

Hebrews



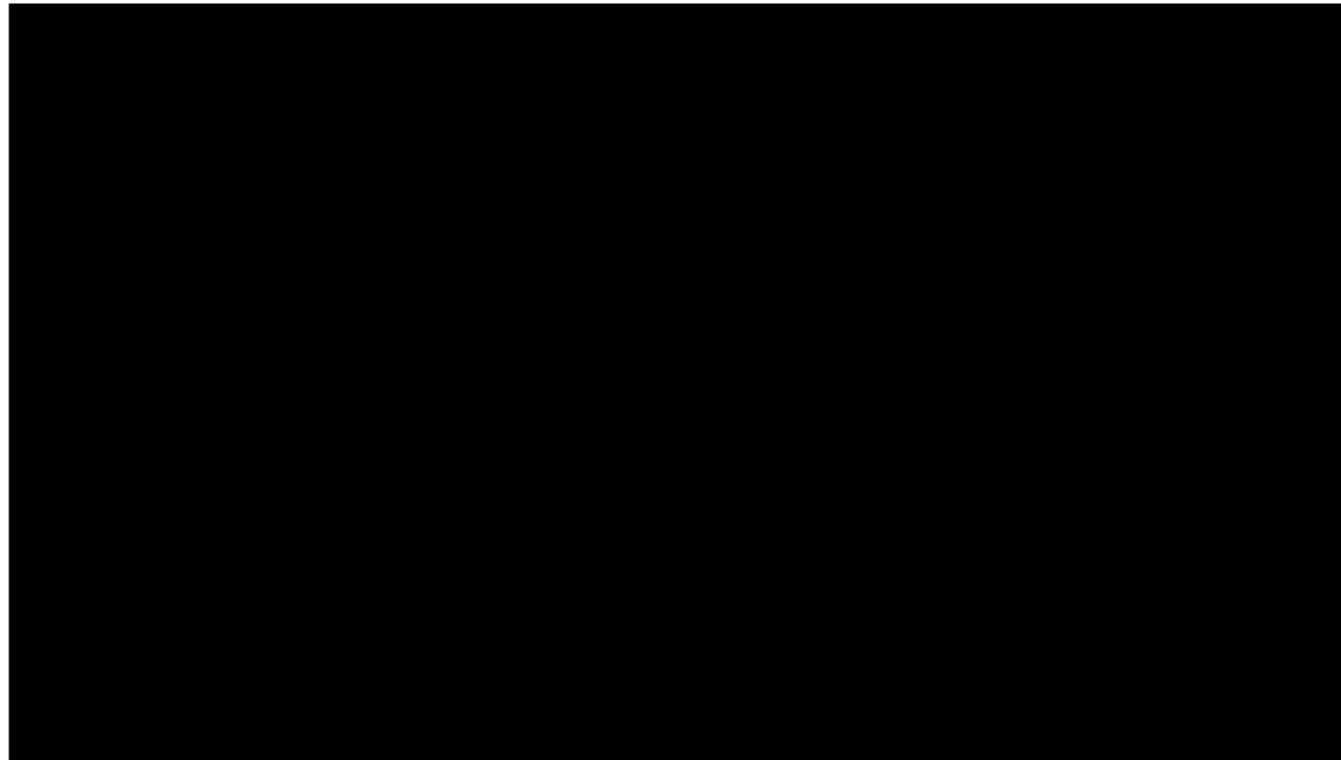
**Promises
Faithfully
Kept**

Hebrews 9.11-28 (ESV)

Jesus is Superior



Intro: Valley of Vision prayer read aloud



Have you fallen for the deception? Have you fallen for the deception that sin and sacrifice are antiquated concepts that do not have an appropriate place in our vocabulary, much less to be considered in our daily lives?

One hundred years ago last a sermon was delivered that was the anthem for theological liberalism, calling for a form of Christianity that was ripped free from its doctrinal beliefs, ripped free from the Christ of Scripture. The preacher advocated for a Christianity that conformed to the society around it. He was not just advocating for culture to be in the conversation, which it should be part of the dialogue. He was advocating for culture to control and dictate the conversation. If Christianity did not compromise and follow the lead of culture, he basically argued, then it would cease to be able to reach people with its message. Rather, he claimed that time and history would show God was on their side. His view was the banner of what would become mainline Protestantism, those claiming to have a form of godliness but denying its power, denying the need for a savior to die in our place for sin, denying that God inspired men to write the words of Scripture in their own style but every letter inspired and infallible, denying the miracles within Scripture, including the virgin birth, denying that Jesus is to return visibly and physically, offering only self-reassurance. They would prefer a god who is as open to change as they were. The preacher asserted that time would show God is on the side of giving up truth in order to fit in with the world.

