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WHAT IS JESUS DOING NOW

Hebrews 7:25

INTRODUCTION:

Christ having begun with the cross, ended with an empty tomb, a resurrection and an ascension. But what is Christ doing now?

It is amazing that the present work of our Lord is rarely considered.

The author of the book of Hebrews answers that question. To him the death, the resurrection, the ascension are viewed as necessary prelude to the crowning act which is the enthronement of Jesus as intercessor for his people.

This intercessor is our representative, our advocate, our friend in court, our lawyer.

The writer of Hebrews says wherefore he is able to save and seeing he ever liveth, shall make intercession for us.

What good would the death of Jesus do if he didn't follow it up with intercession. Why this would mean that after he returned to Heaven, he would have forgotten us. The New Testament insists that Jesus continues to live for the very purpose of interceding for us. The present work of Jesus is told in the four books of the New Testament.

In Matthew, we have the lawyer and his client. In Romans, the lawyer and the accused prisoner. In I John, the lawyer and the penitent repeater. In Hebrews, the lawyer and the final disposition of the case.

I. THE LAWYER AND HIS CLIENT

First, we have the lawyer and the only client he represents. The writer of Hebrews makes it clear that Christ intercedes only for them that come to God through him.

Matthew 10:32-33. Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men - him will I confess also before my Father, which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father, which is in Heaven.

Our confession of faith in Christ means that we ask him to take our case. This is the starting point. A man on trial for his life, who desires to defend himself, would do well to get a good lawyer.

Everyone of us is on trial. God has declared the whole world guilty before him. He has accused us and brought us into court. Any sinner would be foolish indeed to attempt to defend himself before the bar of a holy God.

We sinners need someone to represent us. We need a mediator - a well qualified lawyer. And God has provided one when we confess him as Lord and Saviour, Jesus takes our case. And he confesses us - he intercedes for us before the Father.

He only intercedes for the ones who come to God through him.

Listen to this lawyer - John 17:9. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me. For they are thine. The only client our Lord

takes is the one who comes to God through him. Confess me, says Jesus. And him will I confess before the Father which is in Heaven. Deny me before men and him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven. Our Lord intercedes to them who have asked him to take their case.

II. THE LAWYER AND THE ACCUSED PRISONER - Romans 8:33-34

Our past guilt.

This is a courtroom scene. Paul asked the question, who is he that condemneth. That is, who would act as judge to condemn the prisoner. Well, there are many enemies who condemn us for our past guilt and rightly so. These enemies will never leave us alone. The moral law, our past guilt, our past sins, a bad conscience, the Devil - the chief adversary. But the great question is, will Christ the judge condemn us for our past guilt. Listen, to Paul, as he gives four answers. Who is he that condemneth. Not Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again. Who is at the right hand of God who also makes intercession for us.

In this one verse are the oldest beliefs of the early church. Has the prisoner sinned. Christ died for those sins. Is the prisoner guilty. Christ rose for his justification. Is the prisoner without influence in the court. Christ sits at the right hand of God. Is the prisoner unable to answer the charges against him. Christ makes intercession for him. Here is a verdict for the prisoner. He is not guilty - the trial is over and the case is dismissed.

III. THE LAWYER AND THE PENITENT REPEATER - I John 2:1

Our present sins. What happens to the freed prisoner when he falls again. This is a question that is asked repeatedly.

My little children, these things write I unto you - that you sin not. Sin, in the life of a Christian is a reality. It is a terrifying discouraging reality. Many good people have planned and claimed total lack of sin in their lives. In this respect, the over-whelming majority of us must admit frustration and defeat.

If sinlessness is a present accomplishment for the Christian, rather than the goal, then I have not achieved it. In this, I am a miserable failure. First of all, when the apostle writes, sin not, this greatly discourages me. I wish, I hope, I pray, I strive for such perfection. As I think all sincere Christians do.

What discourages me in this, when I pray my soul doesn't always rise to Heaven. When I study, I don't always concentrate. When God speaks, he doesn't always get my attention.

