

# Jesus is Better – *Hebrews*

Hebrews 8:1-13

“A Better Covenant” – April 14, 2018



## **Introduction**

Shortcuts in life can be great because they simplify things and shorten the waiting period, but there are some things in life where there are no shortcuts. Suffering has a way of making a shortcut (even bad ones) *appealing*, because we're desperate for relief from the pain. Just like the first readers of Hebrews, we're tempted to take *spiritual* shortcuts when following Jesus gets difficult. Knowing that spiritual shortcuts are short-sighted dead ends, Hebrews 8 points us to the superiority of Jesus, His ministry, and a better covenant that he introduces.

## **Pray**

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## **Sermon Outline**

- I. Jesus is the only priest that gets us to heaven (8:1-6)
- II. Jesus is the only priest who makes us new (8:7-13)

## **Read & Discuss**

- 1) Read [Hebrews 8:1-6](#)

In the Old Testament, priests served the people of God by offering gifts and sacrifices for them because of sin. It was a reminder that God is holy, sin separates us from Him, and atonement was necessary to approach God. But as good as *that* priesthood, sacrifices, and Tabernacle were, they were but a 'copy and shadow' of the real thing. Their job was to point forward to Jesus, the true and better priest. He offered a *better* sacrifice (Himself) to provide access to the true and better tent in heaven (*tent, tabernacle, temple* refer to the place where God dwells with man).

God is the giver of every good gift (James 1:17). Those gifts are meant to point us to the goodness and trustworthiness of God, *not* be an end in themselves which we give our trust to. Like the first readers who were tempted to *go back* to Judaism, *back* to the old way of doing things...we too are tempted to trust God's gifts (marriage, family, work, food, pleasure, etc.), rather than God Himself, to save us from meaninglessness, loneliness, discontentment, guilt. Where are you tempted to take a shortcut to godliness? Where are you tempted to impatience when it comes to following Jesus? Why is it important to see and know the superiority of Jesus and His priesthood in the face of such temptation?

Additional reading: Matthew 5:17, Hebrews 10:4

2) Read [Hebrews 8:7-13](#)

A covenant is a relationship formed as two parties make binding promises to each other, similar to marriage: *I promise to love and cherish for better or worse, in sickness and in health, in riches and poverty, till death do us part*. Hebrews contrasts the old covenant God made with Israel through Moses and the new covenant He gives through Jesus. One of the key differences is the way God changes our hearts in the new covenant to keep His commands; something God promised long ago through the prophet Jeremiah. Three distinctives that make the new covenant better than the old: *God writes His law on our minds and hearts (v10), He relates to each person in the covenant personally and intimately (v11), and He fully forgives sin (v12)*.

With all that God does *within* us in the new covenant, one reason we're not further along is because we fail to go to Jesus and instead rely on ourselves or other shortcuts. If you trusted the ministry (v2, 6) of Jesus as our *better* priest to help in following Him this week, what difference would that make? When and how can you go to Jesus for the help you need this week? How can you help others do the same?

Additional Reading: Philippians 2:12-13, Ezekiel 36:26-27

**Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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