100 years later, Tim Keller looked back on Christianity in America to offer critique. Keller does a much better job of accurately representing those he is writing about than the earlier preacher.

Mainline Protestantism is dying away because it has no gospel message to offer to the people of our culture. There is no good news that confronts sin in them. And so there is no reason or benefit to show up for a social group that will simply affirm all the things you want to do away from it.

But Keller also wrote an article on the American evangelical church that has continued to proclaim the gospel without compromising the message. The evangelical church is waning in influence with culture because we've stopped going to the world with love and proclamation. We are to continue holding to the truths of Scripture and about Scripture and are to love our neighbor practically. We are to engage intellectually from a Christian worldview. We are to be witnesses within our current generation.

The other day I spoke to a guy younger than me on the church's property. After approaching him and getting to know him, he asked if I owned the church. His question was both heartbreaking and encouraging. It was heartbreaking because it revealed that there is a generation of Americans now in the workplace who have no concept of the church, much less of the gospel and salvation. It was encouraging because he was open to discussion and because his unbelief is not one of antagonism but one of ignorance.

The world needs the gospel of Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice has secured complete forgiveness with God and an eternal inheritance of life with God in His very presence as those welcome to be there.

**11 But when Christ appeared as
a high priest of the good things
that have come,**

**then through the greater and
more perfect tent (not made
with hands, that is, not of this
creation)**

12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

**13 For if the blood of goats and
bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled
persons with the ashes of a heifer,
sanctify for the purification of the
flesh,**

**14 how much more will the
blood of Christ, who through the
eternal Spirit offered himself
without blemish to God, purify
our conscience from dead
works to serve the living God.**

**15 Therefore he is the mediator
of a new covenant, so that
those who are called may
receive the promised eternal
inheritance,**

**since a death has occurred that
redeems them from the
transgressions committed
under the first covenant.**

**16 For where a will is involved,
the death of the one who made
it must be established.**

17 For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.

**18 Therefore not even the first
covenant was inaugurated
without blood.**

**19 For when every
commandment of the law had
been declared by Moses to all
the people, he took the blood of
calves and goats,**

**with water and scarlet wool and
hyssop, and sprinkled both the
book itself and all the people,**

20 saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” 21 And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.

