

Am I Really a Christian-Part 3
Learning to Rest from Attempts to Earn a Place in God's Family
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We're going to get back into Hebrews chapter 4; we've been working our way through it. We've name this series in a poignant way asking the question are we really a Christian. We can go up to the average person on the street, in the mall, ask them at the golf course or the break room at work, if you ask them, "Are you going to heaven when you die?" The average person is going to say something along the lines of, "I hope so", "Working on it", "You know I'm trying". That's the average response from the person on the street. Unfortunately, if you go and ask the same question in the Christian bookstore, lobby of your average church, you talk to people in a small group bible study, you ask them the same question, "Are you going to heaven when you die?" Unfortunately, you'll often hear a lot of the same kinds of answers, "I'm working my way there", "Well, I'm sure trying", "I'm hoping so", "I'm pretty sure". Here's the terrible tragic reality of scripture, which we will prove today, we've been working through the book of Romans on Thursday nights, the person who responds, "I hope so", has no hope at all. That's the bottom line. The person who says they're hoping that they'll go to heaven has no hope of entering heaven, unless they're ready to change their view of the gospel.

If you're not willing to readjust your view of how you get to heaven unfortunately there's no chance you're going to make it. The answer to the question ought to be crystal clear, I hope, in your mind or if not by the end our time together I hope it's crystal clear. You got to be sure. That's what the fourth chapter of Hebrews is all about. Matter of fact, he says, "I want you to be sure; I want you to be so sure that you ought to be concerned that you missed it." And you need to, and here's the analogy, enter this rest in chapter 4. It shouldn't come as a surprise by the way that people in church misunderstand the gospel. It shouldn't come as a surprise because I hope you realize that Satan according to the teaching of the New Testament is working overtime in the church. He's just as active in the church as he is outside the church if not more so, and you might be able to argue he's more so involved in that. He loves to come in and confuse things in the pew, in the minds of the church going person. And that was the problem in the historical context for Hebrews, these folks were church going people if you will, they were gathering together and they were claiming the name of Christ and they were talking about following Jesus. And the writer of Hebrews is really concerned. I'm not sure you get this. I'm not sure you understand this. As a matter of fact, he says "You need to be absolutely sure that you've entered into this rest".

Now again rest is an analogy. Two weeks ago we looked at that, we saw how it was analogous to salvation. He's pleading with them to be Christians. Then last week we saw with all the background that these Sabbath school graduates had had he begins to refer to rest in all kinds of ways. Matter of fact we saw, seven different ways he alluded to rest in Hebrews chapter 4. Do you remember that? We needed a chart for that one, but we sorted it out. God's initial rest in creation week, a ceremonial rest that was reflective of that creation week rest, we saw the rest that was forfeited by generation of Moses; they didn't make it into the Promised Land. We saw the rest, the temporal rest that was achieved by Joshua's generation. Then we saw David in Psalm 95 saying you need to enter into God's spiritual rest if you hear his voice today, don't harden your hearts. And of course Christ came, he offered people rest, come to me if any of you who are weary and heavy laden I'll give you rest. And then, that wasn't in the passage, but clearly that's what the book of Hebrews is all about and then sixthly he says, I am offering you and proclaiming to you the offer of God's rest, and you need to enter into that. Then of course to look forward to a future rest, an eternal rest an ultimate rest. Seven different rests in Hebrews chapter 4, either explicitly stated or

referred to, but of course the focus is on the analogy. You need to find this rest in Christ. The focus is on the present. Now this is a contention that I have in understanding this text and I'll try to prove this to you next week. But you need to draw a line in your Bibles under verse number 10 and I know the NIV doesn't make the paragraph break there, but my contention is and I'll prove this to you I hope this week and mostly next is that we begin to look at rest as future in verse 11. But in verses 9 and 10 we're still talking about rest as an analogy of the present, that you need to make sure that you enter the rest, which means that you become a real Christian, that you know for sure you're going to heaven when you die. Take a look at it, we'll read it verses 9 and 10.