When I should be listening - I am too busy. In the very act of living and serving, many times I find that I might have a bad spirit which arises in me. I seek to control my impatience. I mean to love everyone and then someone comes along who irritates me.

In my very best moments when I repent of all resentments, irritations, lusts, and self love, and yield them completely to God and ask him to purge me from these sins - I arise clean, warm-hearted, and joyful.

But those high moments, though they are real, they never seem to be permanent. And I am sure somewhere along the way, to fail.

Other people preach and write books on the victorious life, or victorious living, the deeper life. For them the sky is blue, the grass is green, their problems are solved. Their victory over sin is constant.

With me it is always a race to run. A battle to fight.

We may win today but we'll lose tomorrow. Why can't I have a conscience that is constant and void of offense.

Albert Sweitzer said, "A good conscience is an invention of the Devil."

Alexander Whyte said, "The saint has a conscience far too sharp for his own good." Well, I'm not a saint in that sense, but I know that my conscience is far too sharp for my own peace of soul. When John says "sin not" - this greatly discourages one. Is there no end to this struggle, against sin - is it always sinning and repenting. And sinning again. Is there no hope for the penitent repeater.

Happy for me and the rest of us, John added, and if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. Now this I can understand. This encourages me. It helps me to know that John included himself. This statement is not a license to deliberately sin and to keep on sinning. Such a person regardless of his profession of faith has no advocate. He needs a Saviour.

John is speaking to sinning and discouraged children of God, who have help. A lawyer who will handle your case. So if our sins are confessed and repented, as a result, we will prevail with him.

This should give us comfort. I suppose that the main doubt that any of us have about our final salvation is whether our many failures will provoke God to cast us off. We are told that Christ lives to make intercession for us. By living and interceding he preserves our relationship with the Father.

Our Lord's present work of intercession for us is not temporary but continuous. Not interrupted but unbroken.

Someone has said the early church never prayed "Jesus pray for us". They didn't have too - and neither do we. Our Lord delights in interceding for us.

We have one who never fails to intercede for a penitent repeater.

IV. THE LAWYER AND THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE CASE --- OUR FUTURE GLORY.

We carry this intercessory work one step farther. The final step. The accused prisoner in his past guilt, not only is represented, even when he repeats. And in his present sinning, we have a lawyer who stays with us until the final distribution of the case in the future glory.

In our text, it says, we are saved unto the uttermost. This passage tells us that Jesus keeps on, until the case is concluded.

Ministers preach sermons on salvation -- we were saved, we are being saved, we shall be saved. This is Scriptural. Or sermons on eternal security - we were saved by the power of God, we are being kept by the power of God, we shall finally persevere by the power of God. This is also Scriptural.

But why are we being saved now, and from what, why shall we finally persevere unto the end.

If we leave out of our work and preaching the present work of Jesus, we can not maintain constant insurance that we will escape discouragement in the Christian life.

The answer to the question is simple. We are being saved now because of the loving work of our Saviour, who has not forgotten us.

We are kept now and shall finally persevere unto a glorious end. Both are implied in this verse. Seeing he ever lives to make intercession. That is until he can present his own to the Father and altogether glorious church in his eye. Free from spot, wrinkle, or any other disfigurement.

Eph. 5:27. Col. 1:22. He will present everyone of his wholly and unblameable - and unreprouvable in his sight. This is the goal - this is the end result. And this is for this purpose, that Jesus ever lives and intercedes. That Jesus is alive for the purpose of continually making intercession for us. The picture is employed and the reference a common practice among seafaring people of that day. When it speaks of the priest having an anchor within the veil. V. 19-20. Whenever a ship came to port and was unable to enter the quiet haven of the harbor because of a sand bar and low tide, a man in a small boat would take the ship's anchor across the bar. And secure it within the safety of the protective harbor. Henceforth,

the ship might be called upon to endure the fury of the sea for a period, but after a short time, it too - with the rising of the tide would be able to enter the haven of rest. Where it completed it's assigned task and delivered it's cargo.

