

# Saved to Serve

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 02 January 2011

Preacher: Paul Martin

[0:00] Hebrews 9, 1 through 14. Now, the first covenant had regulations for worship and also had an earthly sanctuary.

! A tabernacle was set up.! In its first room were the lampstand, the table, and the consecrated bread. This was called the holy place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the most holy place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins that the people had committed in ignorance. [1:15] The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the most holy place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing.

This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.

They're only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washing. External regulations, applying until the time of the new order.

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made.

That is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves, but he entered the most holy place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.

[2:21] The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean, sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.

How much more then will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God.

On our drive from Toronto here just a couple of days ago, it struck me that I have been coming to Grace Fellowship Church of Bremen for 23 years.

And you would think for someone who has been coming here for 23 years, I would know most of you by now. And yet there are many faces which I do not know, and if I was a member of this local church, I would be an awful member because I'm only here about twice a year.

But we thank God for you. We feel very familiar and at home here, but for many of you I suppose we are strangers, and I trust that by God's grace he will give us all ears to hear his word.

[3:34] I want to bring you greetings from Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto. We thank God for his mercies to us. We pray for you often. You're on our list of churches we just pray through regularly, and we delight to pray for you and for your pastors and for the cause of the gospel here in Bremen and all over this part of Indiana.

We're thankful for what God is doing in your lives and in your ministry. So glad for your faithfulness, your model of faithfulness. You provide encouragement to us as a church as we hear of God's grace in your lives.

I am a Canadian. If I sound funny to you, that's only because you have an accent. But let me invite you now to take your Bibles and turn to Hebrews chapter 9.

In Canada, we do not have states. We have provinces. And one of those provinces is Prince Edward Island. You might have been there on vacation. It's a great place to go.

And on January 18th of 1988, that province voted, and it was a very controversial vote, but they voted in favor of the establishment of a fixed link between mainland Canada and the island of Prince Edward.

[4:50] And so shortly thereafter, construction was begun on an eight-mile bridge that had to be built in a way that could withstand the rigors of the North Atlantic, frozen ice flows crashing regularly every year into the pillars holding up that bridge.

It was constructed in a winding kind of pattern, because apparently we humans, when we drive something straight for too long, fall asleep and drive off. And so it was a very unique structure, and it exists today.

It is called the Confederation Bridge, and it links mainland Canada to Prince Edward Island. Imagine, though, if that bridge had construction had begun, and for whatever reason, those engineers and those construction workers took that bridge seven and a half miles toward Prince Edward Island.

And at the end, put a little cul-de-sac, so you could drive all the way out into the ocean, get a glimpse of PEI, and then turn around and drive back again.

You would say, I hope with me, that is a most useless bridge. That is a waste of time. That was a waste of resources. That was a waste of engineering.

[6:14] That's a waste of everything. That bridge is good for nothing. I am glad that there is a way to God that goes all the way.

God has constructed a means through which humans like you and me can get all the way from the land of sin to the promised land.

Can get all the way from this world to the next world. Can get all the way from living in the slavery to sin and all that is wrong.

And one day, stand with God forever. I don't know about you, but I eagerly anticipate that day. In fact, the older I get, the better it looks.

And so we're going to look at what God has done to make a way for humans, for boys, for girls, for young men, young women, for old men and old women, look at a way that God has made for us to be made right with Him.

[7:21] And the good news is that getting all the way to God has a purpose. It is not simply that God would have us buy our life insurance, buy our fire insurance, and then get on with our lives as we please, but rather, God intends for us to do something.

In fact, God has made this way to Him so that we might, well, if you were going to Prince Edward Island, you'd want to see where Anna Green Gable's house is, even though it's all a big fake thing. It didn't mean to burst your bubble, but it's just fiction. And you could see her home, and you'd want to perhaps go to the government buildings or whatever people do at PEI. There's a purpose in going there.

You take the bridge, you get to the island, and then you live in the goodness of the island. And I want to suggest to you that in the Scriptures, the Gospel comes to us so that we might make our way to God, but then live in the good of the Gospel.

And living in the good of the Gospel has purpose. And it is so we might serve. So we will look at this passage, and not just because I'm a preacher, but because I think it divides nicely into three parts.

