

How the Holy Trinity Draws You Near

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[0 : 00] Let me remind you at Calvary, Redeeming, Grace, we're going through the book of Hebrews. And this is the section that Paul has referred to as the deeper things. So beginning in chapter 7 through 8 and 9, he's now been building this wonderful argument about how the sacrifice of Christ is greater than everything else.

And that's what we've been hearing every Sunday. And I just want you to know the verses we're about to read, you're going to hear these themes repeating themselves, but he's being repetitive because it's like a lawyer bringing his verdict, his closing argument now to us.

Verses 1 through 18. For since the law was but a shadow of the good things to come, instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered once the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, When he said the above, You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings.

[1 : 48] These are offered according to the law. Then he added, Behold, I have come to do your will. He does away with the first in order to establish the second.

And by that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sin, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

For by a single offering. Don't miss this part. He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness for us. For after saying, This is the covenant that I will make with them.

[3 : 02] After those days, declares the Lord. I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds. Then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. This is the word of God. Thanks be to God.

I want to ask you, how do you know your faith is real? How do you know your faith is real?

One of the many ways we know our faith is real is because the gospel of Jesus Christ alone has the power to change a life. Earlier this week I heard the witness of a man who had been an addict to drug and alcohol and he shared about the power of Jesus to transform him.

His name is Patrick McDonald and he graduated for the first time from an alcohol and drug rehab Christian gospel focused ministry in 2012, 10 years ago.

[4 : 17] But then he relapsed hard. So he enrolled again. The focus of the ministry was preaching the gospel. So they would gather and he talks about on a Monday morning, 8 o'clock, here he is again.

And he starts hearing the gospel shared with him one more time. He saw in God's word and he heard it preached. There's nothing you can do to save yourself.

Christ did it all for you. And he reflects back and he thinks and he says, I was sitting there and I would be like, that's a powerful point from the word. And then the next thought is, man, I really want to get high.

And he just kept going back and forth, you know, week after week. That seems true. I really need to know that. But man, I want to go out and get high again. And that was his struggle.

The good that the spirit puts in the Christian will always be in battle against the remaining flesh.

[5 : 18] Second London Confession says it's a continual and irreconcilable war between the desires of the flesh, waging against the desires of the spirit.

That's what Paul reflects on in Romans 7. Well, Patrick, by week three, he said, man, I wrote it down word for word.

Man, there's nothing I can do to earn my salvation. That's what kept sinking into him. Jesus had to do it all for me. Sitting in that Bible study, he said, it hit me.

Man, I don't want to get high anymore. And there's nothing that I did to stop desiring that. Jesus did it all.

It's the same gospel. This is the gospel that you're talking about here. That's happening to me right now, he said. And this is 10 years later still giving this testimony of the power of the gospel to change a life.

[6 : 19] So how do you know your faith is real? I believe that's what the apostle is getting at in verses 1 through 18. By pulling all these arguments together, he wants you to know if this is true for you.

Everything he's been saying up to this point. And here's what I want to try to prove to you from these verses. That if your faith is real, it's because our triune God lovingly draws you near.

That's our sermon title. How the Holy Trinity draws you near. I want you to see the outline here. I think he set it up beginning with the father, verses 1 through 4. Then the son, 5 through 14.

And then the Holy Spirit, verses 15 through 18. Let's start with the father. What does the father desire? Verses 1 through 4. Look at verse 1.

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come, instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

[7 : 27] So what this means is that the law could not perfect those who draw near. Do you see that in verse 1?

But I think the apostle wants you to go one step beyond what the law could not do. And let me show you why I think that is. Let your eyes go down for a moment down to verse 5.

When Christ comes to reveal the father, look what he says. Sacrifices and offerings. What are the next words? You have not desired. So the apostle is trying to make the connection here.

I'm showing you how the law was limited in that provisional service. Because you need to see what it was that God desired all along. So that's what I want to do with these first four verses. So verse 1.

Make sure you see it at the very end of verse 1 again. The law could not perfect those who draw near. What's the implication about what God desires? The father desires that you draw near.