"There remains", this sounds pretty present tense. "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God", its there. Now look, he pulls one person out of the crowd and he uses that person as an example in verse 10 and he says, "for anyone who enters God's rest", very present, right now, and you can enter it, he's chided and pleaded with them to enter it. He says, that person that "anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his". We're going to look at verse number 9 as a present tensed offer and the beginning of verse 11 using a person as an example walking into this rest. Future rest is going to come into view in verse 11, more on that next week, and in verse 12 we'll see how it all fits together all the way to the end of the chapter. But right now he says, you need to know that there is this place that he's analogizing as rest, and if it seems a little odd you Sunday school grads or seminary students you need to realize this, this interpreting Hebrews 4 is a lot like interpreting a parable because he's not speaking straight forward. He's speaking in an analogy; he's using rest as a word picture. So you need to know that here in this text, verse number 10, "for anyone who enters God's rest he also rests from his own work, just as God did from his" you've got to be looking at non-parabolic statements in scripture to understand what this parable means. What do you mean, enters that rest? So let's try to understand this. Number 1 on your outline, what you need to recognize about this rest that out there that remains that's there for anyone to step into and then it describes what the person does if he steps into that you need to know is present tense. The analogy is about salvation, so lets write it down this way and make sense if it. Number one on your outline, know that you can acquire salvation today.

1. Know that you can acquire salvation today

And a lot of you are going, "Whatever, yeah, I know that". But you know it's really odd if you think about the word, "saved", "salvation". The concept of being saved, or salvation, it demands an object. Someone rushed in here and we're not sitting in church, we're just having a bunco night or something, and someone says, "Wow, I was just saved". You'd want to know from what, right? Saved from what? It begs some kind of, it assumes some kind of object. Here are the principals of scripture and it's repeated over and over and over again. God the creator, the great judge has promised this. I will repay everyone according to their deeds. And you can look at a variety of texts but if you want to write a passage down let's go to for instance Revelation chapter 2 verse 23. Don't need to write it down but you know, I not pulling a fast one on you. The bible says God the great judge if he's going to be a just judge he promises everybody this, I'm going to repay everybody according to what they've done. And therein lies the problem. We understand the holiness of God and we know that God is perfect and we are not, if we're going to be repaid for what we've done we're in big trouble. That's the problem.

We also know, jot this reference down, Hebrews chapter 9 verse 27, that you will be judged after you die. Judgment is not here, no matter what the bumper stickers say hell is not here on earth. The payment for you life comes after. Hebrews chapter 9 verse 27, if you jotted that down, just as it's

destined to die once and after that to face the judgment. Judgment for our deeds comes after we die; therefore to talk about being saved that's kind of a strange thing to say in the present tense. I'm saved. The bad stuff hasn't come yet. To say that you're saved is odd and yet most of you Sunday school grads look at that statement, and you go, "Duh, of course, I know you can acquire salvation today." As a matter of fact, in our text if you just glance back in your bibles through chapter 4 and chapter 3 where we started the discussion of rest, 5 times in two chapters he keeps saying, "today", "today", "today". We sang about it, Ed sang the song, led us in the song, "Today if you'd hear his voice don't harden your hearts as they did out there in the wilderness". Today, you know that. Scripture says that today is the day of salvation. Now wait a minute, I don't need salvation right now. I really don't, why? Because my non-Christian neighbor he's across the street doing whatever he wants and you know what? He's just fine. But the scripture says one day he will die and face the judgment and so will I. Then I'm going to need to be saved. See salvation is really future, but the scripture speaks of it in the present tense. By the way, just that observation is going to speak volumes about the nature of salvation because the bible is basically saying I can acquire salvation today, but I don't need it yet and that's a big deal.

Now think of it this way, the Super Bowl is next week, right? It's in Detroit this year, is that right? And if I came up to somebody in the work room this week and I said, "Are you going to the Super Bowl?" They probably wouldn't say, "I hope so", right? If they said, "I hope so" you'd probably got no hope. See, but if I come up to someone and playing golf with them I say, "Hey man, are you going to the Super Bowl?" They say, "Yes I am." I'm going to assume something about that. They're going to have some kind of acquisition of a Super Bowl Ticket, and they've got it, and it's in a safe place and it's theirs and they have it. Now they're not at the Super Bowl yet. You don't need the ticket right now. But you kind of do need the ticket right now. You see how that works? You need the ticket, but you don't need it, not yet. You know when you really need the ticket? Next Sunday. That's when you need the ticket. But if you're going to the Super Bowl you can say, "Yes, I'm going to the Super Bowl", if you have the ticket in hand. Future, and yet you can have it now. And unlike the streets of Detroit, no scalping at the gates of the New Jerusalem. You either got to get your ticket in this life or you're going to face the judgment without a ticket.

