

Looking Unto Jesus

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Hebrews 12:1-2

Henry T. Mahan Tape Library
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

Let me talk quite frankly and personally with you for a few moments. Will you just pull your chair a little closer and listen a little more carefully?

Amid all the conflict and the customs and traditions and confusion of all this religion in our day would you, would you be interested in taking a few moments today to see what God's Word says about three things, three vital, critical, important things?

Now there is a lot of religion, confusion, tradition, customs, emotions, excitement, promotions all around us. We are just literally swamped with religion, but would you like to just sit down for a little while and see what God's Word says about these three things?

Here they are. Number one, what does God's Word say about the forgiveness of sins, the putting away of sin. You are a sinner and I am a sinner. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is no difference, Jew or Gentile, male or female, bond or free, old or young, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Now how are sins forgiven and put away?

The second question. How is a man sanctified? How is a person, a sinner like you and me made holy in the sight of God, before God? It says, "Who is going to stand? Who is going to ascend unto the hill of the Lord? Who is going to stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands. How are hands cleansed? How are hearts purified? How are souls justified? How can a man be righteous with God? That's what Job said. How can he be clean that is born of a woman? How can man be just with God? That's what I want to know. What does the Bible say? How can I become holy because heaven is a holy place prepared by a holy God for a holy people wherein dwelleth righteousness. There shall in no wise enter in anything that worketh or maketh a lie. And the Bible says all men are liars. How are we going to be holy?

And the third question is: How can we approach God? How can you and I, how can we approach God? The Scripture says God is the most high potentate who dwells in a light to which no man can approach. God dwells in a light to which no man dare approach. But how are we going to approach God?

We have got to find out the answers to these questions. How is sin forgiven? How can we be made holy in his sight? A lot of people think they are holy in their sight, in the sight of others, but his sight? How can we approach God?

Now I don't ask you to believe me or any other preacher. I am but a man as you are and they are but men, too. Like Paul said in Philippians three, "I want to win Christ and be found in him. I want the answers to these three questions. I want to know him and the power of his resurrection. I want to attain unto the resurrection of the dead. I don't want to perish in a false religious profession claiming on a stack of Bibles that I am holy when I am not. Our faith must not stand in the wisdom of men or how well a man argues his point or debates his position. Our faith has got to stand in God's infallible, immutable Word. The Word of God is the foundation of faith and Christ Jesus is the sole object of faith.

Now I will tell you this before I get into these answers. This preacher and this program that has been on this station and some other stations for over 20 years, this preacher and this program, we have nothing to sell. We have nothing to promote. We are not building any schools. We are not building any denominations. We have no money to raise. We have no goals to attain, not any whatsoever. We are not promoting anything, selling anything. We don't have any gimmicks. I am interested in one thing. I am interested in knowing God and your knowing God. I am interested in preaching the truth about God and about salvation, about eternal life and I am interested in life eternal. Are you? That is my chief interest. I don't preach myself. I am preaching Christ.

Paul is our pattern, our example. When he was going to Rome and knew that he would be killed and he was preaching his last message to the elders from Antioch, from Ephesus at Antioch. And he knew they would never see his face again, never hear him preach again. And he summed up his ministry with these five statements. He said, number one, I have served the Lord among you with humility of mind, humility of mind. He said, "I am the chief of sinners. I am less than the least of all the saints. I am not worthy to be called an apostle. I am one of you. Is any weak that I am not weak?"

And then he said, secondly, "I have kept back nothing profitable unto you. Neither for gain out of covetousness, I have kept back nothing from this Word that is profitable to you. I have not kept it back out of fear, out of favor, out of covetousness. If I see it in God's Word I will preach it," he said. "And I have."

And then he said, "I am free from the blood of all men. I am free from the blood of all men. I have been true. I have kept the faith. I have finished by course. There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

He said, fourthly, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. If it is offensive I have preached it anyway. If it humbles man's pride and his dignity and shuts him up to repentance and faith in Christ I have preached it. I have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God."