[8 : 29] Do you see that? Do you believe that? The father desires that you draw near. Look at verse 2. Otherwise, they would not have ceased to be offered since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins.

What he said is that the law could not cleanse the worshipers, could not wipe away their consciousness of their own sin. That's what he says in verse 2.

What's the implication about the heart of the father for you behind that? The father desires to cleanse your conscience of sin. Is that how you think of God the father?

That's what he desires for you. Look at verse 3. He says, But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

What he means in verse 3 then is that this sacrificial system was put there to remind worshipers of their sins every year, and especially on the Day of Atonement.

[9 : 43] That would be the yearly reminder. Yom Kippur. What's the implication about the heart of the father? It's that the father desires that you remember your sins no more.

That your conscience be wiped clean. That's what the Day of Atonement could never do. It only reminded you of your sin. I feel like I could just stop right now and sit down.

Let's just go think about these first three verses for half an hour. Verse 4. The law is limited, for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

What that means is that the law could not take away sins. The desire of the father behind that is this. The father wants to take away your sin.

But we also know from God's word, Hosea chapter 1 verse 13, the father's eyes are so pure that he will not look at evil, and he cannot gaze at wrong.

[10:54] So this is the father's desire. It's what Christ came to reveal. But that's how holy God is. He cannot look at your sin.

That's the father. First four verses. Let me try to summarize it this way. The apostle is saying that the father desires that his worshipers draw near to him in perfection.

That's what the father has desired all along. And the law, the ceremonial law, it was a gracious providence for that time. And it prepared the way for the full revelation of the son.

Hebrews 7, 28, he reinforces this word, perfect. Okay, look again at the end of verse 1. Do you see, does your translation say, make perfect those who draw near?

The word perfect, it's a loaded word. If we don't understand correctly what all is meant by this, we're going to end up with some really wrong applications, most likely. But it's an important word. It's used 13 times in the book of Hebrews, more than anywhere else in the New Testament.

[12:04] So, Hebrews 7, 28, for example, the apostle has already made this argument that the law made nothing perfect. And don't think it was just this one apostle using this favorite word.

No, our Lord Jesus Christ said these same words in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 48. You, therefore, must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

And in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus takes it up to a whole other level because he says, don't look, just look on the outside. Look at your own heart and your thoughts and the lust of your eyes because I'm talking about perfection in your love.

That's what the Sermon on the Mount was all about, Sermon on the Mount. Who has perfect love that they can bring to the Father because that's what he desires. I want to illustrate this in this way because it's so important that we imagine our Father biblically.

And the king sends out a call that each one would come to him and that you would present the right gift. Well, this little girl ran into the meadow. She wanted to bring a bouquet of flowers.

[13:15] And she saw these tiny little, you know, petals out there. And I'm trying to modify an old illustration, but she did her best, gathered, you know, these weeds, gathered these thorns, poison ivy, put it together in a bouquet.

And she comes walking into the throne room of the king and she sees, even as she approaches in the hall, there are these beautiful bouquets like these on these tables. And she looks down at hers. And by now the poison ivy has started to work on her hands. She's getting so itchy and it's burning and turning red and the thorns are scratching her. Well, she steps into the throne room. And she sees the king and his prince, his son right next to him.

She, just with one glance, she can know that that prince is the most handsome man she's ever seen. He's got some war scars, commander of the army. And just the shock of the, what this king is worthy, the beauty of which he is worthy, and the fact that it was working on her, the thorns and the poison.

She immediately put her eyes down and just could bear it no longer and dropped her little field flower bouquet. You see, that's what the law does.

[14:23] As God calls you to him, it burns on you. And you behold how much more worthy he is of anything you could round up for yourself. I want you to reflect on your life.

If you've been trying to live a moral life so that you can earn God's favor, this is what Paul calls in Romans 3, the law of works. You cannot be made perfect.

Verse 1. You cannot be cleansed by your works. You will always be tortured by a consciousness of your sins. Verse 2. You can do nothing good enough to merit everlasting life.

