**St Martins C3 – April 6, 2025**

**It is finished – Perfect Love**

**Sermon Summary:**

The book of Hebrews was written for Christian Jews to understand how Jesus supersedes Judaism. In making various points about this, the author of Hebrews gives us some important insights about our glorious redemption through Christ’s death and resurrection.

**Read Hebrews 7, 9, and 10.**

Let us consider the argument laid out in these chapters:

1. Jesus is God’s appointed High Priest and has accomplished, once and for all, the mediating work we needed because of His redeeming work in His death and resurrection.
2. The death of Christ is such a complete, once and for all sacrifice that it never needs to be repeated.
3. Therefore, **EVERYTHING we will ever need from God was purchased for us by Christ in His death and resurrection.**

This is a really important point and the basis of our Easter series this year. Our salvation, our spiritual growth, every answer to prayer that we will ever pray, and our eternal destiny has already been paid for, in full, by Jesus on the cross. There is no more that needs to be done by God, and there is no more that we need to do to add to that redeeming work. Christ fully achieved in His death and resurrection a release of everything that we will ever receive from God.

**So, let us look at one aspect of that this week:**

**Read 1 John 4:9-10; Romans 5:6-8**

In the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have an act of divine love, so extraordinary, so all-encompassing, that in this one sacrificial act, a love from God is released which achieves all we will ever need from God.Let’s unpack that a little more:

1. **In Christ, we have a gift of love so extraordinary and so complete that we don’t need to give back to God anything in return for it.**

It is a gift that cannot be paid for by anything we do, but only by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Trying to be a good person to pay for it, will reduce its effectiveness in your life. We simply need to receive God’s love for the gift it is and live a life of gratitude because of its presence in us.

1. **In Christ, we have a gift of love that is so extraordinary and complete that it is able to replace whatever else we were using to fill that need for love in our lives.**

Without Christ, we will try and fill the need for love in our lives with other relationships or indulgences in things that we think might satisfy us. But we will keep longing for more worldly things if we don’t REPLACE those things with Christ.

1. **In Christ, we have a gift of love that is so extraordinary and complete that it will sustain us under ANY circumstances FOREVER. (Romans 8:35-39)**

Therefore, we can live with confidence in God’s sustaining love for us, which will never let us down. May we get a fresh revelation of that extraordinary love today.

**Main Points:**

* In His death and resurrection, Jesus paid for everything we would ever need from God. It was a full and complete work.
* One of the things that Christ achieved on our behalf was the restoration of us receiving God’s love.
* We will receive that love, when we put our trust in what Christ has done on our behalf. We do that by not trying to earn it, but by turning away from relying on worldly things and living with gratitude, devotion, and confidence in His love.

**Suggested questions for Connect Group discussion:**

*Why is it so important that Christ’s death and resurrection paid for everything that we would ever need to receive from God?*

*What makes the death and resurrection of Jesus the greatest gift that humanity will ever receive?*

*How might we best express our gratitude to God for this gift of love that God has given us in Christ?*

*Why are we tempted to use other people or other things in this world to satisfy deep needs in our lives, which only Christ can fill?*

*What might change in our hearts and minds if we fully internalised how secure the love of God is for us?*

**Monday Devotion: Jesus is Above All.**

**Hebrews 1:3-4**

*The Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honour at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven. This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names.*

This week we are going to go on a journey through the book of Hebrews, exploring the supremacy and the sufficiency of Christ’s work on our behalf. Why is that so important? Because all that we will ever receive from God is paid for by Christ. If His work is not enough, then we are in trouble. If it is enough (complete), then we can live in a confident partnership with God.

The author of Hebrews starts with describing Jesus as having the very character of God. Jesus, like God, sustains everything by His mighty power. The point that is being made here is that Jesus is not like one of us; He IS God. Because Jesus is God, we can put our full confidence in His ability to save us and sustain us in the life God has for us.

Why make the point that Jesus is greater than the angels? Isn’t that obvious? For Jews, angels mediated messages from God to us; therefore, some may have been tempted to think that Jesus is like the angels. But that would be a mistake. Jesus is the SON of God. Therefore, Jesus deserves our worship, not just our attention. Ultimately, Jesus is the One who is above all else, so let us worship Him accordingly.