And then he said, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold. I haven't asked you for anything. I haven't coveted anything you have. I have preached for the glory of God."

Now you want some answers straight from the Scriptures? You turn to Hebrews 10. Hebrews 10 and let's see if we can find the answer to these three questions, how are sins forgiven. How is a man made righteous. How does a man approach God?

In Hebrews 10 verse one, now listen. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things can never with those sacrifices offered year by year make the comers thereunto perfect."

What law is this? It is the Mosaic Law. It is the Levitical Law. It is the law of the tabernacle and the sacrifices and the priesthood and the sabbath and the sin offerings and the holy days. All of these things that were done in the Old Testament when they built the tabernacle, built the temple. And God ordained the priests to represent God to men and men to God and a Mediator. And he instituted the sabbath days and the holy days and the feast days and the mercy seat and the ark of the covenant and the atonement and all these sacrifices.

And these sacrifices were the...they were the shadow. What is a shadow? A shadow is a light shining on something and that is the thing that precedes the object, a picture of that which is to come. And these sacrifices and sin offerings and holy days were the shadow of Christ, the picture of Christ. They weren't the Christ. They were the picture of Christ and the pattern. And these sacrifices were not given to put away sin. They weren't given to make men righteous. They weren't given to bring men to God. They were given to foreshadow Christ, to point to Christ.

Now verse two says this. "If these Old Testament sacrifices could put away sin," and that is what we are talking about today, putting away sin. If they could put away sin, they would have ceased to be offered. But the person bringing the sacrifice would have no conscience of sin. In other words, when Aaron slew the lamb and roasted its body and caught its blood and put the blood on the mercy seat and came out of the holy of holies having made an atonement, if that blood could put away sin they wouldn't have to do it again and again and again and again because the person would have no conscience of sin. If sins are put away there is no need for sacrifice.

But look at verse three. But the very facts that these sacrifices were continually offered every year, every year, is proof that sin is not put away, that sin is still there, that sin has not been put there. It is still there.

Besides, look at verse four, it is not possible for the blood of an animal to put away the sins of a man because an animal doesn't have the same nature as a man, nor the same blood. Is this clear?

So when Paul starts this 10th chapter he starts it, first of all, by saying that that Old Testament system of laws and sacrifices and priesthood and holy days and tithes and all these

things that Israel did and these sacrifices and burnt offerings and sin offerings, these were the shadow of good things to come, not the image of the good things, but the shadow of them, pictures of good things to come, forgiveness and mercy.

Now look at verse...go to verse five. These were pictures of Christ.

Do you know what I am saying? It is that Christ when he came he fulfilled all these things. For example, you remember the rock that Moses smote and water came out? That rock is Christ. That is a picture of Christ how he is smitten for our sins and the refreshing water and the blood flowed from his side to give us sanctification and justification. And that Passover Lamb that they slew and put the blood on the door in Egypt, that blood didn't hold back the wrath of God. That blood was a picture of the blood that held back the wrath of God, the blood of Christ. He is the lamb. He is our Passover.

Paul said, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

He is the rock. He is the Passover. As Moses lifted up the serpent...do you think for one moment that those people who were sick and dying looking to a snake could heal them? That is worse than superstition. That is worse than witchcraft. But they looked to that serpent on a pole and that is Christ lifted up. As Moses lifted up the serpent, so must the Son of man be lifted up. And they looked...that was a picture type. The law is a shadow of good things to come.

And the high priest...these men were but men. And they died. They brought an animals blood. And they went into the holy place and they put blood on the mercy seat and came out and the wrath of God was sustained. Do you think that those, those men who were sinners themselves bringing the blood of an animal on a certain day would hold back the wrath and judgment of God from a sinner? Oh, no more than baptism saves us. You put a man in water, it won't wash his sins away. No more than coming to the Lord's table. The Lord's table is not a sacrament. It is not a saving ordinance. Eating the bread and the wine won't save anybody or put away anybody's sin. Baptism won't put away sin. Joining the church, any of these things now that we do that are pictures and memorials to Christ.