And I'll picture it. If you're that little girl looking down at the floor, when you lift your eyes back up to see the Father, how do you imagine him? Because 2 Peter 3, 9 tells us that the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, but he is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

That's the Father's heart for you. He wants you to draw near, and he's given you the law to help you repent rightly before him. Repent from trying to live under the law of works.

[15:41] And when you are low before the Holy God, remember that the Father desires that you be made perfect before him. The Father desires to cleanse you from the consciousness of sins, and the Father desires that you worship him in perfection.

Like we said in our catechism, the Father watches over you in such a way that not a hair can fall from your head without the will of your Father in heaven. And he watches over you in such a way to make all things work together for your salvation.

That's the heart of the Father for you. How will God do this? How will he accomplish his purpose? Isaiah 46.10 says, God the Father has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, things not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose. So before we look at how he does this in the Son, remember about the Father, if your faith is real, it is because our triune God lovingly draws you near.

So let's look at the Son next in verses 5 through 14. Verse 5 says, Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me.

[17:13] Verse 5 says, that the Son came into the world in the body that the Father prepared for him. This is important because Jesus took on flesh as a representative man, as a public covenant head.

Paul calls him the second, the final Adam. Look at verse 6 next. In burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

So in his incarnate body, having been given the body prepared for him by his Father, in the Hebrew, he's quoting Psalm 40 by David, it actually says he prepared a year.

In other words, when God sent his Son, his Son took on flesh, God also gave him the capacity as the God-man to understand and to hear the will of the Father.

what truly pleases him. Verse 6, he understood what pleased the Father as a child so that your obedience and your disobedience as a child would be imputed.

[18:14] And he understood as a teenager, as a young adult, as a man. And it's not symbolic, the typological sacrifices.

In other words, what the Lord was pleased by was represented in these symbols and these types, these shadows, these animal offerings. But that was their full purpose, just to prepare the way to typify a much greater offering, one that was needed.

The reason it didn't satisfy God, it's not that he's contradicting himself because he's the one who commanded and ordained that. It's really to say that those could never fully satisfy the righteousness required by a holy God.

Well, we read verses 5 and 6, and so the son knew that the punishment for eternal offenses must be fitting and proportional. And if man has sinned against an eternal God, what we deserve is eternal death.

That's what the son understood and grasped, and this was his mission now to perform as the representative, the second Adam. Now look at verse 7. Then I said, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.

[19:33] So Jesus, as a man, he had to study the scriptures, he had to know the Bible, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, he saw what would be required of him, and he understood it more and more according to his human nature.

In Hebrews 7, he's paved the way for this. Hebrews 7 says, The word of the oath, 728, The word of the oath appoints a son who has been made perfect forever.

And the work that would be required of Christ is what Hebrews 13, 20 calls the blood of the eternal covenant. So, look at the end of verse 7.

What was written in the scroll of the book? Our Lord Jesus had to go back and search out what it is that was the will of the Lord, what he would fulfill.

And he entered this knowingly. So, according to his divine nature, he knew exactly the mission he would have to accomplish by taking on the flesh. And he had to study the scriptures and learn it according to his human nature, what he would do.

[20:37] So, I want to take you next. Please turn to Isaiah 49. While you're turning there, I want to explain why I'm taking you to Isaiah 49. We just saw in verse 7, Jesus fulfilled what was written of him in the scroll of the book.

Well, the scroll of Isaiah is so significant for all the prophecies that the Messiah must accomplish. And the second reason is because he says, I have come to do your will.

In Psalm 40, Jesus is making it his words. So, it's now the son in dialogue with the father. That's what we just saw here, verses 5, 6, and 7. The son having this dialogue to fulfill the will of the father

according to what is written.

So, in Isaiah 49, you're going to see those two things. You're going to see prophecies in the book of Isaiah, what's written according to the book of the scroll, and you're going to see a dialogue between father and son. Alright, Isaiah 49.

Let's start at verse 1. Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. So, notice right away that the audience is not just Israel.

