

Saving to the Uttermost

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] Again to Hebrews chapter 7 and reading at verse 25, Hebrews chapter 7 and at verse 25, it tells us there, Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Now, as we know in the Old Testament, the priesthood was at the very center of life. And the high priest, of course, was possibly the kind of person that was an element of awe about him.

You may say to yourself, well, why would that be the case? Well, the high priest, as we remember, was somebody, and he was the only person who was allowed to do this.

Once a year, on the great day of atonement, the high priest would enter into the most holy place, or the holy of holies, with the blood. The place where God's presence was, where God, the very heart of where God was.

And on that particular day, as he entered in there, there would be a great hush over the whole congregation gathered outside, waiting to see if God was going to accept the blood.

[1 : 32] Because if God did not accept, then we know that the high priest would be consumed. God's wrath would fall upon him. But we also know that the high priest would come back out, and there would be this sense, I'm sure, of relief.

But the high priest would be accepted because he was coming, and the God-appointed, the God-ordained way. Now, of course, what happened there was very symbolic.

It was all teaching what Jesus was eventually to do. All the Old Testament was, in a sense, a kind of picture of the life of Jesus and the work of Jesus.

And when we go through, particularly if you're to go through in Exodus and in Leviticus and see the way that God has set out the whole sacrificial system and all the different ways that the whole way of the tabernacle and eventually the temple, all these things were speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, of course, we know that Jesus himself, as the great high priest, he was the one who offered the sacrifice, but he himself became the sacrifice.

[2 : 56] And just like in the Old Testament, we find that there was a public aspect of the sacrifice where the sacrifice was offered publicly before everybody.

But the high priest would take the blood in to the most holy place, and he would present, as he sprinkled this blood on the mercy seat, that this was a private transaction that was taking place.

Nobody could see it. Only the high priest and God. And in a sense, that's what took place on Calvary, because there was a very public putting to death of Jesus.

He was the sacrifice for sin. But what couldn't be seen was God's dealing with the Son. As God was dealing with Jesus and Jesus was on the cross, Jesus was presenting his blood before the Father in the most holy place.

So all of this is speaking to us. It's all so pictorial. Now, again, when we read through this particular chapter, and as we come to the end of the chapter, we see that there was a big difference between the work of Jesus and the work of all the other high priests, because there were two areas where Christ's priesthood was shown to be superior to that of the Levitical priesthood.

[4 : 26] And, of course, this is part of what Hebrews deals with, is showing the superiority of Christ in all the different areas. Every priest from Aaron downwards, although they were set aside for this great work, not one of them was a perfect man.

They were sinners. In fact, we read there that the high priest, the priest, had to offer up sacrifice for himself before he could sacrifice for others.

That's what we read. Verse 27, he has no need, this is talking of Jesus, like those high priests to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people.

So this is one of the huge differences between Jesus and between the other high priests. The other high priests, before they could offer a sacrifice for the people, had to first offer a sacrifice for themselves, because they were sinners.

Jesus, on the other hand, he was perfect. He was spotless. There was no blemish. He was absolutely perfect.

[5 : 44] And we've got to remember that that has always been the case, and that all the people down throughout the generations who have worked for the Lord and served the Lord, and that doesn't just include prophets, priests, and kings, and disciples, and apostles, and ministers, and elders, and deacons, right down to this very present day.

It involves every single believer, because every believer is serving the Lord. If you tonight, you're a believer, you are serving the Lord. The Lord is a different work for each person, because he gives everybody different abilities, different capacities.

But remember this, that one day, the Lord is going to ask us, what have you done for me? The Lord is taking note of everything.

There are things we're not aware of that we're doing for him. We're doing by faith. And these will be brought before us on that great day. We have that set out very clearly for us in Matthew.

You remember how they're going to say, Lord, when did we do this, and when did we do that, and when did we do the next thing? Don't remember doing these things. And Jesus will say, as much as he did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it unto me.

[7 : 00] That day will be full of surprises. Good ones, and maybe not so good ones. Because we've got to remember, at the end of the day, we were saved to serve.

That's one of the things the Christian must always remember. That no longer do we live entirely to ourselves. That's one of the great separating differences between a Christian and a non-Christian. In the sense that a Christian, once a person becomes a believer, their life is lived to the Lord. You're no longer your own. You've been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

That's what the Bible tells us. And so it's imperative that our focus is upon the Lord and upon service. And if we shrink away from it and we say, well, I don't want to get too involved, we are neglecting our duties.