22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own,

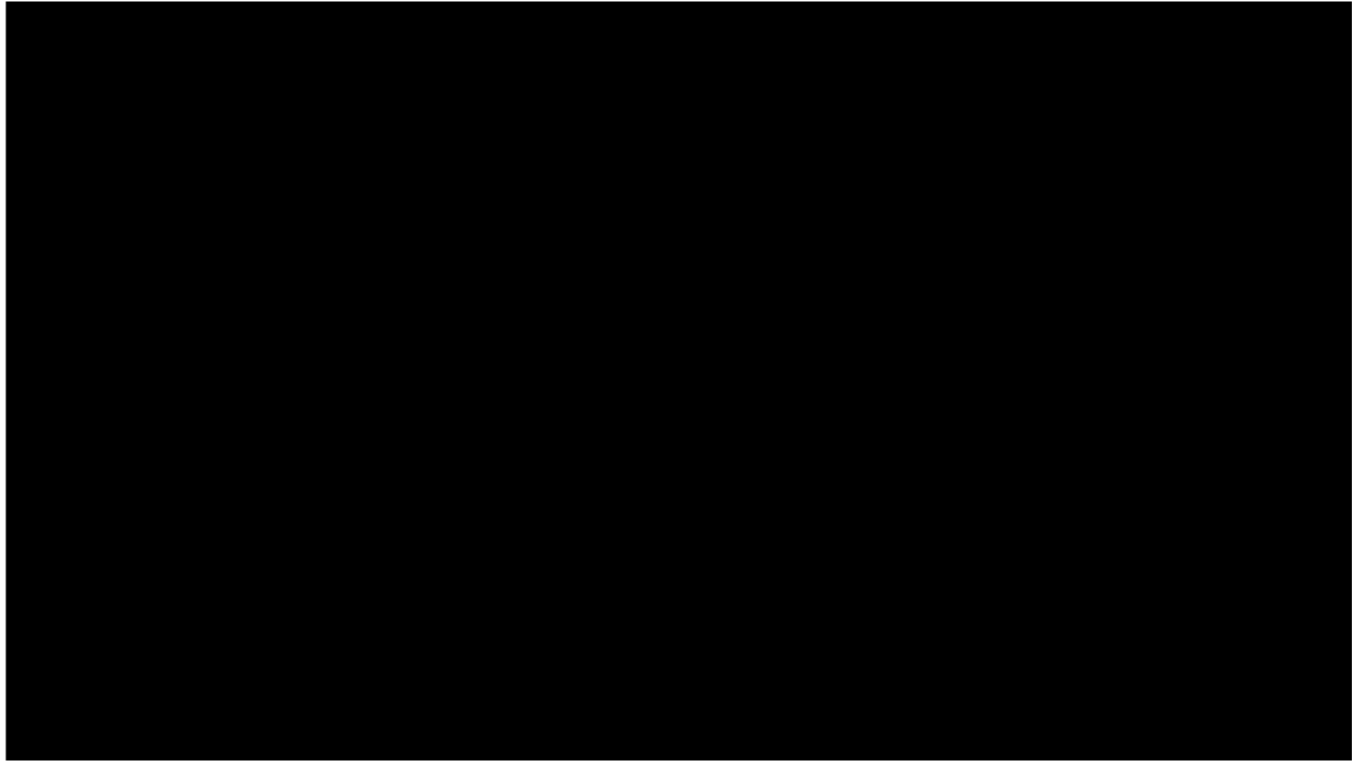
**26 for then he would have had
to suffer repeatedly since the
foundation of the world.**

**But as it is, he has appeared
once for all at the end of the
ages to put away sin by the
sacrifice of himself.**

**27 And just as it is appointed for
man to die once, and after that
comes judgment,**

**28 so Christ, having been
offered once to bear the sins of
many, will appear a second
time,**

**not to deal with sin but to save
those who are eagerly waiting
for him.**



Pray

**Jesus Christ is the Superior High Priest,
has made the Superior offering for sin,
in the Superior Sanctuary of Heaven, establishing the Superior covenant in His blood. (vv. 11–12)**

Jesus Christ is the Greater High Priest, who has made the Greater offering of his own substitutionary death, in the Greater Sanctuary of Heaven, establishing the Greater covenant in His blood, securing eternal redemption and forgiveness for those who trust in Him. (vv. 11–12)

o I've been avoiding using the phrase "Jesus is Greater" until now. We could say that about phrase about all of Hebrews, but we would be missing out on so many great details about Christ and salvation. But the author is clearly making that point now loud and clear. He has been laying the conceptual foundation for this statement by teaching in detail on the Sinai covenant.

o We need to appreciate Christ's sacrifice and redemption by which the Spirit fills the people of God and by which we enter into God's presence. The author of Hebrews has been helping us understand that God chose to lay that groundwork for many centuries before the virgin birth. We are tempted to trivialize or dismiss our sin, even more so to mock the richness of Christ's sacrifice. Can't we have just the cliff notes of the gospel and skate through our days on whispers of how God likes us? How does a cliff notes version of Christianity offer you help when you face news of senseless murder of children, when you learn that people you once respected lied and abused others, when loved ones are sick with cancer? How does a cliff notes version of Jesus ever confront your own sinfulness and sin?

Let us appreciate the depths of the gospel, of this salvation that Christ secured for us by offering His substitutionary death in our place to God to unite us to God.

**Jesus's offering of Himself is
Greater than the blood of
animals.**

**His sacrifice brings eternal
forgiveness and perfect
cleansing. (vv. 13–14)**

Jesus made the Greater offering than the blood of animals that brings eternal forgiveness and perfect cleansing. (vv. 13–14)

o The effectiveness of the Tabernacle system in its time because God set it up

■ Day of Atonement

• At the heart of the Tabernacle system was the understanding that God was providing substitutes to die in the place of people. It was not just any sacrifice. It had to be spotless animals according to the specifications God gave. It had to be a sacrifice that had blood because blood showed that there was life in the substitute, life that had to be taken, causing the substitute to die instead of God's people. His people were never to sacrifice other human beings like the religions around them. They were not to bring any random animal. They were to make an offering by means of the priests. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest had to make an offering for Himself before making an offering for the people's sins.