[21 : 45] He's speaking to the nations. You can picture like the Syrophoenicians up on the coast that are not desert people. They're in ships sailing back and forth. The Lord called me from the womb.

From the body of my mother he named me, my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword. In the shadow of his hand he hid me. He made me a polished arrow.

In his quiver he hid me away. Who is the speaker? This is the son, Jesus Christ. He's speaking. Doesn't that remind you of the book of Revelation?

It's like a suffering lamb. He's hidden away under the shadow like an arrow in the quiver but his mouth, out of his mouth his words, it's a sharp sword. Look at verse 3.

And he said to me, you are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified. So, notice the speaker changed. That's the father now speaking to the son. You are my servant.

[22 : 43] Verse 4. But I said, I have labored in vain. I have spit my strength for nothing and vanity. You hear the cry on the cross. Why have you forsaken me? You hear the anguish in Gethsemane.

Yet you see the faith, how the spirit sustained him. Yet surely my right hand is with the Lord and my recompense with my God. This is the son trusting by faith in the father on the cross.

And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him and that Israel might be gathered to him. So, Jesus came to save first Israel, restoring all 12 tribes, then the nations, then the Gentiles.

For I am honored in the eyes of the Lord and my God has become my strength. He was resurrected and he trusted in the Lord, fulfilled that mission. Now, verse 6.

This is the father speaking again. See, the speaker changes. It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel.

[23 : 53] See, the father says, I see the sacrifice. I see the work you did on the cross and it's too light a thing. The reward of just those 12 tribes is not enough for the great sacrifice you brought.

Look what the father promises. I will make you as a light for the nations that my salvation may reach the end of the earth.

What a glorious promise from the father to the son. This is what across church history, men like Theodore Beza, Vitsius, Flavel, Owen Edwards, and in modern times even men like Lloyd-Jones and so many more today, they've called it the pactum salutis, the agreement or the covenant to save, to bring life to sinners made between father and son witnessed by the spirit.

It's the covenant of redemption spoken among the triune God outside of time in which the father promises a bride to the son, the nations, upon the condition of perfect obedience.

The son willfully accepts the mission, ratifies the father's promise, and receives his reward, which is all those he ransomed. And how are they brought to him?

[25 : 13] And how are they prepared for eternity with him? It's by the work of the Holy Spirit. So because of what was written in the scroll of the book that we just read, Hebrews 2.10 said, it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

So the perfection that the father desires and requires was accomplished by Christ, including what he did on the cross. Well, in Hebrews 10, let's look next at verse 9.

What all did the work of Christ in obedience to the father accomplish? In verse 9, we read, then he added, behold, I have come to do your will. And by doing this, he does away with the first in order to establish the second.

So verse 9 says that the son did away with the first covenant under Moses. The law as a covenant of works in order to establish the second, what he calls here the new covenant over which Jesus now is not in the servant to the father.

He now is the Lord of the new covenant, the Lord of the covenant with his church. See, now anyone in the new covenant with Christ as your Lord, you are not under the covenant of works.

[26 : 46] You are not working under this principle of earning anything for yourself. In Galatians 6, 2, Paul calls this now the law of Christ. All the blessings of the new covenant have been fully merited, earned, accomplished, obtained by Christ, and they're freely dispensed to all who are in the new covenant with him by faith.

Let's look at verse 10. And by that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Verse 10, we read that notice the tense, the verb tense, have been sanctified once for all according to the will of God.

So he's using that word sanctified now in the past tense. You've been justified. The perfection that Christ obtained has been made yours, fully yours. Look at verses, I'm going to read 11 through 13. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

[28 : 19] The son finished his work and is seated at the right hand of God, waiting until his enemies will be made a footstool at his feet. Jesus fully conquered his enemies, sin, the flesh dwelling in you, and the devil.

And all three he has fully and finally crushed. However, he's allowed those three to remain now in an already not yet state. Well, I'm sorry, your sin before God, you know, against you alone have I sinned.

You've been declared righteous now immediately. You have been sanctified. But then the other two, the flesh and the devil, those are the conditions from which the spirit saves you. And they will remain the conditions always being worked out until every one of those Christ ransomed is brought into his kingdom.