We're neglecting doing what the Lord has asked us to do. So what we're saying is that the world is full of serving men and women and young people, teenagers and children who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

[8 : 06] But the fact is, every single one of them is a sinner. Even the most saintliest person you've ever met. And I'm sure we have all met Christians who are, they are that, there's something about them, there's a special mark about them.

There's a saintliness of character that seems to almost separate them from other Christians. Even they are sinners through and through. Yes, they're sinners, but they've been saved by grace, but they're still sinners.

And that's how it was in the priesthood. However mighty, however great, however wonderful they were, they were still sinners and they needed to offer sacrifice for themselves.

But the other great distinction between Christ's priesthood and all the other priests was that Christ was a priest forever. You see, all the other priests died and that was the end of their particular work. They were a priest in their, they exercised the priesthood in their day, then they died and other priests were appointed. But it's different with Jesus because he continues a priest forever.

[9 : 19] But he, we're told that in verse 24, but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. Do you tonight have this great high priest as your Lord?

Has he made sacrifice for your sins? Has he stood in your place? Has God accepted Christ's work for you? That's a question you've got to ask yourself.

Has God accepted Christ's work for you? Now, of course, God will always accept Christ's work. But what about you? Have you asked the Lord?

Have you gone to him? Have you said to him, Lord, please, please, cover my sin. Take my place. Please, I want you tonight to take away all my sin.

I can't do it myself. Have you gone to him? Have you asked him to do this? That is the reason Jesus came into this world. He came to save us from our sins.

[10 : 29] That's what we were told. Remember when the announcement came that Jesus was to be born and he was told his name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.

That's what Jesus is about. Saving us from our sins. And it's very important to understand that because a lot of people think that Jesus simply came to set a new way of life that we are to try and imitate and follow.

That he came as the example, a self-sacrificial lifestyle that we are to try and emulate, that we are trying to try to pattern ourselves upon. So we say to be a Christian it means let's go and look at the life of Jesus.

Let's follow that life as closely and mirror that life as perfectly as we can. Well, in and of ourselves we can't do that because we do not have the capacity, we do not have the consistency of inclination to do that.

It is impossible for us because of our sin. Now, yet, don't get me wrong here, the example of Jesus is vital and it's important.

[11 : 46] we are to follow Jesus as an example. Peter makes that very clear when he's writing to us and he sets out Christ as an example of how we are to live and how we are to act and how we are to follow.

For instance, when Peter is writing about the believers suffering for their faith, he highlights that very thing and he reminds us of the example of Christ, how he bore patiently and submissively without seeking his own personal revenge against what had happened and that he handed everything over to the Lord who judges righteously.

Now, it's not easy when a person is suffering for their faith. If you're suffering for your faith and some of you may very well be, some of you may be suffering for your faith at home, some of you may be suffering for your faith in school, in college, in your community, amongst your peers. Some of you may be suffering for your faith at work. People make it difficult for you for no other reason but that you love the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, we've got to distinguish between suffering for our faith and suffering because of a quirk in the personality.

Some people may say, oh, I'm finding it tough as a Christian but the thing is they were finding it tough before they were a Christian because of maybe the type of person they were. What we're talking about here is suffering for our faith and there will come times when the world will not like where we are, what we're doing, what we're saying, what we're standing for and that is why Peter is saying, look at the example of Jesus who committed himself to the one who judges righteously and remember the Lord will always judge righteously.

[13 : 41] And so we need to take this on board. This is what Peter is saying to us. So we are not to dismiss the example of Jesus. It is imperative and it surely is part of our prayer.

Lord, help me to live in the same way as my Savior lived that I might know him, the apostle said. That, in fact, God's great purpose for you, my friend, tonight, who loves the Lord is to make you more and more like a son.

We are being conformed to the image of Christ. So the example of Jesus is so vital and it's so important. But if we only look at the example, we miss the very heart of what Christ, his whole mission was about, which was to deal with our sin.

Because that is what we cannot deal with ourselves. And we can go through all the different aspects of our sin and our iniquity and transgression and all these different things.

But as we are well aware of sin in its simplest and its most basic form is missing the mark. It's coming short of the glory of God. It's coming short of the law that God requires.

[14 : 59] And God has set out a holy law that he requires all of us to obey, to live to. And we can't. With the best will in the world, you and I are incapable of aspiring to, of reaching the high standard that God has set.

