



## Christmas in Hebrews (part 2)

### Hebrews 9-10

Jesus came into the flesh ...

1. To obtain eternal redemption (9:12)
2. To put away sin (9:26)
3. To sanctify us (10:10)

This Christmas season, we are considering the book of Hebrews and what it teaches us about the coming of Christ in the flesh. Last week, we surveyed the first two chapters of Hebrews and discovered that Christ came into the flesh (1) To communicate with us (Heb. 1:1-2a); (2) To taste death for us (Heb. 2:9, 14-15); and (2) To be merciful to us (Heb. 2:17). This week, I want to place our attention upon chapters 9 and 10 of Hebrews. Like last week, we will find several references in these chapters to the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Let's jump right in.

Jesus came into the flesh ...

1. To obtain eternal redemption (9:12)

This point comes from the very last phrase in chapter 9, verse 12, "having obtained eternal redemption." In the previous verse, you can see that this is a direct result of the incarnation. Verse 11 begins with these words, "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come!" His "appearance" is a reference to His appearance on earth that began in a stable in Bethlehem and ended on a cross at Calvary. And as a result of His suffering, he has "obtained eternal redemption" (verse 12b).

Before we dig a bit into verses 11 and 12 to discover what exactly this means that Jesus has "obtained eternal redemption," we really must begin back at the beginning of the chapter. At the beginning of Hebrews 9, the writer describes the setup of the tabernacle.

#### Hebrews 9:1-5

Now even the first [covenant] had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which [were] the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; and above it [were] the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

These words are a very brief summary of the design of the temple. When these words are described in Exodus, they take up some six chapters (Exodus 25-30). But, here, we see them summed up in a mere five verses. The writer basically describes the two rooms of the tabernacle: (1) "the holy place" and (2) "the Holy of Holies." The holy place was the outer tabernacle. The Holy of Holies was the inner tabernacle. This inner tabernacle is the place where God dwelt. In order to enter the Holy of Holies, you needed to enter through the holy place to get there. You might easily think of this room as the master bathroom. In order to get into the master bath, you need to enter through the master bedroom. These rooms weren't really very large either. The Holy of Holies was the size of a larger bedroom (15' by 15'). The holy place was three times this size. That's it! The hub of worship for millions of Jews was less than a thousand square feet.

Now, each of these rooms were filled with different vessels of the ministry. These vessels were used by the priests to perform the divine worship. Some worship was performed in the outer room and some was performed in the inner room. Because of our own time restraints this morning, like the writer to the Hebrews, "we cannot now speak in detail" of these things (verse 5). However, the significant point comes in verses 6 and 7.

#### Hebrews 9:6-7

Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, but into the second, only the high priest [enters] once a year, not without [taking] blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

Many priests entered this outer tabernacle performing their priestly duties. Every day the priests needed to bring the "clear oil from the beaten olives" and make the lamp in this room "burn continually" (Lev. 24:2). Each week, on the Sabbath day, the priests would bake twelve loaves of bread and set them upon the table in two rows, six in each row (Lev. 24:5-6). Upon each row of bread, the priests would place frankincense on the bread (Lev. 24:7). These priests never missed a day in fulfilling these duties. The door was always open into the holy place. But, it was an entirely different story when talking about the Holy of Holies. Whereas many priests went in and out of the holy place. Only one priest went in and out of the Holy of Holies. It was the high priest. And he entered only once each year on the Day of Atonement with a sacrifice that he offered for himself, and then for all the people. After he left the room, it would be another 365 days until another priest would be permitted into that room.

This is the way that God prescribed our worship to be under the Old Covenant. You might ask yourself, "why?" Well, verses 8-10 tell us why.

Hebrews 9:8-10

The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, [This is] a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they [relate] only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Notice that God had a purpose in establishing the Old Covenant worship the way that He did. God purposely designed His tabernacle with an outer room and with an inner room. The entire arrangement was an object lesson, which was designed to teach us that we couldn't get into the holy of holies, as long as this system of worship was still in place. As the worshipers came to the temple to worship, they were to think, "I can't get into the Holy of Holies. There must be something else." And they were even to understand that all of the religious activity in which they were engaged was, in the end, less than perfect.

Everything that they dealt with was in the external. There were "gifts and sacrifices" (verse 9). There were "food and drink and various washings" (verse 10). Seemingly, they were never able to get to the heart of the matter. As verse 9 indicates, the worshiper would leave with a nagging feeling of how it wasn't enough. But, this all changed with Christmas. With the appearance of Christ, we now have a perfect sacrifice, which has given us "eternal redemption."