But the flesh within you, you will have to battle until your dying breath. And Satan will continue under God's providence to cause destruction and damage and brokenness in this world because those are the conditions out of which the Holy Spirit saves sinners.

So in our illustration, this redemption accomplished by Christ, look at verse 14, by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

[29 : 34] Picture that girl and the prince, the commander of the army. He says, meet me in that meadow tomorrow morning. And he shows up and he's no longer dressed like a priest that next morning.

He's dressed like a simple gardener. and he has brought all these exotic flowers that he conquered from the distant land. And he had planted them the night before so that when she shows up, this meadow is transformed all these beautiful, colorful flowers.

And now she gets to go and pick the flowers that will become the bouquet she will present to his father. When you see the work of Christ as your substitute, you will submit to God.

Like James 4 says, draw near to God and he will draw near to you. The word draw near or to approach, it's not used anywhere in the New Testament except for one time in James but then seven times in Hebrews and six times in Luke and Acts combined.

Well, if it's true that Paul preached these sermons and Luke transcribed them, well, there's Luke using this word to approach or to draw near. And I want to read to you an example of how Luke uses this word in Luke 15 1.

[30 : 43] He says, who was it that was drawing near to Jesus as he ministered? It was tax collectors and sinners. That's who Christ wants to draw near. Our catechism said that our faithful Savior Jesus Christ perfectly obeyed the Father and fully paid for all your sins with his precious blood.

Jesus lived and died so that you can draw near to him. So if your faith, believer, if it's real, it's because the triune God lovingly draws you near.

What about the Holy Spirit? Look at verses 15 through 18. In verse 15 we read, and the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us.

The Holy Spirit, we're told, bears witness to us of the new covenant. See, the riches of heaven purchased for you by Christ can only become yours through the ministry of the Holy Spirit as he applies them to you, as he bears witness.

To bear witness means to convince you of the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the gospel. How does the Spirit do this? How does the Spirit bear witness?

[32 : 02] 2 Peter 1 3 we told that his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. How? Through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.

That's how the Holy Spirit bears witness. He causes you to know the excellence of the Son. Let's see an example in Acts. Turn to Acts 16. Acts 16 verse 14.

So again, Luke writing here, traveling around with Timothy and Paul. the church that God will plant in Philippi. In Acts 16 verse 14 we read, the Lord opened Lydia's heart to pay attention to what Paul was saying.

So how does the Holy Spirit work? How does the Holy Spirit bear witness and cause sinners to believe? Different translations have put it this way, the Lord opened her mind, her spirit, her soul, her inner being to respond to what she heard, to give heed to the sermon that was preached, enabled her to embrace this truth, and made her willing to believe the gospel that Jesus had preached to her through Paul as he ministered God's word.

And who does the Spirit bear witness to? Who does the Spirit breathe this life, this saving knowledge into? Ephesians 1 4 says, it's to every one of those he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.

[33 : 42] Turn back to Hebrews 10, look next at verse 15 and 16 together. So the Holy Spirit bears witness to us, for after saying, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and write them on their minds.

He's quoting again Jeremiah chapter 31 here. The Holy Spirit inspired and breathed out this prophecy in Jeremiah 31, and it's now the Holy Spirit inspiring the writer of Hebrews to record these words, pulling these concepts together, pulling all these promises and pointing them back to the work of Christ.

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord. The work of the Christ, the work of the new covenant, it includes the Holy Spirit applying it and putting it inside you. Notice it's the Holy Spirit who puts the law in their mind and who writes it, puts it in their hearts and writes it on their minds. The Holy Spirit put God's laws on their heart.

So it's the Holy Spirit who by grace makes Christ's new covenant real, effectual, and life-changing for you. And how does the Holy Spirit change you then? If he's putting his law in your heart and your mind, how is he changing you by doing that?

[35 : 06] Philippians 2.13 said, It is God by the Holy Spirit who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure, and it's the same power working in you that raised Jesus Christ from the grave.