He said, "When you eat this bread and drink this wine you show my death till I come."

When a person is baptized he is not baptized for salvation. He is identifying himself with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Pictures.

So look at verse five now.

Now all of that is back there in the Old Testament. The sabbath, the holy days, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the temple, all these things are but pictures, shadows, no substance, just pictures.

Now wherefore, verse five, when he cometh into the world, when Christ came into the world the angels said, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Christ the Lord."

When he came into the world he said to the Father, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me."

What is he saying? Listen. Sacrifice and offering that wouldst not. He is saying the same thing that I have been saying. Those sacrifices would not put away sin. Those offerings would not put away sin. Those sin offerings and burnt offerings would not put away sin. He is saying to the Father, "These sacrifices of animals and offering of blood never satisfied the Father, never satisfied the Father."

In verse six he said, "In burnt offerings and sabbath days and sacrifice for sin thou hast had no pleasure. These sacrifices never gave God satisfaction or pleasure."

But I will tell you who did. When he looked down and saw the Lord Jesus standing in the River Jordan fulfilling all righteousness he said, "Now, this is my Son in whom I am well pleased."

Back yonder when those people were keeping a sabbath Saturday, the sabbath day as a picture of Christ our rest. Back there when the high priest was bringing the blood offering as a picture of Christ our sin offering. Back there when the priest went into the holy of holies with the blood and put it on the mercy seat, that is Christ our mercy seat. He is the priest. He is the mercy seat. He is the sacrifice. He is the sin offering and he performs his service not in tabernacles made with hands, but in heaven itself.

He said, "Father, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast prepared me."

Behold the Lord himself shall give you a sign. A virgin shall be with son, be with a child and bear a son and call his name Immanuel, God with us. God with us. Unto us a child is born. Unto a son is given and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God...

A body thou hast prepared me.

Now then we have a perfect lamb. We have a suitable lamb. We have a representative lamb. We have a man, not an animal, a man, not a defiled animal, but a spotless man, a representative. We have one with whom God is pleased. We have one God sent, one God anointed, a body thou hast prepared me.

You see, when he was born of the virgin the angel said to Joseph, "Now don't be afraid to take Mary to be your wife because that holy thing that is formed in her is the Son of God." She has never known a man. The Holy Ghost came upon her. The power of God. God prepared that body, supernatural body. The God man.

And then verse seven. Look. He said, “Lo, I come. I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me.”

What is he talking about? What book? In the volume of what book is it written of him? The Old Testament from Genesis the seed of woman. God will provide the lamb, Abel’s lamb, Isaac’s lamb, Exodus the Passover lamb. All the way through the Old Testament, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, the mercy seat, the blood atonement, Deuteronomy, the cities of refuge, all the way through the Old Testament it is written of him. It is written of him. To him give all the prophets witness.

The Old Testament said, “Someone is coming.”

These priests are not his priests. These priests are pictures of his priests. These lambs are not his lambs. These lambs are pictures of his lamb. It is written of me.

I will tell you where else in the volume of the book it is written of him. You read in Revelation chapter five of him that sat upon the throne and in his hand was a book written within and without which no man could open.

“And I wept,” John said, “Because there was not found in heaven or earth or under the earth a man fit, worthy to open that book.”

And one of the elders said, “Weep not. The Lamb is worthy.”

And he said, “I looked and in the midst of the throne stood one as a lamb slain. And he came and took the book out of the hand of him that sat on the throne and he opened it.”

In the volume of the book it is written of me.

Now look at verse nine. Lo I come, oh God, oh Father, to do thy will. My will is to do the will of him that sent me. Not my will, but thy will be done.

And then watch this. Verse nine. He said, “Lo, a body thou hast prepared me. And I come, oh God, to do thy will.”