The word uttermost is a great word. It has two qualities which means all and a word of quantity which is a word of reach and means extent. He is able to save to the utmost that is, in him, full provision in quantity and full provision in duration.

Thus the word salvation with which we are all familiar is seen in all the fullness of it's glory. We may look back, we were saved. Thinking of the present, say, we are being saved. And lifting our eyes and looking on we can say, now salvation is nearer than we believe.

Eddie Liberman, many years ago was in a federal jail. Waiting for his trial to come up. While there, he was converted. After six months of waiting the trial took place in Greenwood, S. C. He stood before a federal judge, Judge Watkins of Anderson, S. C. He read out his crime, and his past scraps with the law and asked, how do you plead. Eddie replied, "guilty" - what else could I say, he said. The officers and federal agents have done a good job. They had my complete record, names, dates, convictions - twice before my finger prints had been registered in Washington.

The Judge said do you have anything to say before I pass sentence.

Eddie said, "Your Honor, I ask for the mercy of the court."

The Judge replied with this record, I don't find much room for mercy.

Then he did a strange thing - so unusual that it was written up in the local newspaper - The Greenwood Index. The Judge turned to the courtroom crowd and said is there anyone here that has anything to say in defense. There was a stir among the people. Then one after another, all of it unexpected by the prisoner, people got up and addressed the bench. Mrs. Hagan, a 70 year old woman, who introduced him to Christ, told the judge of his conversion. Major R. B. Curry, President of the Citizen's Trust Company, visited the prisoner while he was in prison and felt that he was a changed individual. Former cell mates testified that they had lived with him and that he was changed and had lived a sincere Christian life. And then there was silence.

The Judge looked at the prisoner and said, "Young man, because of these who spoke in your behalf, I sentence you in one hour's custody of the United States Marshall. I suspend that." The prisoner was set free.


However, one day, that prisoner will have to appear before the Judge of all the earth. And he will have to give an account of the things done in the body. God's record will be more exact. Deeds, thoughts, words, intentions, feelings, motives -- all written down. All of it read out. How do you plead thunders a voice. "Guilty" the prisoner will have to reply.

Do you have anything to say before the judgement sentence is passed. The voice will say. Like the man without a wedding garment, the prisoner will be speechless. Then the voice will continue - is there anyone here that cares to speak for this prisoner. And of course, this prisoner will note that a lawyer steps forth - and he will say, I acknowledge that he belongs to me and to you. This lawyer will say, this man asked me to take his case many years ago, he paid for his crimes by my blood and death.

God will say, my child, because my son died for you - and you asked him to handle your case - I declare you completely free. We want you to spend eternity with us and the rest of the family. The court will ring with shouts and praises unto him who died, rose, and ascended, and interceded.

John says of Jesus - having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them until the end. John 13:1. He who was the friend of sinners while on earth, is still your friend in Heaven. He who was our friend in the early years of conversion, is our friend today. And will be our friend forever. When the sun has ceased to shine and the Heavens have passed away, he will remain our everlasting friend.

He, who, lost none of his while on earth will lose none of his while in Heaven.

 Daniel Polling, the editor of the Christian Herald for many years, one day received a call from his son who was away in college. He wanted to talk to his Father. He didn't want anybody to know about it, not even his Mother. So he came to his father's study, he sat down across the desk, and he said -- "Father, I want to ask you two or three questions. What do you know about God? And how do you know there is a God?" And two or three other questions relative to faith. Dr. Polling said that he told his son, "I don't know that I can explain all the questions that you have submitted. But what I know about God, I know real good." After their little conversation, the boy went on back to school. Later, you will remember, that it was on the Warchester on which four chaplains gave up their life preserves that other people might survive. This boy that had

been in his father's study, and asked him that question - was one of those four chaplains. He had learned that Jesus interceded for him and there on the deck of that sinking ship, he was making intercession for others.

Now this is what Jesus is doing today. He is interceding. The question is whether or not you want him for your lawyer. Whether or not you want him to take your case. Whether or not you are willing for him to plead your cause.