[8:32] I will point you to part number one, which this writer to the Hebrews tells us that the old way to God fell short. Now, if I understand Hebrews correctly, then this letter is being written to Christians who are about to suffer badly.

We're not told what that suffering will be, but we are told that they have already withstood great trials. They are Christians, Jewish Christians, who because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have suffered greatly at the hands of the world.

Maybe you've suffered because of your faith in the Lord. Maybe you are in high school, and you're standing up for Christ, and you're trying to live a Christian life, and you're even opening your mouth and telling people about Jesus, and because of that, you suffer for it.

Maybe you're in university. You find the same thing. Maybe in your workplace. We say, well, yeah, I suffer. But sometimes when you suffer a little, and then a little more, and a little more, you get a little gun-shy, a little suffering-shy.

And it appears that that's what's going on with these Christians. Whatever it is that's coming down the pipe, it appears to be something quite fierce. It looks like the trials that are approaching are

going to be quite bad, and maybe there's been some kind of news, something that's happened with other Christians in other places.

[9:55] They've seen the suffering, and now it appears to be coming their direction, and they're trembling in their boots. And He's writing to them, and He's warning them, don't turn back. Don't give up.

Don't drift. Stay tight with your God. Stay tight with your Lord. And for these Christians, their particular temptation is apparently to go back to Judaism, to go back to the old ways. For them, the old ways are predictable. For them, the old ways are comfortable. For them, the old ways, you know, it's just a way to be safe. We won't get persecuted for living as Jews. We will get persecuted for living as Christians. So we can be religious. We can be moral. We can talk about God. For them, that's their temptation. For you, it's probably a little different.

I don't think any of you are tempted to go back to Judaism. But maybe you're tempted to just go back to living morally. Or maybe you're tempted to speak about God, but not about Jesus.

[11:03] Or maybe you're tempted to just not say anything in the classroom or anything at the office or anything out on the shop floor. You'll just be quiet.

Because it's easier, or it looks easier to live that way than it does to live full out for Christ. And so, that is how I think this particular letter is directly relevant to you and me.

Because I don't know about you. I know about me. And I know that I need constant encouragement to live boldly for my Lord and Savior Jesus. And so that's what he is doing in this section here.

He's been talking a lot all through this letter about the need to stay close to God. And now here he is saying, listen, the old way to God fell short. He's saying, in essence, it fell short by design.

Now, I'll be reading from the ESV. I apologize, but it's what I'm familiar with. So, you'll figure out where I am. Chapter 9 begins with the word, now even the first covenant had two things, regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness.

[12:13] And so he's drawing back and he's saying, let's talk about that old covenant. That old covenant had two things, two parts to it, regulations and location. And then what he's going to do from verse 1 down to verse 5 is he's going to talk about the place, the place of holiness.

And then in verses 6 down to verse 9 or so, he's going to talk about the regulations. And he's just going to briefly remind them of things that they were very familiar with. Now, kids, if you've been in Sunday school, you've probably seen pictures of the tabernacle.

And it was an amazing structure. I wonder what it would be like to be traveling with God's people through the wilderness. And maybe one day, Dad says to you, you know, son, I realize that I have unintentionally broken one of God's commands.

We're just learning all these laws. There's so many of them, perhaps 600 of them. And I'm trying to get all of them crammed into my little brain, but I have unintentionally broken this commandment. And I will need to make a sacrifice to get myself clean before God. So come along, son. And they go to the tabernacle. It's like a big tent.

[13:24] Only a tent without a roof. The walls of the tabernacle would be about 7 1/2 feet high. And they were made of a linen, cotton kind of material that would make the perimeter of this tent.

Pegs all the way along, holding up the walls. Remember, the tabernacle is the movable temple, if you like. And so this structure would be pitched everywhere that Israel would stop in their wanderings in the wilderness.

And I can picture that dad and the little boy coming to the entrance, a 30-foot wide entrance to the tabernacle. A structure not so unlike this building that we're in right now, about this size.

And that 30-foot wide gate, or really it was curtains across the end, would be where you would come in. And I can imagine the guards of the temple there, the guards of the tabernacle there, an opening as you have your little lamb and as a dad might bring his son along.

And the first thing you would see as you came into that large tent was an altar. And he would step up to the altar. And dad would take the lamb and he would confess his sins before God and before the priest.

