

A CONFIDENT FAITH FOR CONTROVERSIAL TIMES

13. "Relying on a Better Hope!"

Scripture: Hebrews 7:18 – 28.

Theme: "The Mosaic Law lacked the power to make men better, but with faith in Christ there is grace to make men new!"

Introduction

We live in a day in which people are open to spirituality, but not necessarily to Christianity. The majority of people today still believe in a God. The definition of that God most often is subject to a person's own imagination or is defined by some religion or cult.

As we have mentioned before, it is not unusual for people to view God from their own conclusions. What is necessary, in light of such conflicting perspectives, is for God to reveal Himself...for God to make Himself known. This is the confidence of the Christian faith. We believe that God has made Himself known, not through a variety of teachings or philosophical propositions, but in and through the unique history and experiences of a peculiar people – the Jews. That revelation comes to it's fullness in the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, for whom the Jews were waiting for a thousand years.

The reality is but the beginning of a true spiritual journey to know God. There is a world of difference between knowing about this God who revealed Himself, and knowing God. You can know about God from having a degree in theology, but you can only know God from a devotional life that draws you near to His heart.

Knowing God and having access to Him – these are the hallmarks of true religion.

But herein lies the problem, between sinful humanity and a Holy God stretches an abyss that no amount of religious fervor or good deeds can span. What is needed is a bridge.

The good news of this letter to the Hebrews is that this "better hope," through which we draw near to God is found in Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:17). Through Him we have access to God. (Jn. 14:6). He is our High Priest, our Mediator, and our Bridge to God. (1 Tim 2:5; Heb. 8:6). He is the one, the only one, who can open the way to God, and He does it perfectly and permanently. Once you know Jesus and approach God through Him, you never again need another human priest or set of regulations or rituals to follow. Jesus is the Superior Priest, a subject which the writer spends the bulk of the next four chapters.

In this study, the author compares and contrasts the Levitical priesthood with the priesthood of Jesus Christ to determine which gives the better hope.

I. **You Can Be Sure of Your Salvation** (7:18 – 22),

1. On what basis did Jesus become a priest? (7:15 – 16).
 - On what basis does the author claim that He could become a priest “forever?” (16 – 17).
2. Why was the law “set aside?” (7:18 – 19). In what sense had it failed? (7:11, 18 – 19).
3. What is the meaning of the expression “a better hope?” (7:19).
 - What is now possible for the first time for sinful man? See also (4:14, 16).
4. What is the next reason the author presents that Jesus’ Priesthood is superior? (7:20 – 22).
 - What is the significance of that oath?
 - What comfort can we Christians find in Jesus’ role as our High Priest?

II. **You Can Be Secure In Your Salvation.** (7:23 – 25).

1. Why is there no permanence in the old priesthood? (7:23).
 - How does the writer contrast this fact with Jesus? (7:24).

2. What is the advantage of a priesthood being permanent? (7:25).

- How is the Resurrection of Jesus important in this discussion? (I Cor. 15:17 – 19, 20 – 22).

3. Examine the words: “Always” and “to intercede.” What do these words mean in this context? (7:26).

- What specifically does Jesus do in His Ministry in our behalf?
- In what can Christ’s Priesthood give us confidence regarding our salvation? (See also John 10:14, 18, 28; Rom. 8:39).

III. **You Can Have Stability From Your Salvation.** (7:26 – 28).

1. What is Jesus, our High Priest, like? (7:26).

- Define the words used to describe Jesus in verse 26.
- How has the writer portrayed Jesus’ Priesthood in other chapters? (2:18; 4:15; 5:8 – 9).

2. In what final way is Jesus Superior as a High Priest? (7:27).

- What did the Levitical Priests have to do before they could offer sacrifices for the people? (7:27).

3. What further contrasts are made in verses 27 and 28 between the priesthood of Jesus and that of the Old Testament high priests?
 - What did they do that Jesus never did and what did Jesus do which they never did?

4. In what way can Christ's Priesthood give us confidence to draw near to God?
 - What if you are not 'perfect' and you sinned and know you are unworthy...can you still come? (7:11, 18).

Application

1. How secure in your salvation do you feel having Jesus as your High Priest?

2. How has this Chapter, explaining Jesus' High Priestly office, given you a "better Hope?"

3. How can you make a special effort this next week to draw near to God?