You know what the problem is in the church, here's the thing of the non-Christian out there in the world, their hoping so. In the church unfortunately Satan has two ways to mess this up. He can mess up the definition of salvation and they can still say like the non-Christian on the street, "I hope so". But then they can also be hanging on to something that they think is a ticket and it's not. That's a whole other sermon series but we preached it about 8 months ago. If you were here at the outset it's the very first sermon series we preached here at Compass Bible Church. Very important we understand what the real thing, the real deal. One passage, maybe two, 1 John chapter 5 let's look at this one together, jot it down and turn there with me. This text I know most of us learn at a young age if you grew up in the church but know how important this is. When it comes to me saying, I can know for sure that I have a place in the kingdom and I'm saved from the bad stuff that I should get because of what I've done, I'm saved from the punishment of God but I can be sure now. You can see that it just fits that ticket analogy. And that's not how the average person views salvation, they're working on it, they're working toward it. Can't work toward it, you either got a ticket or you don't. 1 John chapter 5 verse 11, and this is the testimony, here it comes, God lets you try to get in to eternal life. Is that what it says? God will let you work toward it. God has given us eternal life. And there's a biblical word, "given us", it's a gift, he gives it. And this is the life that's in his Son. He who has the Son, guess what? You got life. He, who does not have the Son, does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. Just to state the plain fact that you can know proves

something about the nature of salvation. You can know you got it. And to know you got it as opposed to being working on getting it proves something about the nature of it. We'll drive that home in a minute.

By the way Jesus offered rest now, come enter this rest, I ought to turn there, 1 Peter chapter 1, let's go to that one. I know we talked about this so many times, we touched on it last time, we touched on it two weeks ago, but maybe all that's working up to the place in your life where you're saying, yeah I got to understand this, I got to hear it again. Let's talk about the acquisition of the ticket. We're talking about what's not involved in it, but let's talk about what is involved in it. 1 Peter chapter 1 look at verse 3 after the salutation, Peter says, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Who in his great mercy has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. New birth, new start, gift all of these concepts familiar, it's all based on mercy or grace. And into an inheritance, here's the thing about it, that can never perish, spoil or fade. Because that's the thing when you buy an expensive ticket my concern is maybe I'll lose it, I'll mess it up, you want to put it in a safe place. Here's the deal your reservation is kept in your pocket, it's kept in heaven for you. One of the best things about the airline industry when they went to ticketless travel, right? I love that. My problem was buying the ticket, travel agent gives it to you and you have that problem. Now you can just show up, they've got your reservation; it's kept in heaven for you. Who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. Tense of the salvation, past, present or future? Future. Can you see it? I mean really when you need the ticket it's in the future. You're shielded though, your reservation is kept and it's kept by God's power until the coming of the salvation that's ready to be revealed in the last time. Because when I'm really going to need it is when it's judgment time. I got to face God.

In this you greatly rejoice, whew and you're really relieved, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. And here's what we don't appreciate about trials, these have come so that your faith – which if it's real it's of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. That's future. But the point is faith in this life as it's tested it's either proved genuine or like the soils example by Christ the seed and the Sower, it's going to be proved to be phony. And if it's proved to be genuine, then man that's great and trials prove whether or not your faith is genuine which is a good thing about trials though we don't care for them. Verse 8, though you have not seen him, you love him, and even though the trials if you're hanging on to your confession, man look at that, even you don't see him now, you believe in him, you trust in him, and you're filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvations of your souls. It hinges on my trust in Christ. I believe him, I trust him, I'm confident. It's like the whole fear of flying thing. When you're in the plane there's nothing helpful about gripping the handles tightly, doesn't do a thing. Once you step on, they close the vault, and they're ready to take off, that's it, you have to trust the driver, you have to trust, because you can't do anything about it. Trust is about recognizing that if you're going to receive this thing that is valuable if it comes by someone else's effort, someone else's purchase, someone else's money, all you can do is trust. And if it's about trust then it's not about work.