He taketh away the first and establisheth the second. What is the first? Well, it is the first covenant revealed. It is the Old Testament priesthood. It is the Old Testament tabernacle, the Old Testament sacrifices, the Old Testament temples, the Old Testament holy days, the Old Testament sabbaths and tithes and all these things that were required of Israel to do until Christ came who would do it perfectly.

He taketh away the first. That is all gone. Why is it gone? Christ fulfilled it. When you have the person you don’t need a picture. If I show a picture of my wife to someone that means she is not here because if she was here they would say, “What does your wife look like?”

“There she is.”

I don't show them a picture when she is here. And you don't show a picture of Christ if he is here. You don't need a sacrifice. You don't need a priest. You don't need these things. He is...Lo I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, oh God. And when he came he takes away the first.

Don't go back there and dig up a sabbath day and dig up a sacrifice, dig up a sacrament, dig up a priesthood and dress the fellow up and give him a cross and let him go around making silly signs and people kissing his rings and bowing before him. Don't do that. You are a priest. He has made us kings and priests unto God. I have a high priest. He is in heaven. I don't need anybody here on the earth to confess my sins to or to go to for forgiveness. I go to Christ.

He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. The second is a full revelation of God's will in Christ.

He said, “I come to do thy will.”

How is sin forgiven? Listen to it. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Lo I come, oh God, to do thy will. And when he said that he took away all of those types and shadows and established himself. And he said, “Now, by the which will, the will of God, we are sanctified, made holy, forgiven, justified, accepted, made righteous, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

How is sin put away? By the sacrifice of Christ.

How are sins forgiven? By the death of the Son of God.

How are sins cleansed? By the blood of Christ?

How is a man made holy and righteous? In Christ because he is our holiness. He is our righteousness. He is our sanctification. We are sanctified by his blood.

And how do we approach God? By Christ.

Oh, this is so clear, so clear. Look at verse 11. Back there in the Old Testament he said, “All those priests. They stand daily and thy offer the same sacrifices and the same offerings which can never take away sin. But this man, this God man, this man for whom God prepared a body, this man after he had offered...listen...one sacrifice for sin forever, forever...”

We are sanctified by the blood of Christ once for all, forever. He sat down at the right hand of God.

Do you see those old Testament priests were but men, only men, nothing but men. This is God man. God was in Christ.

Those Old Testament men lived and they died and somebody took their place. He ever lives. He is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. He is...he was, he is and he always will be.

You see, those men ministered here on the earth. He ministers in the presence of God. Those men offered many sacrifices, oh thousands of them. He offered one, one. Those men offered animal blood. He gave his perfect blood. We are redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ. Those men, their sacrifices could never put away sin. I could sprinkle water on you and burn candles and go through all the hocus pocus how you want to and it won't put away sin. Sin is put away by the sacrifice of himself.

And those men stood. Every priest stands daily offering the same sacrifices. This says he sat down having finished his work.

Watch verse 14. By one offering...How is sin put away? How is it forgiven? How are we made holy? How does man come to God? By one offering. He perfected forever them that are sanctified. By one offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified.

And this is the covenant God says in verse 16 that I will make with them, with those believers, those men in Christ in that day, in the days of the Messiah. I will put my law in their hearts.

God doesn't give us a law on a table of stone. He writes it on our hearts so we love it. We love his law. He said, "I will write my law on their minds."

They don't have to go around reading it. They think on it. They think on it and they love it.

And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more, no more. They are put away. Our sins are cast into the depths of the sea, behind the back of God wherever that is, separated from us as far as the East is from the West because he paid for them. He bore them in his body on the tree and he paid for them and he put them away. And their sins will I remember no more.

Oh, I remember every sin. You do, too. Thank God he doesn't. That is the power of the blood of Christ. He puts away our sins. And we are forgiven if he is.

Verse 18. There is more sacrifice, no more sacrifice, no more work to be done, no more duties to be performed. It is done. The great transaction is done. I am my Lord's and he is mine.

So verse 19. Therefore having boldness, brethren, to enter the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance.

How are sins put away? How is a man made holy? How do we approach God? By the blood of Christ.