So it's his work and through his word. It's the work and the word together. John Owen highlights how important that is. The ministry of the word alone, according to Owen, without the work of the Spirit cannot convert sinners.

So how we minister, how we share the gospel, this is very important. The sinner's will, so we hear about discussion, debate about free will, the sinner's will does have the power to refuse God's grace, according to John Owen, and I think according to Philippians 2.

It's a powerful will. What the will does not have power to do is to desire the righteousness, the love of God in the heart. That has to be a gift from God.

Owen says, Human persuasion is useless to change fallen nature any more than the most effectual arguments can prevail to make a blind man see, or a lame man walk, or a dead man rise from the grave.

[36 : 17] Look at verse 17. Then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more. In verse 18, where there is forgiveness of sins, forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

God has erased the sin of the believer judicially before the eyes of a holy God already. Internally, the Spirit is working in you and will no longer condemn you because you have been declared righteous.

The Spirit also promises to clean you up. Sinclair Ferguson illustrated it so helpfully to me that the Holy Spirit and a believer is making each little area ready and showing you what you need to bring over to the Lord once more now and surrender.

And he's preparing your inner being and saying to the Father, look, this is a soul in which we can dwell. And to the Son, look, look what you purchased, look how clean this life is becoming. Always a work in progress. But that's what the Spirit is doing. You see how wonderful and important the work of the Holy Spirit is in making the accomplishments of Christ real for you?

[37 : 30] Can we summarize the mighty work of the Holy Spirit? I'm going to let Herman Bavinck, a Dutch theologian, do it for us. He says, The Holy Spirit testifies of Christ, regenerates the spiritually dead heart, gives you the gift of faith, seals your adoption into the family of God, renews you, sanctifies you, brings you into the fellowship and communion of the Holy God, and prepares your soul for heaven.

And all this the Holy Spirit can work out and bring into being because together with the Father and the Son, He is the one true God who rules and reigns eternally.

Praise be to God. Our catechism confessed this as well. The Holy Spirit assures you of eternal life and makes you wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

If you are seeing some of the fruit of the Spirit in increasing measure, it's because the Spirit is showing you the love of the triune God. And back to our illustration for one last time.

The Holy Spirit is walking you around that meadow and showing you, look how beautiful this flower is that the Son put here for you. And see how prickly and thorny these weeds are.

[38 : 53] He's showing you so patiently that He's helping you to arrange the bouquet and present it back to the Father in a way that will be beautiful. And He'll bring you all the way back into that throne room.

And guess who's going to be on your side? It's the Prince, the commander of the Lord's army. And you present that little bouquet that He gave you 100% as a gift and helped you to present now to the Father.

The Father smiles at you and He smiles at His Son who's just beaming with delight. You're His child. So if your faith is real, it's because your triune God lovingly draws you near.

Do you see the love of God the Father for you? He loves for you to draw near to Him. See the grace of Christ who came near to you while you were still a sinner.

You were a slave to sin and He obeyed His Father perfectly for you and gave His life, His precious blood, sacrificially for you. Do you see His love?

[40 : 01] And see the sweet fellowship you enjoy with this triune God through the Holy Spirit. He secures you and prepares you for heaven. He is drawing you nearer and nearer to your Father every day.

Trust this promise. Look at verse 14 one last time. Jesus Christ has perfected for all time.

Who? Is this you? Those who are being sanctified because His Spirit is drawing you nearer and nearer to the loving God. Our triune God gets all the glory for our salvation, doesn't He?

From start to finish. This is His eternal, immutable counsel and His promise to you that if you are being sanctified, it's because He loves you so much and He will to your very last breath.

That's why we can obey like Hebrews 4.16 commands. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find help in time of need.

[41 : 10] Let's pray. From Ephesians chapter one. Father, thank you for blessing us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

In Christ, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of your grace as it has been the plan for you to fulfill in the fullness of time to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth because in love you predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of your will, to the praise of your glorious grace. You chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before you. Help us now to live in such a way by the power of your Holy Spirit in us and with us as a body, we ask.

Amen. Amen.