[14:36] And either he or the priest would slit the throat of that animal as he lay his own hands on the animal, thus symbolically transferring his guilt to an animal, saying this is what sin against a holy God deserves.

It deserves death. And that animal would be killed right before their eyes. I could see the little boy perhaps watching and wondering and looking about him.

He's in the tabernacle now. And maybe he would look a little past the altar and he would see a basin. A washing station is really what it was. And the priests would be perhaps there at that moment.

They would be washing and doing particular forms of washing in preparation for their ministry. Some of them would be going into another tent in the big tent. So picture this big room with another tent inside of it.

And that rectangular tent, unlike the big tent, had a covering. It had a roof. And had very thick curtains along the front of it. And perhaps while the little boy was there, one of the priests would go inside that other tent.

[15 : 42] And as the curtains were pulled back just for a moment and the priest would go in, he might see in the flickering light the incense, the cloud of incense burning.

He might even look over toward the right and see the table with the bread on it. Twelve loaves of bread that would look something like our pitas today. The flat bread. And they would be stacked there on the table.

To the left, as he would enter into that first section called the holy place, would be the menorah. The candlesticks that were lit with oil. And so the priests would need to go in often through the day, make sure that the candles were properly lit.

Make sure the showbread was where it ought to be. But if the curtains were pulled back long enough, that little boy might see another set of curtains.

Because in this tent was yet another smaller tent, the size of a cube, 15 feet. And in that second set of curtains, right before it was that altar of incense.

[16 : 49] This is the same altar of incense that Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, were careless with. And either got the recipe wrong or were being haphazard in their application of it.

And so when they, these two sons of Aaron, went in before this altar of incense and burned strange incense before the Lord, fire leapt out from this altar of incense and consumed them on the spot.

So I wonder what it was like to be a priest walking in. Did we get the recipe right? Is everything prepared? Check the candles. Check the bread.

Then I go towards that altar of incense, standing right before the thick curtains blocking my way to the most holy place.

Embroidered on those curtains were golden cherubim. As if sending out a message, stay out of here. Don't come in here.

[17 : 53] The angels symbolically guarding this particular place and so you might approach, if you're a priest, approach with great caution that altar of incense because just on the other side is the Holy of Holies.

Our author tells us. He says, you look at it here, verse 2, a tent, a tabernacle was prepared, the first section in which were the lampstand, the table, the bread of the presence. That's called the holy place.

Behind the second curtain was a second section called the most holy place or the holy of holies sometimes in our Bibles. Having the golden altar of incense.

Yes, we've seen this right before the front curtain there. And then these things, the Ark of the Covenant covered on all sides with gold. Something like a chest, like you'd have a cedar chest about that size, not that big, just a big rectangular box and yet covered in gold.

I don't know what your cedar chests are like. Mine are not covered in gold. If yours is, I would like it. And inside this chest were some things.

[19 : 00] Manna, Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. Why were these things here?

Well, they were tokens, if you like. They were contents that symbolized both God's holiness and God's mercy. In Numbers chapter 17, for instance, Aaron is being challenged by some of the sons of Levi who says, they said, why should just the sons of Aaron be priests?

We'll all be priests. So Moses said to them, well, from each of your families, take a staff, and we'll put it before the presence of God, and in the morning we'll see what we see.

And he took one from Aaron also. And in the morning, Aaron's staff had budded and borne fruit.

That is a weird kind of sign. But, what it intended to show was that the blessing was on Aaron.

Aaron was the one who had been called. Aaron was the one that God set aside for the priestly ministry. It would be the sons of Aaron who would serve as the high priests. And so all those others

in Korah's rebellion were struck down dead to teach Israel they must obey the commandments of God.

[20 : 23] So you see the holiness of God, and yet you see the mercy of God, that God is willing for there to be priests, willing for there to be ones who would intercede. And then in this ark you find as well the law, again expressing something of the holiness of God, and yet the mercy of God.

God's holiness that His righteous standards are high. And in many ways, unattainable. And yet the mercy of God that He gives us His law, He gives us His truth, He tells us about Himself and what He requires.

And then the manna. What is it? That's what it means. What is it? The strange food that would appear like dew every morning as they traveled through the wilderness. Catch some of it up in a jar and put it there to remind the children of Israel that they will live by Me.