• Bull and ram, bull for priest's own sins

• 2 goats, one representing the people to take God's wrath in their place, one to go away and never return, bearing the guilt of their sins away. (propitiation AND expiation; goats represented and anticipated Christ; explain them and "Author of Hebrews is presenting Christ as the fulfillment of the Old. As Augustine summed up, The Old lays the foundation for and anticipates the new; the New reveals and fulfills the Old.")

■ But it had to be repeated annually, as it only covered the sins of that year up to that point since the last Day of Atonement and did not cleanse the people from the inside out. The people at large had consciences still in rebellion against God.

• Conscience is the channel or means by which we interpret right and wrong, whether we believe we are relating rightly to God or not. Conscience is not ultimate in determining truth, but we must have consistent consciences if we hope to line up with truth. Like on a compass, our conscience is the needle. If the needle is off, it will not stay pointing north even if we turn the compass that way.

o But Christ Jesus's sacrifice and offering of Himself secured eternal redemption from sin as He accomplished it. The Holy Spirit led Him to die in our place and raise again. By the Spirit's application of this grace to us, we are made new. Jesus did not sacrifice himself in the earthly temple made by human hands. He gave himself as a

sacrifice upon the cross, following the Spirit in submitting to the Father even to death.

o Eternal Spirit

- By the Spirit He made the sacrifice

- Eternal and complete cleansing/forgiveness

- 42 “This is my servant; I strengthen him,
this is my chosen one; I delight in him.

I have put my Spirit on him;

he will bring justice to the nations.

- 61 The Spirit of the Lord God is on me,

because the Lord has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives

and freedom to the prisoners;

o Jesus’s salvation is holistic. He offered glimpses of what heaven and new creation are like through healing people. He loved them and healed their sicknesses and diseases simply by touching them or speaking to them. But there was a greater sickness that would require His very life in our place. The Spirit would lead him all the way to the cross where the iniquity of us all was placed upon him. By His wounds we are healed and will be completely and perfectly one day when he returns. But already for all in Christ, we have experienced a healing greater than Lazarus coming out of the tomb. We have been forgiven and made clean by means of Christ’s sacrifice.

- For those who trust in Jesus Christ for life, your sins have been forgiven. Which ones? All of them. And I mean all in the forever and ever sense. All your past sins are forgiven. All your future sins are forgiven. For all the sins you have committed today, you are forgiven.

- This truth should help us realize the terrible weightiness of sin. As one reformer put it, even our most repentant prayers contain within it enough wickedness to condemn the whole world. ■ Last week’s text includes the reference to unintentional sins. We may try to dismiss the deadliness of rebelling against God unintentionally. But the author of Hebrews says that such wickedness of even unintentional sins would keep us from serving the One true God. Our hope is not in our ability to avoid sin but in the Christ who has brought about the forgiveness of all our sins. As we look to Him, we will hate sin because love for God will leave no room for love of sin.

Don’t trivialize your sins. Rather, see that there is grace that is greater than your sin by means of Christ.

The Christ's blood was necessary to establish the Greater covenant. (vv. 15–22)

- The Christ's blood was necessary to establish the Greater covenant. God set the standard for life, and we knowingly chose certain death. So a perfect substitute had to die in order to cleanse us perfectly. (vv. 15–22)
 - o Mediator (not a compromise negotiator)
 - Jesus is mediator in the sense that he brings us into the presence of God appropriately. We have no place to be in God's presence apart from Jesus. He is our mediator by means of His (big but important theology words warning) substitutionary atoning death in the place of sinners. He died in our place, rose again, and ascended to the Father. The sacrifice that He offered to the Father was accepted so that we are one again with God. That is what that theology term atonement refers to, the sacrifice that makes it possible for people to dwell with God.
 - So for you to have a relationship with God, Jesus had to offer himself. When the author of Hebrews refers to the purifying blood, he's not saying that someone had to go and collect Jesus's blood that spilled at Golgatha to sprinkle on anything. He is using the terminology of Ex. 24:3–8 to help us understand how Jesus had to die to cleanse us and initiate the new way of relating to God, which is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
 - o Death and will/covenant
 - o Cleansing of the first covenant by blood (Ex. 24:3-8)
 - 3 Moses came and told the people all the commands of the Lord and all the ordinances. Then all the people responded with a single voice, "We will do everything that the Lord has commanded." 4 And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early the next morning and set up an altar and twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel at the base of the mountain. 5 Then he sent out young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. 6 Moses took half the blood and set it in basins; the other half of the blood he splattered on the altar. 7 He then took the covenant scroll and read it aloud to the people. They responded, "We will do and obey all that the Lord has commanded."
 - 8 Moses took the blood, splattered it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you concerning all these words."

