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WHY IS THE PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS SO MUCH BETTER?

Hebrews 8:1-6

Introduction: "Are We OK?"

OT Context: Priestly work involved (a) making sacrifice, (b) bringing it to the location of God's presence, and (c) waiting for the result

I. Better Sacrifice: Christ's Priestly Work Provided a Perfect Offering (v.3)

- A. OT priests offered animal sacrifices
 - o "Every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices" (v. 3a)
 - o But the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (10:4)
- B. But, Jesus offers himself, the perfect sacrifice
 - o As a priest, "it is necessary. . . to have something to offer: (v.3b)
 - o Prior chapter taught Jesus was the only "perfect" sacrifice, allowing him to offer himself in our place (7:26-28)
 - o **Thus, animal sacrifices are a "shadow" and Christ is the reality!

Application: What "sacrifices" do we try to offer God instead of looking to Christ alone?

II. Better Location: Christ's Priestly Work is Done in Heaven Itself (v. 2, 4-5)

- A. OT Priests served in earthly, man-made tabernacle
 - o The tabernacle was that "tent" that was the central place of Israel's worship before building the Temple in Jerusalem—it was the location of God's presence
 - o But this tabernacle was only "a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things" (v.5a)
 - o Since the tabernacle reflected heaven, it was important that Moses was careful to follow God's instructions (v.5b)
- B. But, Jesus did his priestly work in the very heavenly presence of God
 - o Thus, Jesus is "a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man" (v.2)



- o Same theme elsewhere: “For Christ has entered, not into the 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” (Heb 9:24)
- o **Jesus did what no other priest could do: enter into heaven itself!

Applications:

- o Relationship between OT and NT: Structure of OT Israel was a shadow, and the work of Christ in the NT brings the reality
- o Pick your mediator like you pick real estate: location, location, location!

III. **Better Result: Christ’s Priestly Work Was Successful so He Sat Down (v.1)**

- A. The work of OT priests never really took away sin, so they never sat down
 - o The work of the OT priests was never done; they had to repeat sacrifices over and over
 - o There were no chairs in the tabernacle!
- B. But Jesus’ priestly work fully accomplished salvation, so he is finished!
 - o Jesus “is seated at the right hand of the throne in the majesty of heaven” (v.1).
 - o **As Jesus said on the cross: “It is finished” (John 19:30)

Application: Do you worry about an uncertain future, or are you looking back to a finished past? How can we do more of the latter?

IV. Summary Point: Jesus’ Work Begins a New and **Better** Covenant (v.6)



Discussion Groups

1. If there are new folks at your table, take a moment to introduce them to the group!

2. Do you ever struggle with doubts about whether the work of Jesus is really able to save you? How does this passage provide reassurance?

3. What are some of the “sacrifices” you offer to God to try to gain his favor and love? How does this passage help you fight that temptation?

4. How does the final, completed work of Christ allow us to obey him and serve him more freely?