We are now in a situation to fully understand verses 11 and 12 in context.

Hebrews 9:11-12

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, [He entered] through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Now, there are several difficulties in understanding verse 11. The New American Standard indicates that Christ appeared of some future things, that is, "the good things to come." Other translations, like the English Standard Version and the New International Version indicate that Christ appeared for the good things that have already come. The difference in translation comes from the difference in manuscripts. Some manuscripts say it one way. Some manuscripts say it another way. It's difficult to know exactly which way it was originally written.

Another difficulty is understanding exactly what is meant by "the greater and more perfect tabernacle." It's obvious that we have never seen this tabernacle, as it is in heaven someplace. According to chapter 8, verse 5, there was a heavenly copy of the tabernacle that Moses built. It is very difficult to know exactly what this is.

But, don't be worried about these difficulties. Although the text is difficult in the details, the big picture is quite clear. Because of the coming of Christ, there will be "good things to come." The glories of heaven are unsurpassed for those who believe. Because of the coming of Christ, there have been good things that have come. The blessings upon the godly life are abundant. So, it doesn't much matter whether these are past or future, because either is most definitely true.

They are true because the sacrifice of Christ was a better sacrifice than all of the Old Testament sacrifices. The blood of Christ was not taken by a priest offered in the Holy of Holies in the temple that was built by hands according to the stipulations of the Old Covenant. Rather, the blood of Christ was the means through which He "entered the holy place once for all" (verse 12). This probably has reference to the very presence of God--His throne room. The Holy of Holies in the temple was symbolic of God's presence upon the earth. The Holy of Holies in the heavens is God's presence. It's the place where the angels fly around the throne, saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory" (Is. 6:3). Throughout the book of Hebrews, you see that this is where Jesus has gone. "To which of the angels has He ever said, 'Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet'" (Heb. 1:13). "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. 8:1). "Having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, [He] sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12).

When Jesus sat down at the right hand of God, His work was finished. He obtained, "eternal redemption." Finally, we get to the crux of my first point this morning. Jesus came into the flesh (1) To obtain eternal redemption (9:12). The redemption that Christ provides is so different that what the Old Testament sacrifices provided. As you think about this, it really blows your mind!

When we think of redemption, we often think about coupons, which we "redeem" at a store. That's exactly what "redemption" means. It means "purchasing."

I have brought with me some coupons this morning. I have here a coupon from Kohl's. It says, "Pick a day and save an extra 15% on everything." On the back, it has a place for a sales associate to place his (or her) initials, and identify the date that this 15% off was "redeemed." (It even uses these words). On December 14th, my wife went to Kohl's and saved an extra 15% on that day. I don't know how much she spent that day, but if the register rang up \$100, she only paid \$85!

But, the redemption of Christ is a bit different than such coupon. First of all, the purchase that Christ made for those who believe isn't a "discount." It's not like we are put forth 85% effort to achieve forgiveness by ourselves, only to see Christ kick in the remaining 15%. Nor was it even the other way around (i.e. 15% our effort and 85% the effort of Christ). When Christ redeems us, His redemption is complete. He has paid 100% of the cost required.

In this way, Christ is more like a cash coupon. I have here a coupon from Kohl's for \$10. In fact, I have two of them, totally \$20. These things

are equivalent to having a \$20 bill that can be used at the Kohl's store to purchase anything in the store! When I take this to the Kohl's counter, they will treat it like a \$20 bill. Only, there's one problem. It has an expiration date on it. It says, "Redeem your Kohl's Cash Coupon in store December 9-20, 2007. It has expired. It is no longer effective. And now, this coupon is completely worthless. The only thing that it is good for now is a sermon illustration.

But, the redemption of Christ is different than such a coupon. His redemption is "eternal." It never expires. If you are living and breathing, His redemption is available to you.

In this way, Christ is more like a "gift card" that has no expiration date. I have here a gift card from Don Pablos. It was given to us recently as a Christmas present. We are grateful for it. My wife and I are looking forward to using it one of these days. It is a card for \$25 dollars. On the back, it says that it's also "redeemable" at Hops Grill and Brewery. At either place, it is equivalent to a \$25 in cold, hard cash that will go toward a dinner at the restaurant some evening. It has no expiration. It even has a guarantee of being replaced if lost.

However, even this has its limitations in seeking to parallel the redemption that Christ has provided. It may be that we choose to use this gift card for our entire family. In this case, the price of the entire meal won't be covered. (Don't get me wrong, we appreciate the discount, but my point is to show the limitation of the gift). The redemption that Christ has provided will pay the entire meal, regardless of the price. The gift card of Christ will cover every item on the menu in full.