Back to Hebrews 4, just look at your worksheet it's printed in the little box, for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work. Which by the way you might want to circle right after the 'k', right around where the comma is, and put a little star there in the margin or put a little 's' there because in the Greek language tone ergon and that's plural. Which kind of changes a little bit of the feel of this, doesn't it? For anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own works. What's

the point? Great, I can step into this place of saying, “I trust you now”, now I don’t have to do anything, see? You don’t have to do anything. Here’s the problem with the interpretation by the way for those of you who are still saying, “Well I don’t know if I trust this interpretation”. Verse number 10, if you perceive in verse number 10 that this rest is future and that one day we’re going to get into kingdom of God and we won’t have to do anything anymore you don’t understand the nature of the New Jerusalem. Jot this reference down, Revelation 22 verse 3, when we sit there in the New Jerusalem, that’s not a good intro. When we arrive in the New Jerusalem and live in the New Jerusalem, guess what we’re going to be doing? Working, serving, his servants, we’re still call Dulas, his servants will serve him. That will be our life. Now, we’ll serve him without sin, we’ll serve him without decrepit sin laden bodies. We’re going to serve him in a perfect place, with perfect relationships, it’s going to be great! But it’s still going to be work. We’re still going to be serving him. We don’t cease from good works when we get into the kingdom. So if the concept here is future it still doesn’t work, it’s present. We don’t get into future till verse 11. I’ll prove that next week. I said that already, but I’ll try to. For anyone who enters God’s rest, here’s God’s rest right here, get in and trust Christ. I’m going to step into this and you know what I cease from? My own works. What kind of works? A certain kind of works because the problem with the Jewish people who were sitting listening to this first century sermon from the writer of Hebrews, they were trying to do certain things that they think would curry God’s favor, they were giving the answer that we hear all the time, which was a 21st century problem and a 1st century problem and that is this: I hope I’m going to go to heaven. And the only way I can hope to get there is if I do enough good things. And the thing is if you step into his rest, guess what you cease from doing? Good things that will hopefully earn you a place in God’s family. Number 2 on your outline, let’s jot it down and we’ll prove this clearly, this a parable now, if you will or at least it’s understood as a parable, it’s an analogy. We’re going to go elsewhere to prove that this is what this is point is all about. But number 2 on your outline, stop trying to earn it.

2. Stop trying to earn it.

You can’t earn it. And your friends not only your unchurched friends but a lot of your church friends are saying, “I hope so”. And they’re saying, “I hope so” because what they think is I can do enough good things for God to say, “Great, you’re good enough for my family”. Can’t do that for the guy on the streets, says I’m going to enough good things that are going to outweigh the bad things. And that way when I stand before God on judgment day He’s going to say, “Wow, 65% good, that’s fantastic, enter into my kingdom!” But the problem is, it’s the rest of this, 35% that God, the Holy God of the universe must respond to in retribution. Why? Because he’s holy. He can’t let you in with 35% bad on your resume. What’s the point then? We get rid of the resume we exchange it for God’s resume, Christ’s resume, who’s fulfilled all righteousness, we step into this place of rest, what does that mean, we’re saved now, and you know what we cease from doing? Things where we try to earn God’s favor. I want to be acceptable. I want to do what’s right. It’s not just your unchurched friends and not your church friends who have this confused. There are whole religious systems based on this very fact. A lot of you grew up in them. You do this, you do this, you do this, and you keep on doing it and you will eventually get to heaven. And whatever 65% you got going on or maybe you’re really a holy Joe you got 80% good, you got 20% bad that’s right we’ll ship you on to an intermediate place and you can work off the 20% after you die. Sounding familiar, altar boys, right? It’s ridiculous, it’s heresy. It takes away from what this passage and all of the New Testament is all about when Jesus says I’ll do the work for you. You trust me, you step into this place of rest and you will cease from your works. What kind of works? The kind of works where you’re trying to earn or curry God’s favors. Stop it. Don’t do it.