And that is why we need help. And that is why God in his love and in his mercy and in his grace has come to help. And that is the great, that is the great news.

That is why God, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. God could have left us to him, to ourselves. And he could have said, well that's it.

They've made a mess of things. It's over. What chaos and carnage. We sometimes talk about chaos and carnage in this world. And sometimes there is.

And sometimes this world is a very sad and a very lonely and a very difficult place. But it's also a world full of many great things, many blessings, many wonderful favors.

[16 : 09] But however dark and dangerous and difficult it may be, if the Lord had turned his back and handed this world over to itself, I cannot even begin to imagine what it would be like tonight.

But God didn't. God in his love and in his grace and in his mercy has come to deal with sin. And sin is at the heart of all that's painful and sorrowful in this world.

Behind all the chaos, behind all the disease and death, behind all the breakup, behind all the wars, behind all the catastrophes. Even in this world, even in the natural world.

People look at the earthquakes and the destruction and havoc that it causes and they say, how? Why? You go all the way back. It's because of the fall.

It wasn't just man that was affected through the fall. The whole creation, it groans because of the fall. This is sin. Sin affected everything.

[17 : 18] Sin brought in separation. It wasn't just God and man that were separated. We know that the very creation has been affected. That's why your gardens are filled with weeds.

That's why it's a battle sometimes to get things to grow because sin has affected the very soil, the very earth. Everything has been affected by the curse of the fall.

sin is everywhere. And God has come to deal with the impact and the effects of sin.

And that's a great thing. Now as we said, sin of course separates. Separates in every way. There's this great barrier between God and man. And so Jesus came into this world to deal with what we couldn't deal with ourselves.

You know, some people say as long as a person is sincere in their heart, as long as a person is good in their own heart, then God will be satisfied with that.

[18 : 33] No. The Bible makes it very clear to us that it is only by coming in God's way that we can be made right with God.

if we had the ability to save ourselves, if I had the ability tonight, if you had the ability tonight to make yourself right with God, then the work of Jesus was of no avail whatever.

In a sense, an awful thing to say, but it would be true. God would have made a mistake in sending his son into this world if it were possible for you and me to save ourselves.

If somehow one of us in here could save ourselves, then this Bible is not true. Everything is absurd. Millions of believers have made a huge mistake.

We have been deceived. But we know we're not. We know this word is true. We know God is true. And God in his grace and mercy has revealed to us what he has done.

[19 : 45] And so this is what it tells us here. Because of Jesus' great work, his priesthood, then it tells us that he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him.

He's able to save to the uttermost. It's not wonderful. Able to save completely those who come to God through him.

It's not wonderful. He's able to save to the uttermost. It doesn't matter who you are. You know what I love about this? It doesn't put down anything.

It doesn't say how old or how young a person has to be. It doesn't talk about a person's history, what they have done or what they haven't done. it doesn't talk about a person's station or rank or whatever in life.

He is able to save to the uttermost. You might be here, my friend, and you say to yourself, you know, I have come across people like that.

[20 : 54] I think it's one of the saddest things where people continue to come to church. That's not the sad part. That's a good part. But they have sunk into a kind of, I wouldn't call the word despair, but into a sort of an apathy, but that is born out of the fact that they say, well, I don't think it's going to happen for me.

I believe what the Bible says, and I believe that Jesus is a way of salvation, but somehow I think it's passed me by.

And they still continue to come under the word and somehow think that it's not going to happen for them. I don't know if there's anybody like that in here.

See these words, that he is able to save to the uttermost. I love that word. It doesn't matter where you are, it doesn't matter what you've done, it doesn't matter your age, it doesn't matter any of these things, he is able to save to the uttermost.

These are what it's a wonderful word, able to save you completely. it's not a partial saving. It's not a saved kind of.

[22 : 23] It's complete. Where God is going to deal and save you from the guilt and the corruption and the condemnation of your sin. His salvation is so complete that not only is your soul going to be saved, but your body will be saved.

Yes, your body will go into the grave for a while, but the Lord has not abandoned your body. He's still going to be looking after it. And he's going to raise that body to be reunited with your soul. And you will discover then the totality, the completeness of that salvation. This salvation in Jesus governs everything, forever.

even although there will be a temporary breakup between body and soul. And so it's a wonderful thing.