Now again, this imagery falls short, because, once I have used my Don Pablo's gift card, it can never be used again. But, the sacrifice of Christ is different! Not only does it never expire, but you never lose its value when you use it. Whenever you need some redeeming power of Christ, it is there to use.

In this way, it's a bit like eternal food stamps. I don't have one with me this morning to show you. I don't think that such a thing exists. If it did, then there would truly be a free lunch. But, suppose that the government issued a food stamp card. Whenever I needed food, I simply had to go to the grocery store, take the food from the shelves, flash my food stamp card, and take my food home to meet my needs. Such a card sure would beat a an extra 15% off coupon.. Such a card sure would beat a cash coupon with an expiration date. Such a card sure would beat a Don Pablo's gift card that could only be used once.

That's the picture of the redemption of Christ. His redemption is "eternal." That is, there are no expiration dates on it! His redemption is "complete." That is, the cross never loses its ability to forgive. The blood of Christ is sufficient to atone forever! It doesn't matter what sins you may have committed. It doesn't matter how devastating that sin was. If you have defrauded your employer, the redemption of Christ is sufficient to provide forgiveness. If you committed adultery in your marriage, the redemption of Christ is sufficient to pay for your sin. If you aborted a child in your womb, the redemption of Christ is sufficient for your forgiveness. If you are living some type of lie with your life, the redemption of Christ is sufficient to atone for your sin.

The blood of Christ atones for all sorts of sin. It redeems fornicators (i.e. those who have engaged in sexual activity outside of marriage). It redeems idolaters (i.e. those who have found their satisfaction in something else, rather than God). The blood of Christ redeems adulterers who have been unfaithful in their marriage. It redeems those who are perversely effeminate. The blood of Christ redeems homosexuals and thieves and the covetous. It redeems drunkards, revilers and swindlers. I know this because it had redeemed these sorts of people in Corinth (1 Cor. 6:9-10). So, never be discouraged that the blood of Christ can't redeem you from your sin.

I love the way that verses 13 and 14 describe for us the greatness of the sacrifice of Christ.

Hebrews 9:13-14

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

With these words, the writer is contrasting the sacrifices of the Old Covenant with the sacrifice of Christ. The blood of goats and bulls cleansed the flesh (verse 13). But, the blood of Christ cleanses deeper than the flesh. It cleanses our consciences.

We can look to this perfect sacrifice and realize that in Him we have our redemption. We no longer have reason to feel guilty for our sins. We can sleep at night with a clean conscience, knowing that we are at peace with God, through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We have no need to try to make sure that we secure our forgiveness through various religious works. With that, we are freed to serve the living God.

All of this came about because Jesus came into the flesh. Apart from His appearing upon earth, none of this would have been possible. This is what we have to celebrate this Christmas season. Will you rejoice in your eternal redemption?

Jesus came into the flesh ...

2. To put away sin (9:26)

This comes from verse 26, "Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." I trust that you can see Christmas toward the end of this verse. It says, that "He has been manifested to put away sin." That is, Jesus has appeared in the flesh for us. He has come on the scene of human history for all to see. His purpose was "to put away sin" through His death.

Now, once again, we are in a difficult situation regarding the context. We have jumped right into the middle of the verse to get our point this morning. And look at how the verse begins. It begins with the word, "Otherwise." It's a word of contrast that compels us to back up a bit in the context to catch it's full significance. I think that we can do an adequate job of understanding this verse if we back up to verse 22. Look at it

now.

Hebrews 9:22

And according to the Law, [one may] almost [say], all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

This verse is a summary of verses 15-21. As Christ has established with us a "new covenant" (verse 15), it must be that He died (verse 16). Because (as verse 17 says), a covenant "is never in force while the one who made it lives." Verses 18-21 speak about how the first covenant was inaugurated with blood. And verse 22 concludes, "And according to the Law, [one may] almost [say], all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." And so, the writer continues in verse 23-25, ...

Hebrews 9:23-25

Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a [mere] copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own.

As Christ entered heaven as a forerunner for us (6:20), He needed to cleanse it, lest we enter and stain it with our sin. Verses 24 and 25 speak about the cleansing work of Christ. Christ entered heaven itself with His once-for-all sacrifice that cleanses the holy place forever. His sacrifice was unlike the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. They needed to be repeated over and over and over again--every day, every year, with no end in sight. But, the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross was different. It was a once-for-all sacrifice, which has now been completed. This is flushed out in verse 26.