Truth of this clearly stated, we're studying the book of Romans on Thursday nights, if you have not been coming to that, man we're getting to the good parts, although it's all been pretty good, I thought, but we're going to get to the really good parts. And let me give you a little preview from Romans chapter 3, so turn there. Keep your finger in Hebrews 4 and look at Romans chapter 3, what a great passage this is going to be. Because here's the bottom line, here's the message of Romans. Here it is, salvation is too expensive for you to purchase. Which by the way I looked up on the Internet to see what I could get some really nice seats for the Super Bowl for. I found a web site selling tickets for \$210,000 a piece. I'll take 5. Seriously, I got a family of 5, I want to go, I want those great seats. It's a million bucks. Here's the problem I can't afford it. I had to check the check registry but I'm thinking I can't afford it. And that's the problem. Every seat in the kingdom is too expensive for you, because you know what it costs? Perfection. You got that. Check your check registry. Baa. You don't have it. You're plumb out of perfection. We got a problem. You can't try to do a few good things or a lot of good things or everything good from this point on and hope to get in. You won't make it. Matter of fact verse 20 makes it crystal clear does it not, Romans 3:20, no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by observing the law. Yeah, except for the really good people. Nobody. Matter of fact all the law does is it makes of conscious of sin. What does that mean? The rules just convince us that we're not perfect. That's what the law does. But now, a righteousness guess where it comes from, from God, apart from the rules, has been made known, to which the law and the Prophets testify, the Old Testament spoke of it. Verse 22, this righteousness from God it comes through, a lot of church attendance and big checks in the offering plate. You see that there? It come through, here's the word, faith, trust. It comes through trust or faith in Christ Jesus to all who believe. There is no difference, all have sinned, I mean we're all qualified to trust in Christ, cause we're all sinners we fall short of God's glory. But we're freely justified by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because that's what was deserved, death, wages of sin is death, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Christ. He had to solve the problem himself. Where then is the boasting? Well, I guess if you didn't earn it you really can't boast about it. It's excluded. On what principal? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. Therefore what this text says enter into the rest and guess what you won't have to do anymore good works, it's doesn't mean was stop doing good, it means we stop doing a certain kind of goodness. What we call in theology a meritorious goodness. You stop doing things that you think are going to merit you a place in God's family. Stop! Because you can't earn it.

That's why a guy who lives an absolutely rotten life, absolutely rotten life, and at the last minute of his life, places his trust in Christ, guess what? Purgatory lasts a long time for him, right? What happens? Let's put it to a test. Jesus hanging on the cross, got a thief right next to him, he puts his trust in Christ, Jesus says, "Today" Does that torque you? It doesn't torque you because you've seen the water colored pictures of the three crosses. But what about the guy in the state penitentiary on MSNBC whose got all these tattoos all over his body and has killed a bunch of people and raped a bunch of people and stolen all your property and he sits there and gets Jesus in jail. That guy torques you though, doesn't he? Because you're thinking that old geezer dies in jail you're telling me he's going to the same place I'm going to? No way, do you know what that proves? You don't understand grace. Because the thing about it is you exchange your resume for his. It's not works that gets you there. How can God let that rat in at the last minute? Same way He let you in. OK? It's called grace. Jot the reference down, you know it, Titus 3:5, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, that's not the point, he saved us purely out of his mercy, through

washing and rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. So that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs of the hope of eternal life.

So far, you're still like, I know all this stuff, I know this, yeah, should have stayed home today. Here's the problem with you church goers, and I'm included. We understand that we get into the family of God by trusting in Christ. No brainer, heard it all my life, I understand it. Here's the problem. You have the Galatian disease. The Galatian disease is, I understand I get in it by faith but here's the thing I feel like I have to earn my keep to stay in. And here's what Paul said about that, Galatians chapter 3, we ought to turn to this one, Galatians chapter 3. The problem is we think we have to do good works to stay in. Now here's the foolishness of this, if you can't do anything to get in, you can't do anything to stay in, because it's all about grace. Now I know this leaves some wide open gaping concerns and that's why we need part 4 of this series next week. So don't miss that. Galatians chapter 3 he says this, oh you misguided Galatians, is that what he says? This is a harsh word, "hey stupid", I mean that's what he's saying, "hey dumb dumb Galatians, what's wrong with you, you retarded, what's wrong Galatian people? That's what he's saying, you're stupid. Who bewitched you? You have some kind of wizard come in and steal your brain? What's wrong with you? Before you're very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. That's the crux of the matter, because Jesus on the cross said it's finished. That was the sacrifice for sin. Don't you know that we preached Christ crucified so that you don't have to be punished by God? That was the whole message. Keep reading, verse 2. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law? Well, no of course we got in by faith, of course. Or did you get in by believing what you heard? Well, that's it, letter B, are you so foolish after beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Stop it. Stop trying to earn it. You can't do it. Imagine your kids, the Mitchell's came up and told us about adopting children from China, remember that, was that last week? Now can you imagine, you might say, well I understand that they didn't go there and have their daughter flashing \$100 bills in their face to get adopted. They adopted that child out of pure grace. The child did nothing to earn a place in the Mitchell family. Now they stand up on the stage, they've got this beautiful daughter that they have adopted, and it's a beautiful picture of our relationship with God. Can you imagine if the Mitchell daughter every week came to the parents and said, "Hey, I've got \$20 here, can I stay in a little bit longer?" "Uhh...it's not necessary." "Oh, ok, just checking." Next week, "Well, you know, I got part of my allowance here. I've been saving up. I just want to give it to you, so that I can stay a part of your family." You know what the parents would do? I mean eventually they'd say, "Stop it, you don't understand adoption. You don't understand it. You don't get it. You didn't get here because you paid for it, and you can't stay here by paying for it. Adoption is permanent, and it's by grace." You've got to understand this people. When you start freaking out in your mind, because you've stumbled in the Christian life, and we all do, right? And you start going through this thing, oh, God's going to kick me off the team. This isn't baseball, you realize? This isn't little league, this is not some kind of "I will be good enough to stay on the team", this is about grace. Just as you would be offended by someone trying to buy their way into your family, that would be bad enough, how about paying to stay in the family. It just doesn't make any sense. Stop trying to earn it. Stop trying to earn it to get in. Stop trying to earn it to stay in. You don't pay to stay. There's a good line. Let's say that one again, you don't pay to stay. And you don't pay to get in. I like that one.