I will sustain My people. But remember, even the manna was a result of Israel's complaining and grumbling and rebellion against God. And so in all of these things, Israel is to be reminded your God is holy and yet your God is a God of mercy.

But that Ark of the Covenant had across the top of it what was called the mercy seat. And the mercy seat had on either side two cherubim with wings extended, touching.

[21 : 43] And this was to symbolize God's throne, God's seat, God's place, and the Shekinah glory itself, that pillar of light, that cloud of fire would come down and reside there between the cherubim sitting there on the mercy seat.

And so God has worked with Israel in such a way that He limits Himself by location to one place. And it is this tabernacle. It is a limited location. If you want to meet with God, you must go to the tabernacle.

And if you go there, God is there. But this way to God of tabernacle religion was a way that fell short, not just because it was a limited location, but it also, because it provided limited access.

Oh, if you were an Israelite and male, you could come within that tabernacle and make your offering, but go no further. That's why that second tent and the third tent are covered with curtains, thick curtains that are telling you to stay out.

[23 : 03] Only the priests can go into that holy place, tend to the candle, tend to the bread, tend to the altar of incense. But as the writer of Hebrews says, only one priest and that time and that only once a year could come into the holy of holies.

Luke tells us, if you were reading the Christmas story and perhaps reading from Luke chapter 1, you remember how Zechariah was chosen by Lot to go into the holy place.

He wasn't into the holy of holies, he was into the holy place. And it was there, he was given an angel, angelic vision and lost speech because of his lack of faith. In the days of Jesus, that was how you were chosen.

You were chosen by Lot, by casting of Lot, who would go in. In other words, at any time in Israel's history, it's not just anybody who can go into the holy place.

And to go into the most holy place, the requirements are much more strict. Here you are going into the actual presence of God. There is a visible manifestation of God, something tangible, something visible, something that is seen and it dwells there between the cherubim.

[24 : 21] I'm not sure that the high priests were lining up to get that job. We tend to think things like, oh, wouldn't it be something?

Wouldn't it be something to see God? Yes, it's something. It's interesting to me that when Aaron is given instructions about the day of atonement, this would be the day you would go into the holy of holies, it's the one day out of the calendar year you would enter.

And when he's given instructions in Leviticus 16, that chapter begins with these words, after the death of your two sons. In other words, if you thought you needed to get things right to get to the altar of incense, now we're talking about coming into my presence directly.

So this old way to God, it provided limited access, and that is one of the reasons it fell short.

It's summed up here in verses 9 and 10 where he says there's a limited effectiveness to what was going on with this old way to God. Verse 8, I begin. By this, the Holy Spirit indicates, he's teaching, that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing, which is symbolic or an illustration of, literally, he uses the word parable here, is a parable of the present age.

[25 : 57] According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

The Holy Spirit is teaching us, says Hebrews, by the limited location of tabernacle, by the limited access that is granted. What is he teaching us?

This is hard, he says. He says it's a parable. Remember, Jesus told parables not to make the truth clearer, but to obscure it to the unbelieving, right? And so, and so he says this is a, it's like a parable.

You've got to ponder it. You've got to think very closely and clearly about this. And when you think about tabernacle, what is God teaching? He is teaching something by the very construction of it. In Ottawa, which is our nation's capital, we have a wonderful new museum called the War Museum. And part of what I love about the War Museum is that in the very construction of the museum, the architect was trying to communicate something of the chaos and the coldness of war.

[27 : 15] And so all the, all the angles of the walls are just slightly off. The concrete in which the whole structure is made of is cold and dark.

The lighting remains dim and there's, there's the pockmarks on the wall of the, of the concrete. Nothing is, is finished off completely. It's, it's, it's something, something confusing about the building.

Something dark almost about the building. And, and the architectural design is intended to teach something of the reality of war. It's darkness and it's darkness and it's confusion.

And there was something, this writer to the Hebrews says, there was something in the construction itself of tabernacle that is like a parable teaching us something about this way to God.

What does all this construction of, of tent and, and limited access and limited effectiveness, what is it all teaching? It's teaching that we can only get so close to God.

[28 : 17] In this way, God is saying, come near Israel, but not too near. Draw close, but not too close.

Come near, but not too near. This kind of limited access means that we can only get so close to God because we can only get so close to dealing with our sin.