Hebrews 9:26

Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Christ only needed to suffer once. Then, His suffering was complete, because He put away sin once and for all. He doesn't have to keep putting it away again and again and again.

My wife recently heard a short poem that addresses the situation in our house so perfectly. She shared it with me. I share it with you.

Cleaning a house while children are growing,  
Is like shoveling snow while it is snowing. [\[1\]](#)

This is our house. Our children are entropy machines. Somehow, somehow the house always needs cleaning. But, this is not the way with the sacrifice. He didn't need to put away sin, only to need to put away sin again and again. Christ offered Himself once!

Perhaps you remember the last thing that Jesus ever said before He died upon the cross. He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). After saying those words, "He bowed His head and gave up His spirit" (John 19:30). This means that the work that He came to earth to accomplish was completed.

And what was this work? To take away the sins of the world. Early on in the ministry of Christ, John the Baptist saw Jesus from afar and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Here in verse 26, we have essentially the same thing, although the words are slightly different. John could easily have said of Jesus as He approached, "He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (verse 26).

When did Jesus do this? Our text indicates that this was "at the consummation of the ages." That is, when the time was right. This talks about the right time for Christ to come to earth. The time was right politically. There was a Roman peace in the world that gave the right circumstances for the spread of the gospel with quality roads and a universal Greek language. The time was right spiritually. The law had tutored the Hebrew people long enough for them to realize that they needed a savior. The time was right prophetically. All of the prophecies were converging upon the time of the Messiah.

The New English Bible captures the sense of verse 26 with these words, "He has appeared once and for all at the *climax* of history to abolish sin by the sacrifice of himself." This is the heart of Galatians 4:4-5, "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law."

Again, I hope that you see that this is Christmas. The writer to the Hebrews is describing the time when Jesus came into the flesh. This all occurred when Jesus was "manifested." His days began in Bethlehem. His days ended outside the city of Jerusalem upon a cross.

And by His sacrifice, Jesus "put away sin." This Greek word, *aqetew*(*atheteo*), means that He "set it aside." He annulled its power. Because of His sacrifice upon the cross, Jesus declared it invalid. He buried it in the sea.

This week I was talking with a friend of mine, who had been plagued by some difficulties in his life. There were some past offenses and problems that continued to come up in his mind. They haunted him. He knew that he shouldn't continue to dwell on them, because they were dealt with at the cross. So, he took a piece of paper and wrote them all out. He then took a rock and some bio-degradable string and tied the paper to the rock. After praying, he took that rock and heaved it as far as he could into a local body of water. It was his way of saying, "It is

finished! Those past difficulties should haunt me as much as the piece of paper attached to that rock will come out of the water and accuse me again."

This is how Christ has dealt with our sin. "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12). This is why Paul can declare, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" in Romans 8:1. This is why Paul can say that in Christ Jesus "all of our transgressions" have been forgiven (Col. 2:13). For a believer in Christ, you never need to worry about sin coming back to accuse you any longer.

If you are haunted by your past sin, there are two reasons for it.

1. Either you are not a believer in Christ, and the Holy Spirit is being gracious to you at this moment by convicting you of your sin. If this is the case with you., I exhort you to look to Christ, who alone can grant you forgiveness. Trust that His sacrifice has been sufficient for your sin.

2. But, it may be the case that you are a believer in Christ, but you think that the sin you committed in the past is so great that you need to continually express your sorrow for it. If this is the case with you, I exhort you to believe the gospel. It is in Christ that all of our sins are wiped away. It's not just the little ones. It's all of our sin.

We don't need to make it up by saying some prayers or by church attendance or by compensating it with good works, like giving to the church or being especially kind to your mother. We need to believe the word of God, that Christ has "put away" our sin. And when you do, you will be liberated to serve the living God with clean hands and a pure heart (Ps. 24:4).

Jesus came into the flesh ...

3. To sanctify us (10:10)

This comes in chapter 10, verse 10, "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ."

Again, we find ourselves in the situation that we are deep within the context of Hebrews. We need to back up and get a running start on this verse. As we approach the verse in context, I trust that you will see how appropriate it is for Christmas. So, look back to Hebrews, chapter 10, verse 1. There we read, ...

Hebrews 10:1-4

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. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those [sacrifices] there is a reminder of sins year by year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

These verses tell us that Christ did what the law could never do, "weak as it was through the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). The sacrifices that the priests offered were shadows that pointed to the reality. They weren't the reality themselves. As such, they can never "make perfect those who draw near" (10:1). To be sure, there was a "cleansing" that took place (Heb. 9:13). But, it was never final.

