32-36, especially 32-34 (words that are in the same context with the powerful warnings), which confirms that he doesn't consider his initial recipients of this epistle to have gotten to a place where they could not repent.

The Old Testament and the New Testament make it clear that God's people need to fear Him, which includes the need for us to be afraid to sin against Him (cf., e.g., Ex. 20:20; Deut. 6:2, 13, 24; 10:12; Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5; 2 Cor. 5:11; 7:1; and 1 Pet. 1:17); this is a necessary and healthy fear. There is a definite shortage of the fear of God among many Christians in our day. Many even tell us that we are not supposed to fear God. We had better be (or get) afraid to sin against Him! The world today doesn't have much room, if any room, for the idea of sin, and many Christians have been influenced to a significant extent by this totally wrong viewpoint.

All sin is a serious matter! (I'm speaking of things that God considers to be sin for that person; a young Christian might get by doing some things that God doesn't consider to be sin for them; I'm speaking of things that aren't clearly spelled out to be sin in the Bible.) Anything that God considers to be sin is a serious matter, but some sins are much more serious than others, depending, for one very important factor, on the willfulness, defiance, rebelliousness involved. God knows our hearts! Most sins don't fall in the category of the rebellion that the writer of Hebrews is speaking of in Heb. 10:26-39, or Heb. 6:4-8; 12:14-17. But again, all sin is a serious matter, and we are called, enabled, and required to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin. Doesn't that sound like good news! Isn't that what you want in your heart? We must aim at the target of zero sin.

I believe God will forgive any Christians who are sincerely repenting in their hearts (1 John 2:1, 2). One reason this is important is that the evil one and his hosts have convinced many Christians that they have committed a/the unpardonable sin, when they haven't. And they often accuse Christians of sinning when they haven't; if we listen to demons, it causes considerable confusion and despair. Anyway, it is very dangerous to leave any room for sin; for one thing sin hardens hearts, and dampens faith, and when you start down that path you are playing with fire. Believers can become unbelievers!

I'll quote two sentences from what Andrew Murray says under 10:26 ("The Holiest of All" [Revell reprint, originally published in 1894 (in the public domain)], page 403): "He who would know what willful sin is, with the thought that he is safe, as long as he keeps from that extreme, deceives himself. **THE ONLY SURE WAY OF KEEPING FROM WILLFUL SIN IS TO KEEP FAR FROM ALL SIN** [my emphasis]." We are called to have zero tolerance for sin. It is totally unacceptable to leave room for some sins because we are confident that those sins will not keep us out of heaven. God hates sin, and He paid an infinite price to keep us from all sin. If God considers something to be sin, it is

SERIOUS; it is rebellion against God and His truth. He paid an infinite price to give us the victory over sin! But this does not mean that the victory is always easy, and it certainly is not automatic. We need to make living in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, with the victory over all sin, a top priority. HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR US TO KNOW AND TO DO HIS WILL!]] **(27) but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES** [Compare Isa. 26:11; 2 Thess. 1:7-10. We dare not become "adversaries" of God.]. **(28) Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses** [cf. Deut. 17:2-7; 19:15; Matt. 18:15-18; and Heb. 2:2, 3]. **(29) How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God** [[Those Christians who (from God's point of view) abandon new-covenant salvation are in a very real sense trampling under foot the Son of God who died for them and saved them. The writer makes his point with words designed to picture apostasy in the worst possible (but true) light, and he is going to continue with words of equal intensity as he continues with this verse.]], **and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified** [The fact that these Christians had been "sanctified" "by the blood of the covenant" totally confirms that they had become true, born-again Christians.], **and has insulted the Spirit of grace?** [To turn from new-covenant salvation obviously insults the "Spirit of grace" who is so directly involved with that salvation.] **(30) For we know Him who said, 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY** [cf. Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19]. **And again, 'THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE** [cf. Deut. 32:36]. **(31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God** [cf. 2 Cor. 5:11]. [[As I mentioned, the encouraging words of the verses that follow, 32-36, especially 32-34, along with most of the words of this epistle, show that the writer of Hebrews did not believe that any (at least not many) of the recipients of this epistle had crossed the line where there was no room left to repent.]] **(32) But remember the former days** [Hebrews 5:12 shows that the original recipients of this epistle had been Christians for long time.], **when, after being enlightened** [cf. Heb. 6:6], **you endured a great conflict of sufferings** [Such sufferings were common in the early church, and throughout much of the history of the Christian church.], **(33) partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations** [cf. 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Thess. 2:14], **and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated** [["Sharers" is "koinonoi" in the Greek. I'll quote a sentence from what Paul Ellingworth says regarding the meaning of "koinonoi" here in Heb. 10:33 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1993], page 539): "The word implies active support and solidarity as well as sympathy (4:15; 10:34); typically, visiting Christian prisoners to bring them food not supplied by the authorities [and he listed some references]." He mentions "Christian fellowship in sufferings." "Koinonoi" could also be translated "partners."]] **(34) For you showed sympathy to the prisoners** [cf. Heb. 13:3] **and accepted joyfully** [cf. Matt. 5:12] **the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession** [better hope (Heb. 7:15); better covenant (7:22; 8:6); better promises (8:6); better sacrifice(s) (9:23; 11:4); and better country (11:16)] **and a lasting one** [referring to eternal glory forever in heaven, centered in new Jerusalem (cf., e.g., Heb. 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Rev. 21:1, 2; 22:1-5)]. **(35) Therefore, do not throw away your confidence** [cf. 10:19], **which has a great reward** [["The great reward" is the equivalent of "what