■ How much more so does Christ's sacrifice cleanse us and seal the new covenant

Be confident in this simple gospel message. We do not honor Christ by stripping it of truth. We do not do service to the mission of Christ by stripping the armor and sword from his soldiers. We do not love by telling those dying from sin that they simply misunderstand and just need to become more educated to escape death and guilt. Jesus died for sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures and so now forgiveness in His name is able to be preached to the lost and dying of this world among all nations in order to bring people into relationship with the God who created them and who is calling them to Himself.

Christ Jesus brings us into the realm of life in God's very heavenly presence. (vv. 23–24)

The place Jesus brings us into is much better than a wonder of the world; He brings us into the realm of life in God's very heavenly presence. (vv. 23–24)

o In the New Covenant, we enter into the heavenly original of God's presence, not the copy.

■ Remember all the beautiful arrangements that were to make us want to enter into God's presence in the most central room, but we were forbidden. But now we get to come into the very presence of God by means of Christ.

o We get to experience this now by means of the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer. We get to experience it in a greater way when God calls us home from this life into His very presence. To be apart from the body is to be present with the Lord is what 2 Cor. 5:8 and Phil 1:23 teach us. Even better than that will be when Jesus physically and visibly returns and raises our physical bodies so that we will again be both body and soul as God designed but then in Christ's likeness without fear of decay.

o But in all these hopes fulfilled, we come into God's presence only because Jesus has made the way.

■ If you are welcomed only by means of the Son, why would we ever try to proclaim ourselves to be Christians or God's people apart from Christ Jesus as He has been revealed?

■ If we try to approach God by any other means, we disgrace His presence, we disgrace His person, we disgrace the Son's sacrifice. To try to approach the King of the Universe with any way other than the blood of Christ, we approach with a spear of human ingenuity in the hope of dethroning the very Creator who gave us the ability to think. And by the way, when Adam and Eve attempted to throw that spear through eating the forbidden fruit, they were given death for all of mankind.

■ But now a second Adam has tasted death so that all who follow in His lineage by faith are forgiven and brought back into God's presence .

**Jesus's first coming inaugurated
the end time day of salvation.
His second coming will close
that timeframe and bring His
people home.
(Vv. 25-28)**

- We are in the time of the end and in the day of salvation, for Jesus is the Greater high priest who made the Greater offering in the Greater tabernacle of heaven to establish the Greater covenant by which those who have trusted in Christ may be with God. (vv. 25–28)
 - o This passage tells us again like the rest of the New Testament that the end of the ages has come upon us because the Messiah has come and made the appropriate sacrifice.
 - o As Paul tells us in 2 Cor., we are in the day of salvation. The offering has been made. The door has been opened. But it will not remain open to sinful man forever.
 - o Let me read to you again what was preached upon previously in Hebrews 2:5-9.

For the Christian, we have hope because the One reigning on His throne at the right hand of the Father is our Lord. We who look to Christ by faith are His subjects by grace, being welcomed in His presence forever. Woe to those who will be subjected by wrath, for their necks will be under His feet, and He will send them from His presence into the place of eternal devastation and suffering. Your deadline for responding is either death, which you do not know when it will happen, or the return of Christ, which you also cannot know when that will be. When He does return, He will save and separate completely His people from sin and its consequences. Will you be found to be among those who realized your sinfulness in order that you might look up to the light of grace in Christ? Will you find life in Him? Or will you cling to spiritual death and so be those who experience the eternal judgment of death in hell separated from God?