He says here that all the Old Covenant could really cleanse people from was ceremonial uncleanness, uncleanness. Look at verse 9 again.

According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body.

The best that it could do was to get you clean again for a little while, but you'd be back again. You'd spend your whole life coming back, coming back, coming back. Can't clean the conscience.

[29 : 32] There is no sacrifice for something like murder. What do we do about that? David says in Psalm 51, it's not whole, bold, burnt offerings you desire.

There's no sacrifice in place for this particular sin. Oh, there's things in the law about cities of refuge and what must be done to the murderer and is there intention behind the murder? All of these things, but there's no sacrifice.

It's not, hey, you murder somebody, get a couple bulls and that covers it. No, he's got to appeal to God himself, David does. He throws himself on the mercy of God. And so, this Hebrews author is telling us that because the entrance to the holy places says forbidden to the general public, it's like some priests get a backstage pass and one priest gets a one-day pass.

But everybody else, you'll never see the presence of God. And that's a problem because we want to be where God is.

We want to see God. He says, what is it teaching us? The way into the holy places is not yet opened. Come near, but not too near.

[30 : 56] Now, I noticed when we read from the NIV this morning, it omits a word in verse 11 that I wish was there because the author put it there and it's the word but. And I don't know about you, but I love all those places in the Bible that say, such and such is true about you, such and such was your condition, such and such is how bad it was, but, what?

God. But God. In this case, but Christ. And so, if the old way to God fell short, like a bridge that gets you seven and a half miles but not the full eight, the new way to God goes all the way.

Already in this letter to the Hebrew Christians, he's written things like this. After having made purification for sins, He, Christ, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Or this. We have a great high priest. Literally, a mega high priest. It's not... He just makes the term up. We have a mega high priest who has passed through the heavens. Or this.

Jesus has gone into the inner place behind the curtain. Or this. He always lives to make intercession for us.

[32 : 15] Now, all of these Scriptures were pointing to what he's describing here. He's saying the old way to God. Nobody could get close to God. If you were just average Joe blow Israelite or Judah blow Israelite, you couldn't get all the way to God because you could just come as far as the altar.

And maybe if you're a son of Aaron, you get into the holy place. And maybe if you're one of Aaron's direct relatives, you are chosen as high priest and you get once a year into the holy of holies.

But here is our Lord Jesus Christ. And look what He has done. Verse 11. When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, 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.

The new way to God goes all the way, first of all, because it goes to the real place. Jesus is our high priest and He is a high priest of the good things that have come.

He is the high priest of the new covenant, of the better way. And not only did He appear, did Christ appear, He says in verse 11, not only did He appear, but He entered.

[33 : 44] Not into the shadowy image of tabernacle. You understand, right, that when Moses was given the diagram, the blueprint for tabernacle, Hebrews has already told us that these things were patterned after the heavenly reality.

It's not that God came up with a plan for a physical tabernacle and then thought to Himself, now I shall create the same in heaven. No, He says to Moses, you're just going to make a shadowy image of the reality.

Kids, have you ever put out your hand under a light and maybe traced your shadow? And if the light is just right and there's no conflicting shadows, you can make a very precise image of your hand.

You get all the funny little wrinkles around your knuckles and you can make it, or you can just trace it out almost perfectly. You get a very good idea of what that hand looks like. In fact, if I was maybe missing a finger and you'd never seen my hand before, I could just show you the shadow of my hand and you would learn a lot about my hand.

And so, we could learn a lot about the true tabernacle through its shadowy image, but it is something altogether different to see the real hand, isn't it?

[35 : 04] Not just the shadowy image. And so, what He's saying here is that Jesus goes to the real place, the greater, the more perfect tabernacle, the reality, that which Moses' tabernacle is patterned after.

Jesus wasn't playing around with symbols. Jesus is dealing with reality. In chapter 8, verse 1, it says, now the point of what we are saying is this, we have such a high priest who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven.

If the mercy seat is an image, is a picture, is a reflection of the true throne of God that is then seen something, God's presence is manifested there, the Shekinah glory dwells there, and we see something of the shadowy image of the true reality, but how much more has Christ gone through the heavens and now sits on the true throne and reigns over all creation?