Hebrews chapter 4 verse 10, you can enter it now, you can acquire salvation now, for anyone how enters the rest, it's now, it's God's rest and you enter it, also rests from his own works (plural literally tone ergon plural, doesn't matter word singular, plural – I don't have to earn my place here). Now, note this phrase, just as God did from his. Now this is a double-entendre here, right?

This is an analogy, so this reads like a parable bible students. Gerhamanautical capson. Here we go, now we've just talked about God's rest in a multiplicity of ways. We've talked about God's rest in the 7th day, we talked about ceremonial rest, we talked about rest in Canaan, we talked about spiritual rest in Psalms, we talked about rest the writer of Hebrews is talking about, now what kind of rest are we talking about? Just as God did from his, see the analogy here is parallel to why I don't need to work to stay in. The reason I don't work to stay in I already quoted it because Christ on the cross said, "Totelisti", it is finished. It's done, it's paid for, it's over, the payment has been made. And if the payment has been made, all I have to do is trust in the finished work of God.

3. Rely on God's completed work

Number 3 on your outline, this is what it's all about, it's what trust is about, it's about reliance, it's a good verb let's use it, rely on God's completed work. And if you want to be specific, it was carried out by the 2nd person of the Godhead, it was carried out by the Messiah, Jesus Christ. I'm relying on the completed work of the Messiah. I'm relying on God's completed work in Christ. He's done with his work, it's all paid for, all we're doing stepping into the family is relying what's already been done. Note takers, jot down these references and you can look them up later, just within the book of Hebrews. Here is the references in the book of Hebrews to Jesus' work being complete. The phrase that the writer of Hebrews likes to use is that, "He sat down at the right hand of the Father". What does that mean? It's all done. He's done his work. We saw it in chapter 1 verse 3, where he said after providing purifications for sins; he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. How about this one, chapter 8 verse 1, he's saying at what point are we saying this: We do have such a high priest, who has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, he's done his high priestly work. How about this one chapter 10 verse 12, but when this priest, Christ, had offered himself for all time one sacrifice for sins, then he sat down at the right hand of God. How about this chapter 12 verse 2, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and then he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. There's a theme in the book of Hebrews, and that's Jesus is finished with the work, he's done it. Here's another phrase within Hebrews, and you should jot these references down, different heading on this one, not "sat down at the right hand", but how about this, the phrase repeated throughout Hebrews, "once for all". Once for all, it's done once, and it applies for all and it applies for all time. How about this one, chapter 7 verse 27, unlike the other high priests, he doesn't need to offer sacrifices day after day, here's the thing, he sacrificed for their sins once for all, he offered himself. Chapter 9 verse 12, he didn't enter by means of the blood of goats and bulls; he entered into the Most Holy Place by his own blood having obtained eternal redemption once for all. How about chapter 9 verse 26, then Christ, if were the way of the old covenant, would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But that's not the case with Christ, he's now appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Chapter 10 verse 2, if those offerings could satisfy sin, he said, they would not have stopped being offered. But the worshipers instead now have been cleansed once for all. I love that. Chapter 10 verse 10, and by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Christ once for all. Now I was reluctant to give you the laundry list there, but 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, 7:27, 9:12, 9:26, 10:2, 10:10 he's trying to say something about Christ. It's done, it's finished. And if it's finished, you can step into it and you know when you step into Christ's finished work, it's finished.