**Tuesday Devotion: Better than Rules and Religion**

**Hebrews 3:3, 5-6**

*But Jesus deserves far more glory than Moses, just as a person who builds a house deserves more praise than the house itself.*

*Moses was certainly faithful in God’s house as a servant. His work was an illustration of the truths God would reveal later. But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God’s entire house. And we are God’s house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ.*

Jews had huge respect for Abraham and Moses. These were appointed men of God who established the nation of Israel and revealed God’s will to them. The author of Hebrews points out that Jesus is greater than Abraham and Moses, because Christ is the head of God’s house, not just a servant in it.

The point being made here is that not only is Christ greater than these great men, but also greater than what these men facilitated on God’s behalf. Being an Israelite could not save us from our sins. Trying to follow every law in the Torah could not save us. We needed something greater than a godly inheritance or good deeds. We needed a complete sacrifice that only God could provide.

This is a good reminder for us to consider what we are truly relying on. Your Christian heritage or your good morals won’t save you. The basis of everything you will ever receive from God is found in Christ and Christ alone. Reflect on that truth before you seek anything from God. Maybe acknowledge in worship today how grateful you are to Christ for connecting you with God.

**Wednesday Devotion: Approach Boldly**

**Hebrews 4:14-16**

*So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe.* *This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.* *So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

Jesus is now referred to as the “great High Priest,” because He is from God, He is God, and His work is more comprehensive and complete than anything else previously achieved by human effort. However, this could mean that Jesus is out of touch with our needs. Therefore, the author now switches tack and reveals the beauty of Christ’s nature. Christ is fully divine, but also fully human. (That is a detail which will mess with your head a bit, but we will just accept it as a fact based on what God has revealed.)

What advantage is there to us of Jesus being human as well as divine? The main thing is that Jesus can identify with our struggles. Much like how we can empathise with those who are going through a serious illness or injury, if we have had a similar illness or injury ourselves.

What all this means for us is that we can boldly seek God’s help in our time of need, because Christ is not only powerful enough to meet that need, but also understanding enough of our need to listen. So, what do you need to boldly approach God with today?

**Thursday Devotion: The Full Inheritance**

**Hebrews 9:14-15**

*For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.* *That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them.*

So far this week, we have seen that only Christ could be the one to restore our relationship with God. Only Christ can be the one to answer our prayers. Now the point is reinforced that not only is Christ alone the one who cleanses us from all past and present sin, He is also the one who mediates us receiving the fullness of the life God has for us.

God always intended us receiving His power, His righteousness, His love, etc. Now that we have Jesus as our great High Priest, all these things can be imparted to us. The technical theological term for this is, “imputed righteousness.” What that means is that all of the holiness, goodness, and love that was in the character of Christ, is now indwelling in us. Or, to put it another way, when God looks at our character, He sees the character of Christ in us. (Mind-blowing, right?)

The implication of all this for the author is that we ought to live confidently in the knowledge that God is as supportive of us as He was of Christ, because we are His. We have His very nature in us. We don’t need to work towards achieving something that has already been imparted to us as a gift. So, how are you confidently living from what God has imparted into you today?

**Friday Devotion: Complete the Race**

**Romans 12:1-3**

*Let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joyawaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honour beside God’s throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up.*

Once we have internalised all that Christ has done for us, how then do we live our lives from that foundation?

1. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

He is the example we are following and the One who is giving us the wisdom, grace, and strength we need. The temptation is that we rely on ourselves or others when we should be relying on Christ first. We need to keep in mind that Jesus is the only one who had a purpose for our lives before we were born and is committed to fulfilling His purpose in us in eternity. No one else is as committed to us as He is.

1. Don’t buckle when times get tough.

Jesus was given God’s strength to endure the cross. He was tempted to avoid it, but He didn’t. Likewise, we have been given all the resources in Christ to endure anything, so we ought to use those resources to endure. Why? Because the prize of being complete in Christ is worth it.

Remember, we have everything that we will ever need in Christ to accomplish all His plans and purposes for us.