He sits on the true mercy seat, which makes the words of Hebrews 4.16 remarkable when He says, draw near to the throne of grace.

Here is our God inviting us to draw near to the throne of grace, that shared throne with His Father. Why? So that you may find grace and you may find mercy in the time of need.

[36 : 26] And so to these Christians, He's saying, listen, when you're tempted, when you are sorely pressed to go back to the old ways, to trust in your good works, to trust in your morality, to trust in your silence, to trust in your fears, when you're tempted to go back to those old ways, oh, draw near to the throne of grace, and you will immediately find grace and mercy in your time of need.

God never fails a Christian. The new way to God goes all the way because it goes to the real place. It goes all the way because it grants full access.

The old way dealt with ceremony, this way deals with reality. If you would like to meet the Prime Minister of Canada, which I am sure is high on all of your priority lists, you could try to make friends

with people that know him and you could, you know, work the deals and, you know, come on, please, introduce me, introduce me, and maybe after a while you could pry that relationship in such a way that you would gain some kind of an introduction to the Prime Minister and he would say, well, I'm not going to spend a lot of time with you, you're American and I can't get your vote, so goodbye.

Or, if you wanted to know the Prime Minister of Canada, you could marry his daughter. One is a ceremonial relationship, the other is a relational relationship.

And so, what he is saying here is he's comparing these two covenants, these two ways to God and he's saying this old way to God. You could get ceremonially clean, but this new way to God, you are completely clean.

[38:11] You are relationally in good relationship and in good standing with God. He describes it here. He says, because our high priest goes all the way, he brings us with him all the way.

Where does he go? Verse 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.

In other words, it is a single entrance. When he says once for all, he does not mean once for all people. He's comparing here, right, between the earthly high priest and Jesus our high priest.

He's saying the earthly high priest would go again and again and again and again for hundreds of years. He had to go once a year on Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement, make atonement for the people all the unintentional sins and he would take his bull for his own sins and then for the people's sins and lambs would be offered and this and the grain offering, the wave offering, all of these things had to be done again and again and again, but Jesus the mega high priest comes and it's once for all time.

His offering is sufficient. Sometimes we use that word with our children. Clean your room.

[39:28] Clean your room. Clean your room. Clean your room. And then we say once and for all clean your room.

And all smart children know that's the time to clean your room. Get her done. And here Hebrews tells us Jesus entered into the heavenly reality once for all.

into the true holy places. Not some earthly tabernacle. Not even Solomon's temple which was just a further extension of tabernacle. Not even Herod's temple that was really quite something.

But he goes to the true temple. The true presence of God. Where God is. Into the true holy places. Not only is it a single entrance, it's a complete entrance.

He goes all the way to the true holy places and it's an authorized entrance. Not on the basis of the blood of animals but on the basis of his own blood. I don't think that Hebrews is saying here that Jesus caught up something of his own blood and brought this.

[40:38] I think it's just an expression of his death. And he's saying that by virtue of his death, by the effectiveness of his death, by hanging on a cross for sinners like you and like me, Jesus now gains full access and full entrance into the true heavenly reality of God's presence.

And that is why the four cherubim and the 24 elders bow down and say, worthy are you for you were slain. And by blood you ransom people.

The new way to God goes all the way because it goes to the real place, because it grants full access, and because it is totally effective. At the end of verse 12 he says, thus securing an eternal redemption.

No more ceremonial cleansing. At the end of verse 10 he says, until the time of reformation, until the time of, you might translate that word, correction.

It's the idea of improvement. This was the way to God, but it was a way to God that fell short until the reality Jesus Christ came. All this first way to God is pointing to the true way to God, which is Jesus Himself.

[41:58] Temple, sacrifice, priests, they are all fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ. And so he says, this first way needed a time of reformation, and when the time of reformation came, when the time of correction came, oh, then he secured an eternal redemption.

To be redeemed is to be purchased. So I wonder, have you appropriated what Jesus did to yourself?

For the good news of this gospel is that Christ, having done all of these things, Jesus Christ, who left heaven, came to earth, lived as a sinless man, offered up his own life in the place of sinners, bore all of God's holy wrath against sin in his own body on the tree, died, and then was resurrected,



and then caught up by God into the heavenly presence.

And this Christ who sits upon His throne now and looks down on this world knows everything about you, knows all the intentions of the thoughts of your heart. not just what you've thunk, but what has been behind what you have been thinking.