was promised" in the next verse. They must not throw away their confidence (their confidence in God and His gospel of new-covenant salvation), but, as the next verse says, they must press on (persevere, endure) to the end in faith, which includes doing "the will of God," by continuing to believe the truth and live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, by grace through faith.]. **(36) For you have need of endurance** [cf. Matt. 24:13; Luke 21:19; Heb. 12:1; we must continue to run the race by faith until the end], **so that when you have done the will of God** [Compare Mark 3:35. See under verse 35.], **you may receive what was promised.** [[Compare Heb. 9:15. What "was promised" is to be glorified when the Lord Jesus returns and to inherit the fullness of eternal life, which includes reigning with Christ.]] **(37) FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE** [cf. Heb. 10:25; Rev. 22:20], **HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.** [Taken from the Greek (Septuagint) version of Hab. 2:3b. The Lord Jesus is coming to save and to judge.] **(38) BUT [AND (Greek "de")] MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH** [[See Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11. The "RIGHTEOUS ONE" of God is the one who becomes righteous and continues to live a righteous life by the grace of God in Christ BY FAITH. This is how the apostle Paul uses the quotation from Hab. 2:4 in Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11: That is, the one who becomes righteous by faith shall live, which follows the order of the Greek words. (The Greek has the words BY FAITH before the words SHALL LIVE. I should also mention that Paul did not include the Greek pronoun translated MY by the writer of Hebrews.)

The writer of Hebrews doesn't use BY FAITH to explain how the RIGHTEOUS ONE became righteous (like the apostle Paul did in Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11), but he would agree that we become righteous by faith. He used BY FAITH to explain why the believers SHALL LIVE: We SHALL LIVE and inherit the fullness of eternal life BY (because we have) FAITH, instead of "[shrinking] back to destruction" (see the next verse) and losing our souls to the second death, eternal death (cf. Rev. 20:14, 15). (There is widespread agreement that the words "will [or, shall] live" in the context of Hab. 2:4 prophesy of living before God instead of being removed by judgment.") "Those who have faith" (see the next verse) preserve/save their souls instead of losing them to eternal death. (The apostle Paul included the idea "shall live" in Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11: the ones who are righteous by faith "shall live.") True Christians already have spiritual, eternal life that starts with being born again, but we have to wait for the fullness of eternal life, when we will be glorified and born into the fullness of eternal life (cf., e.g., 1 Tim. 6:12, 19; Titus 3:5; and Rev. 12:5 [This verse, and other verses, speaks of our being born into the fullness of eternal life; see on Rev. 12:5 in my book "The Mid-Week Rapture" and my recently published e-book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture," which should be read first (both books are available at amazon.com).]).

On saving or losing your soul, cf., e.g., MATTHEW 16:24-27. I'll quote these verses and make a few comments: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself [Christians must live for Christ (and God the Father who sent Him) from the heart; God's will must be done by Christians; when we become Christians we sign a contract, so to speak, that includes a commitment to always live in the truth and righteousness of God, doing His will (by His grace through faith), not our will whenever our will isn't in agreement with His will.], and take up his cross [on which

we die (by God's saving grace in Christ, by faith) to the old man and to sin (cf., e.g., Rom. 6:1-7, 11; Gal. 2:20; 5:24)] and follow Me. (25) For whoever wishes to save his life [to save his life in this world, instead of living for God; to fully appreciate this verse you must know that the Greek noun ("psuche") that is translated "life" here (and later in this verse) is the noun translated "soul" twice in verse 26.] will lose it; but whoever loses his life [his life in this world] for My sake will find it. [He will find God's eternal life; he will save his soul] (26) For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits ["and lose" (KJV); "and loses" (NKJV)] his soul? [His soul will still exist, but an existence in the second death (eternal death; the lake of fire) isn't a tolerable existence. He will have missed what man was created for in the kingdom of eternal, spiritual life.] Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (27) For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and **WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS** [cf., e.g., Psalm 62:12; Prov. 24:12; Rom. 2:6; 1 Cor. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 2:23; and 22:12]." What we do shows what is in our hearts. Our works must demonstrate that our faith was/is real when we stand before God. We are saved by faith, not works, but a life of righteousness (works of righteousness) by grace through faith is required. (Now we'll finish Heb. 10:38.)); **AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK** [which is the opposite of pressing on (enduring) in faith], **MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM** [This is a way of saying that God will reject him; he will not have a place in His eternal kingdom (heaven).]. **(39) But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul** [See under verse 38. To preserve your soul is to not lose your soul to eternal death. As I mentioned, these positive words in Heb. 10:38a and 39 show that the writer of Hebrews didn't believe that the recipients of this epistle had gotten to a place where they were beyond repenting. He warned them and exhorted them to repent throughout this epistle. As I also mentioned, I believe we should always assume that backslidden Christians can repent (unless God clearly shows us otherwise) and pray for them, share with them, exhort them, warn them, etc.."]"

May the will of God be fully accomplished through this paper! May the name of God the Father, the name of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit be glorified and the people of God be edified!

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