Now here's the deal, the realization of it is future. Somebody has paid for the great \$210,000 Super Bowl tickets, they're already paid for. You have one in hand, and whenever you step through the threshold of this life, you've got what you need. And the question is do I have real faith? Do I have

the real gospel? Am I holding on to the right ticket? And if you are, it's paid for, it's done. I use the illustration many times, but it's much like the homerun, right? Picture yourself the pinch runner for the designated hitter who parks one over the fence. No one can tag you out, you just run, just a little running, I could do this. Run from base to base, touch the little white bag and come on home, because it's all done. It's been earned by someone else. You're running a race of faith. We're going to stride into home plate, we're going to be protected and it's all because Christ has done the work for us. George Meuler put it this way, a great man of faith by the way, he said, "The beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety." And if you ever sit and wondering where do I stand with Christ, you've got to realize what an insult that is to the finished work of Christ. What you need to do is make sure, matter of fact, you need to fear you've even got the right Gospel. But if you've got the right Gospel and you're clutching it by faith, it's done. And if someone comes up to you in the lobby and says, "Are you going to heaven?" you can say, "Absolutely because of the finished work of Christ and I trusting that."

One last passage to jot down, it's a great text, 2 Corinthians chapter 3 it may seem for the person who's highly religious in a different religious system that that's a really arrogant, boastful thing to say. Listen to the apostle Paul. Such confidence as this is ours; I love this, 2 Corinthians 3:4-5, Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. I know I've got a place at the table. It's not because of me but because of Christ. He says, not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, we're sinners. But our confidence it comes from God. And specifically it's through Christ. You know, I don't think you realize, maybe if that's the gospel and it's all just old hat to you, I don't think you realize what a different religious system you're adhering to than rest of the world. It's a very unique position. Go talk to any of your religious friends about eternal security, they don't have it. We can leave today, if our faith is genuine and say, its done deal, paid for, paid in full. I got a ticket, I'm in. What does that mean now? Coast? Come back next week we'll answer that question. Let's pray.

God help us please, to be confident, a kind of confidence that the apostle Paul was referring to there in 2 Corinthians, a confidence that may seem to the world just super arrogant. Wow, how can you say that, how can you know you have a place at the table in the kingdom? How do you know that you're not going to get slammed for your sins after you die? The bible is really clear, because we have major confidence in Christ, and if he said it's finished, if he said it's been paid in full, if he has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, if he has offered himself once for all, then we know the work is done and the payment has been made in full and we're resting in him. And we've rested in him, we're no longer screwing around trying to garner the favor of God. We've ceased from those kinds of works that kind of work is done, we're resting in the finished work of Christ. We thank you for that simple central truth of the gospel. God may it be a reality for every person here. If there's someone that doesn't, they don't know, they're not sure about their placement in the kingdom. God I pray that they would examine themselves and as we saw two weeks ago, test themselves to see if they're of the faith. If their faith is genuine, if it's rightly place, God if it's not, that today they would just by the knowledge of what's been preached this afternoon that they would say to you, as they reach out to you, say, "Yes God, I am defiantly ready to place my trust in what you have done, not what I can do, I recognize my sin and my guilt, I want to turn from that in repentant faith and trust you." God if that's the case, I know their life will be changed because your spirit will indwell them and as Galatians 3 says they will acquire a relationship with the living God through the Holy Spirit because of that response of faith is a gift from you and it will change their lives. Then God I pray they would never like the Galatians be tempted to try and earn their keep, but rather they would continue to trust you day by day, knowing that you've earned a place for us in the family of God. And God I know it doesn't lead to licenses we'll look at next week, to



do whatever we want, it's going to lead to a humble penitent obedience, and God we just look forward to examining that part of this passage next week, that you would encourage us to be people that out of gratitude and gratefulness we would respond to your grace by serving you faithfully. God we love you so much for this formula that's clearly spelled out in scripture. Make us faithful to what I pray in Jesus name, Amen.