

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF HEBREWS

A NEW WAY (HEBREWS 7:11-14) THE ORDER OF MEN HAD TO BE REPLACED

Levitical Priesthood under Aaron was good for a time because it introduced and taught the Law, the 10 Commandments, and over 600 other commands of God

- The problem was that the priests could not lead the people to God, but simply expose morality to them

THE FIRST WAY SET UP THE PERFECT WAY

People in the OT and the recipients of this letter longed to know the perfection that is God, but the Levitical Law could only show imperfect people right from wrong

- It would take a perfect Savior to give them forgiveness and victory over sin. The giving of the Law set up the only One who could fulfill it

A DIFFERENT LEADER MEANS A DIFFERENT LAW

Many people misinterpret the OT. The OT is essential for understanding Jesus and why He came. **He did not come to abolish the 10 Commandments, but to show that only through Him can they be honored.**

- The Law was a safety net of rules until God's people had the power of the Spirit available to them

BUT IT'S NOT THE WAY WE EXPECTED

V13-14 alludes to the assumption that Jesus could not be the perfect High Priest because He did not come from the priestly line of Levi

- Jesus came from the line of Judah from which priests did not come, but this is Jesus' style. **He didn't come on our terms.** He came humbly to do things that had never been done before.

THINGS HAD CHANGED

Unlike the temporary leaders and law, Jesus is the eternal High Priest that is continually ministering and standing in the gap for us.

- **His way is deeper, not just rules to expose sin and right from wrong, but to lead us into a relationship with God. Christ wants to address the heart!**

THE LAW (HEBREWS 7:15-22) THE DEFICIENCY OF THE OLD PRIESTHOOD

The Levites enforced the 10 Commandments, but since they were chosen by legalities and not their heart and abilities, the Jews had some poor spiritual leaders at times. Even at their best, they could only temporarily help the people

CHRIST DID NOT COME THROUGH LEGALITIES

Jesus was a new order, not from men, but from the righteousness of God, like Mel. It was His ability and goodness that made Him Priest, not a law or list of rules.

- He also didn't come from "physical descent" but from an indestructible source, God Himself. Jesus' ministry would never die but last forever

THE LAW IS WEAK AND UNPROFITABLE? (V18-19)

3 statements about OT Law.

1. It is weak.
 2. It is useless.
 3. It has been annulled.
- It provided a standard by which one can evaluate the moral condition, but it is "useless" and "weak" in the fact that it can't provide spiritual vigor or a relationship with God. **It is a diagnostic tool, but cannot provide constant access to God** (Matthew 19:17-21)

BUT, THE LAW DOES HAVE A VALID FUNCTION

Romans 3:20 says, "the knowledge of sin comes from the law." Without the commands of God through Moses, we would not know what the standard of God is.

- But the point remains, **to simply follow rules without a true change of heart and desires is not an authentic relationship with God**

THE OTHER CURVE BALL WITH THE LAW

There had to be a change in priesthood because it's impossible to live by the Law. Even if we appear to on the surface, we break these laws in our hearts (Matthew 5)

- Jesus came to fulfill the Law, to hold the standard up for us, **to blanket us with His righteousness** so when God looks at us, He sees the perfection of Christ

RIGHTEOUSNESS CAN ONLY COME THROUGH CHRIST

The ability to be good and to have a relationship with God only comes through Jesus. The Law identifies the state of the heart, but only Jesus can restore it

- Hope comes from the fact that **He sees our inabilities and His grace bridges the chasm between our deficiencies and God's perfection**

THIS IS ALL SWORN TO US BY AN OATH

Unlike promises of man, when God makes an oath He does not change His mind

- The strength of this oath is shown in God giving His only Son. Jesus' character, sacrifice, and the power of His resurrection pledge the strength of the new covenant. It takes the power of the cross to heal the hearts of man.

THIS IS A "GUARANTEE" (V22)

This is the only time **guarantee** appears in the NT. God was reemphasizing that a new and better way had come through Jesus.

- The Law had failed in producing godly character. God never intended the law to produce followers, but to simply expose the problem. **We are the ones that try to reduce faith to a set of rules.**
- **The Law exposes sin, but cannot absolve sin**
- **We must know that we cannot completely follow the Law. This is why we must be dependent on the Spirit and grace of God**
- **Following rules is not a relationship with God, but seeking Him first will lead us into honoring the commands of God.**

WHAT WE NEED (HEBREWS 7:23-28) THE LEADERSHIP OF MAN IS NOT PERMANENT

Aaron's priesthood had a multitude of members because priests died and new leaders would be appointed. Jesus is superior to human leadership. He is eternal and His leadership is permanent. **He is consistent and never changes** (13:8)

PEOPLE WILL LET US DOWN

We are called to respect and honor people in authority, especially elders of the church, but people are limited and will come up short

- There are people worth imitating (1 Corinthians 11:1), but **we must not make idols of people because we will be let down.** And though ministers are called to a higher standard, we must have grace!

WE MUST KEEP OUR EYES ON HIM (V25)

Jesus can meet and exceed our expectations of Him. **He is able to save, both in the present and in eternity. He mediates for us** to God the Father, **He has opened the door for our healing and restoration through the cross, and His attention is always on His people**

"HE IS HOLY" AND "INNOCENT"

Jesus is the perfect accomplishment of all God required. No blame or guilt can be put on Christ. He has committed no offense or sin and is free of moral wrongdoing.

HE IS "SEPARATED FROM SINNERS"

This isn't referring to His distance from us. He is always close, but not in His nature. His nature is perfect and not like ours, but if we invite Him into our lives we start to take on the nature of Christ. **Jesus can serve and meet the needs of sinful people and bring us into salvation.**

HE IS "EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS"

Jesus was not just a good man, He is divine and **His name is above all names** (Philippians 2:9). He is not a high priest from an earthly order, but **He is the High Priest because of the power of God.** He experienced the human condition, shows compassion to us, and never yielded to temptation while on earth

ALL OF THIS IS FOR OUR BENEFIT, NOT HIS

Levitical Priests had to make sacrifices for themselves before serving the people. Jesus was blameless, therefore all of His attention was on the people of God

- Jesus only had to offer one sacrifice, Himself, for the atonement of all sin, guilt, shame, and rebellion. That act opened the door for redemption

TO BRING IT ALL TOGETHER (V28)

The Law "appoints men who are weak," meaning we cannot depend on simply following laws to produce righteousness. The Law can only expose the problem.

- After the problem is exposed by the law, **it takes a Savior to then come in and rework the heart and mind to align our lives to honor God.**

LET'S DIG DEEPER

- We understand the 10 Commandments expose sin, but have we bought into the lie that simply following rules creates righteousness?
- Or is it the other extreme? Have we convinced ourselves that God has no definitive standards? And, that since He loves us there are no boundaries?
- Are we looking for a God to affirm our choices, or are we striving to find truth and conform to righteousness?
- Are we in love with Jesus and His instruction?
- Why are we in this room? Obligation, habit, guilt, social/family pressure, selfish gain, or is it to foster a relationship with our Creator?