And this is what Jesus has come to do. He's able to save completely. And he loves doing it. You know, sometimes people have the idea that Jesus is a reluctant saviour.

[23 : 26] No, he's not. We are reluctant to be saved. Jesus is not the reluctant saviour. But we are reluctant to be saved. Are you here tonight and you're reluctant to be saved?

Oh, you want to be saved someday, but not tonight. You're reluctant tonight. You are here wanting to hear about this salvation and you're planning to deal with one day along the line, but not tonight. If that's the case, then you're reluctant to be saved. And you know, it's a dangerous thing to play with your salvation. I want to be a Christian, but not tonight.

Leave me to some other time. My friends, that is dangerous thinking, dangerous talk. Now is the accepted time.

Now is the day of salvation. But who are those who can be saved? He's able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God.

[24 : 30] You see, it's not enough just to know about God. It's not enough just to know the way of salvation, although that is important. You have to draw near to Him.

That's a key. You see, you could have the most extraordinary Bible knowledge. You could be theologically so able, you might know the doctrines inside out.

You could be able to repeat the 107 catechisms inside out. Somebody could ask you, come up to you and say, you know, how do you become a Christian?

And you could sit that person down and you could tell them. And you could say, well, you know, it tells us in the Bible, just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, it was a picture of what Jesus was to do.

And in the wilderness, they all were to look, whoever was bitten by the serpent and who was dying, all they had to do was to look to the serpent, the brazen serpent that Moses had erected, and they would be healed.

[25 : 36] And in the same way, Jesus came and he was lifted up, and all you have to do is to look to him, and you will be saved. A person can tell, can sit down and say all that, but they themselves have never come.

to salvation. You know, there's lots of people in our church like that. They know the way of salvation. They can tell people the way of salvation, but they've never come to taste for themselves. you know, for instance, if you have to go to Glasgow, and you say, it's really urgent that I go to Glasgow, not sure how I'll go, and you begin to look at all the options, and you have your ferry timetable, your bus timetable, you look at your air timetable, and you even look at maybe taking a train from Inverness, and you have all the timetables, and all the times, and all the prices, and you can check it out, and somebody says, what's the best way of getting to Glasgow, you've got all the information to hand, you become an authority on how to travel to Glasgow, but you don't go, it doesn't make sense, the main thing is, you've got to get from here to there, and that's how it is with regard to salvation, yes, it's important to know, it's essential because faith comes by hearing, but unless we make use of the knowledge that we have, and what we've heard and known, then it's not going to be a any use to us at the end of the day, and so we're told that we have to draw near, that's what we're told here, you know, the wonderful thing is this, first of all,

God has drawn near to us in Christ, now, we draw near to God through Christ, and that's the way it's worked, God, because Jesus was the perfect embodiment of God and man, the two natures in one passion, so God initiated it all, he drew near to us in sending his son, and we are to draw near to God through his son, Jesus Christ, Christ, so we have to ask ourselves this question, have we, have you, have you drawn near to God, we're talking about that this morning, draw near to him, and we're looking at it in a different way, people sometimes say they feel so far away from the Lord, well, draw near to him, and he will draw near to you, but we read here that those who draw near to him, to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them, isn't that wonderful, the interceding

Christ, and what is it Jesus doing tonight, he's interceding for us, always interceding, he is there at the right hand of God, interceding on our behalf, and he's not saying to the father, some people have the idea that Jesus is there pleading for us, and he's saying, oh, father, the law is too difficult for them to adhere to, they can't help it because of their sin, please, no, he is presenting himself and his work on our behalf, that's what he's doing, continually presenting himself, it is finished, it's a finished work, and yet there is this intercession, again, we have, that was part, we see how Jesus worked in his intercessory way in this world, you remember

[29 : 40] Peter, how Peter was praying, Peter was being tempted so vehemently and violently by, by Satan, and Jesus said to him, Simon, Simon, I have prayed for you that your faith does not fail, here we see the intercession of Jesus, as one person said, our Lord's life in heaven, indeed, is his prayer, what about you tonight, where are you in relation to all this, this Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost, will you tonight come to him, let us pray, Lord our God, we ask thee to bless us and keep us, and ask thee to shine thy face upon us and do us good, we ask oh Lord that we might know thy grace and strength and help, watch over us and take us all home safely, may the peace of God dwell in our heart, shine thy love into us and forgive us our sin in Jesus name we our school, Amen.