This Christ, who one day will take you and judge you based on your life. This Christ, who has done all of these things and will do this great thing, is now inviting you to take what He did and appropriate, to take it to yourself.

[43 : 28] The glory of the gospel is not that we do good things to be right with God. The glory of the gospel is that Jesus has done all the right things and now offers them freely.

This is the day of salvation. This is the day in which God invites all men to repent of sin. Do you know what that word repent means? Sometimes we use words like that and I think if they become so common we've forgotten what they mean.

Or maybe you've just never been in a church before. You've never heard words like repentance or faith. These are Bible words that describe the whole change of a person from one direction to another.

Every one of us are born under sin. Every one of us are inclined toward evil. You say, I'm not that evil. Oh yes you are and you know it. And I know it. Because you lie and I lied and we had evil thoughts and we got angry.

You name your sin, they're there. And you may not want to think of them as sins but God calls them sins and He says because of your sin and because I am holy you cannot be in My presence.

[44 : 34] The very first man who walked on the earth Adam he was a real man and imagine this the God who is good said to Adam in My goodness I give you all this.

I give you everything. Everything that I have made I give to you. I just ask one thing. Don't eat of that tree right there.

And out of all the trees first Eve and then Adam took and ate. And at that moment plunged our human race into active rebellion against God so that even when we're little and I can remember I'm not too old but I remember when I was little like some of you and I can remember being eight, nine years old and lies would come out of my mouth.

And sometimes I would feel very bad about it and I would say to my little eight year old self I'm not going to lie anymore. A boy shouldn't lie to his mom.

And then I would do it again and I would do it again and I would do it again and as I got older I realized that those lies and those things I stole and those things I said and those things I thought all of those were piling up against me and I was a guilty young man before God and I needed God to do something and praise God he did do something a long time ago.

[46 : 09] And yet something that is still absolutely relevant to this day today. He sent his son to die in your place. And on his son he took all the punishment that you deserve and put it upon him.

Now this gospel is something to be believed and that is why not only are we to stop sinning or to look at our sin as sinful and to try and stop it we're also to believe on Jesus.

It's not just believing in belief it's believing on Jesus Christ believing that he is the true temple he is the true high priest that he is in heaven that he has made a sacrifice that what he did is sufficient for a rotten sinner like me.

It's enough. It's enough. A Christian is a person who's come to see that what Christ has done is grandly sufficient. And he glories in it and he throws himself on the mercy of God saying I venture everything on Jesus.

I have no hope in myself. That's what these Hebrew Christians had done. But now they're wavering a little bit.

[47 : 22] And sometimes we Christians waver a little bit because we live in enemy territory and the enemy's got an outpost right here in your heart. And so the enemy within and the enemy without are whispering strange things whispering doubts in God telling us that oh if I really stand for the Lord I might not advance in my career how will I provide for my family let me help God.

If I really confess my sins people will know who I really am and they'll reject me. It would be better to play with God.

Let me take you to where I think this whole passage is aiming and that is our third point that the ones who have come all the way to God are free to serve.

The very last sentence in verse 14 he says what Christ has done will purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Now verses 13 and 14 are a concluding comparison an if then statement. If this is true how much more is this true? Alright? And so what he's doing in verses 13 and 14 is just summarizing everything he's said so far.

[48 : 44] I've been telling you about the tabernacle now I tell you how Christ fulfills all of this in the true tabernacle. He's the true high priest. He makes the true sacrifice. All of these things being true.

Let me summarize this for you now and here's what he says verse 13. For explanatory word if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh 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.

What he says is this if bull blood gets you temporary ceremonial purity then how much more does Christ's blood purify the conscience from dead works the works that lead to death.

What is your conscience? Well there's many things but one thing it is is the place that you engage the holiness of God. The more holy you understand God to be the more activated your conscience will become.

The conscience is that which convicts. It is that which tells us of our wrong. It is the point at which a man or a woman confronts God's holiness. And this internal work of God grants then freedom to the conscience.

[50 : 20] Christ's blood purifies the conscience from dead works the works that lead to death. Let me try and flesh this out for you because I think it's vitally important for Christians to live this way.