The sacrifices of the Old Covenant were about like our bars of soap. Many of us take showers each day (morning or at night). As we do, we take the soap, lather it up, spread it over our bodies, and it makes us clean. But what happens throughout the day? We get dirty again. Our body begins to stink. What needs to take place tomorrow? We need to take another shower. We need to take our soap again. We need to lather up and clean our bodies once again. What happens after that? We get dirty again and need to shower again. Soap can never make us perfectly clean forever.

This is the reality of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. They are like soap, which never makes us perfectly clean. The very fact that we need a shower tomorrow shows you how ultimately ineffective our soap is. It's a temporary fix. So also the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. They can never make us perfect (10:1). So, they need to be offered again and again and again (10:2).

The reality comes in verse 4, "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." But, here's the good news that we celebrate: Christ has taken away sins! He is like super-duper soap that cleanses perfectly and permanently. Somehow, this yet-to-be-invented soap leaves a film that says on you and resists all dirt and smell.

In verse 5, once again, we see the writer explaining how He did so.

Hebrews 10:5-7

Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for Me; In whole burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin, You have taken no pleasure." Then I said, "Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do Your will, O God."

These words are taken from Psalm 40. And they have Christmas written all over them.

Verse 5 begins by describing the incarnation, "When He comes into the world." These words are describing Jesus descending from heaven and taking on flesh and blood and walking among us. This is what we will celebrate in a few days, the word becoming flesh (John 1:14).

The last phrase in verse 5 says a similar thing: "But a body you have prepared for me." This makes the first phrase in verse 5 all the more clear. When Christ came into the world, He received a body. Born of the virgin Mary, of real flesh and blood. During His days upon earth, nobody ever doubted that Jesus was a real man. He came in the flesh. He took on a body.

Again, we see it in verse 7. "Then I said, 'Behold, I have come ... to do your will, O God.'" Apart from verse 5, it would be difficult for us to ascribe this to the incarnation. But, in close context, this must be what verse 7 is referring to. He says, "I have come" into this world. As we continue to work through these verses, we see in verse 8 that the writer is expositing the words of Psalm 40, which he just quoted.

Hebrews 5:8-9

After saying above, "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), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

Verse 8 is describing the futility of all of the Old Testament sacrifices. Though God commanded that they be offered for sins, fundamentally, these sacrifices wasn't really what gave delight to God. This is echoed in Psalm 51:16, "You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering." The reason why God doesn't delight in these things is because they are useless to take away sins, which is the point of verse 4.

It's a little bit like Christmas shopping with your small children. In the first place, they have very little money to spend. But, they want to purchase something for their brothers and sisters. The only thing that they can purchase with their own money will end up in the trash very quickly, because they can't afford to purchase anything of high quality. As a father, you delight in the heart of your children to want to give to their brother or sister. And yet, there is something within that doesn't take delight in these things, because of the limitations of your children's purchasing power.

So also with the blood of bulls and goats. When these sacrifices are joined with a "broken spirit" and "contrite heart," God delights in the heart of the worshiper. But, because of the weakness of the sacrifice, God takes little pleasure in these things. But, the sacrifice of Christ has given God great delight! And as Christ came to do the will of His Father, His sacrifice ended the need for animal sacrifices, and has established for us a way into the Holy of Holies. He "takes away" the animal sacrifices in order to establish the true way to God (verse 9).

And now, we come to my point this morning (in verse 10),

Hebrews 10:10

By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

When Jesus came to earth, He submitted Himself to the will of His heavenly Father. It wasn't an easy road for Him. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus struggled with that will. He said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39). Of course, God's will for His life was that He would be crucified upon the cross. And, as verse 10 says, it was through this sacrifice that we are sanctified. "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (verse 10).

This is the reality of Christmas. It was the will of the Father to give His Son a body, so that His Son would be crucified upon a cross, so that whoever believes in Him, shall not perish, but might be sanctified through the offering of His body, and have eternal life (Hebrews 10:10 combined with John 3:16). This is what Christmas means to us! Christ came to do the will of the Father, so that we might be sanctified through Him (verse 10).

Let's finally look at verses 11-14.

Hebrews 10:11-14

Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Are you sanctified this morning? If you are, there is great reason to rejoice this Christmas season.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on December 23, 2007 by Steve Brandon.  
For more information see [www.rvbc.cc](http://www.rvbc.cc).

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[1] Various different forms of this quotation were found all over the internet and attributed to Phyllis Diller.