We need to learn to walk in the good of the gospel. It's wonderful to get across the bridge to the island but if all you do is stand at the edge of the bridge just at the foot of the bridge and say there I've seen Prince Edward Island or in this case get across via the gospel and say there I've seen the gospel.

I don't think you've understood the full intention of why God saves people. It is ultimately for his glory but here the Lord says I am saving you in order to purify your conscience from dead works to serve to free you to serve the living God in such a way that brings him great glory.

Maybe you're married that is a blessing from God and if you're a husband I dare say on occasion very rare maybe once twice a year you sin against your wife.

Maybe it's something you say maybe it's something you do sinning against another person can take many forms. It's maybe something nobody else would know about. Maybe it's raging anger inside your mind that it's never seen.

[51 : 42] Or maybe it's heard a lot. You can picture the man coming home one day and he's had a tough day at the office a tough day at the work and he gets home and she hasn't had a good day and just right away she says something that offends him and he gets offended and so he speaks in such a way that's wrong and sinful and angry and just bad.

And they go their separate ways. And he's got the TV on but he's not watching the TV he's just saying you are so bad you did it again.

Now that man has a choice. That man that husband can get up and in his guilt do the dishes look around say oh the laundry's not folded and fold the laundry and run the vacuum maybe the next day call from the office send flowers and he's trying to appease he's trying to make things better and he gives her some space and he waits a few days till things cool down and then okay we're back to normal.

but I would suggest to you that robs Christ of much glory and is in fact going back to the works that lead to death.

No I'm not saying it's never wrong to give your wife flowers please don't hear me incorrectly but I am saying that when sin enters a relationship the right response is what? It's to get the gospel into that relationship and so what he seems to be saying here is I'm reminding you of this gospel I'm telling you all about what Jesus has done about this older covenant about this new covenant and I'm telling you all of these things so that you would see that the conscience having been purified is enabled it is freed then to serve the living God and one way you would serve the living God in a marriage is when you sin against your wife you would come to your wife and you would identify it as sin and you would say to her I sinned badly in the things that I said and in the way that I said them would you please forgive me because I see I am a sinner in need of a savior and I have gone to

Christ and I confessed this sin to Christ and I see now that it is because of these things that I do and

[54:04] I say and I think that God had to send his son into the world and crush him that's what those words deserved they weren't just petty words of a couple that have been married for 25 years and we'll get past them they are riddled with sin and it is sin that Christ died for So dear wife I've gone to the Savior and I've reminded myself of the cross and now I come to you and I say won't you forgive and that wife doesn't need to say in a few days but rather looks right into the eyes of her husband and says how could I not forgive you when I think of what Christ has done for me too and how he has borne all of my guilt and all of the wrath the Father has against my sin it is my joy to forgive you because it makes much of Jesus if we go back to our old ways we make little of

Jesus but if we're going to live in this world like Jesus is real and like what he has done is true and real and that there is a Savior who currently reigns on a throne and we will one day stand naked before him and give an account of this life we want to stand there as a couple and we want to stand there and say we did our best to make the most of you in every aspect of our life so that you would receive glory because you have done all of this for us oh may God give us grace to live this way to apply the gospel to look to the cross to look to the throne and to find mercy and grace from our Lord Jesus himself he has done so much for us to enable us to serve the living God what discourages full out living for God more than sin if you're toying with secret sin you can come to church you can talk like a

Christian to a level but I am quite convinced the spirit of God is plying is convicting and you know you know you know in your heart you must deal with this sin and if all your way of dealing with the sin is to work harder to go back to the law you've gone to the half built bridge again and he says humble yourself and come back to the gospel remind yourself what Christ has done ask yourselves these two questions what do I deserve what have I been given those are good questions to ask yourself every morning what do I deserve hell what have I been given all the riches!

in Christ Jesus the old way to God said come near but not too near the new way to God says come all the way to God find grace find help find mercy in your hour of need the bridge is open walk in the goodness of his gospel let us pray together!

Lord this is our prayer that through the course of this whole year we would become people that walk in the goodness of the gospel more than ever before who delight to remind each other that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised who see the gospel at the center of every decision every relationship every hour of every day we need more of Jesus we need your Holy Spirit we need your help so please give it you are so inclined to answer prayer that we are very confident and very hopeful that you will do this very thing do it for the glory of your great name we ask amen