

Hebrews 9:1-14

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[0 : 00] and go with me to the book of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 9. Hebrews chapter 9 is where we are at this morning. We have been making our way to the book of Hebrews on Sunday mornings, and we are now in Hebrews chapter 9.

We're going to be in verses 1 through 14 as we just continue to make our way through. So we'll be in Hebrews chapter 9, verses 1 through 14. If you have not been with us during this time, or maybe you've been listening, or maybe you haven't, I'll kind of get you caught up really quick. We know that the author of Hebrews, whoever he is, there are a lot of speculation as to who it could be. No one knows for certain who it is, so we don't definitively say. But whoever the author of Hebrews is, is writing to the Jewish people, hence the name Hebrews, who are scattered abroad, we think, outside of the realm of Jerusalem, or outside of the vicinity of Jerusalem. More than likely those Hebrew people who are scattered throughout the Roman Empire. And he is writing to not only Hebrew people, but people who have heard of Christ. Some of them have accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, and some of them are kind of caught between the two. Do I continue practicing Judaism, or trying to please God through my works and efforts, or do I go all the way with Jesus Christ? And the author of Hebrews has one overarching theme, and that is Jesus is better.

[1 : 14] Jesus is better. Jesus is better than Judaism. Jesus is better than Moses. Jesus is better than Abraham. Jesus is better than the law. Jesus is better than anything that you could ever do, or any work you could ever put forth.

And he is showing this for the intended purpose of longing for people to make a full-on commitment for Jesus Christ. And we understand Jesus himself says, I don't want you to be lukewarm. I'd rather you either be hot or cold. And that's essentially what the author is doing, saying, Make your decision. Jesus is greater in all of these ways, and since he is greater, know where you stand with him.

And that gets us up to this point. The last couple of chapters, we've been looking at the high priesthood of Jesus Christ. He is a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is very unique in this.

I know I'm giving you a lot of information on the onset, but you need to know it to get it in context. Jesus is the only individual in Scripture referred to as the great high priest.

[2 : 17] There are a number of high priests referenced throughout Scripture, but there is only one great high priest, and that is Jesus Christ. And because of his great high priesthood, he offers better things, and he offers better service.

And this is where the author is camping out, and he has been for the last couple of chapters. And the reason is because there was no person of higher rank or authority among the Jewish people than the person serving as the high priest.

The high priest was the individual who would stand between the people and God. He was the person that was appointed according to the order of Levi, from the tribe of Levi, of Aaron's descendants, who, as Job said, I wish that I had a man who could put his hand upon man and his hand upon God.

The Bible says in the book of Job, he calls it an umpire. I wish I had an umpire. He is what the man has always longed for. He is one who would go before God and represent man, and come before man and represent God.

That is the high priest, or was supposed to be the high priest with the Jewish people. Jesus is the one who does it perfectly. And understanding who he is and all that he has done gives us a greater realization of just how good Jesus is.

[3 : 31] So that's enough for the introduction. If you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking you to join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God in Hebrews chapter 9,

starting in verse 1, and we would go down to verse 14.

The word of God says, Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread.

This is called the holy place. Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the holy of holies, having a golden altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant.

And above it were the cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat. But of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.

But into the second only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time.

[4 : 47] Accordingly, both gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

Verse 11. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood he entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. God, we thank you for your word. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity we've had to read it together, to see it alongside one another.

But Lord, we pray now as we have read it, or we have heard it read, that Lord, by the power and presence of your Spirit, you would speak. We pray that you would penetrate our thoughts. We pray that you would penetrate our hearts.

[6 : 02] And Lord, that the truth of the word of God would grip us to the very core of our being. And Lord, we pray that that truth would do a work in us that only you can do. And we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. You may be seated. In Hebrews chapter 9, verses 1 through 14, we are introduced not only to the high priesthood of Jesus Christ, not only into the tabernacle in which he enters, which we will flesh out in just a little bit later, as we move from the 15th verse onward through the rest of the 9th chapter.

But we are introduced here in verses 1 through 14, to the greater cleansing of Christ. To the greater cleansing of Christ. Jesus is better in everything that he is, and he is better in everything that he does.

And the one thing that we focus on this morning in our passage is the cleansing which Christ offers those who come to him being fully committed to him. And the author here begins to introduce this aspect to us, speaking of the tabernacle, not the temple.

And it's very unique because when he's looking throughout Judaism and he's looking at the priesthood and all their service, he goes back to the original plan. Some say because the tabernacle was ordained and constructed according to the pattern which God showed Moses on the mountain.

[7 : 20] And the temple was constructed according to the pattern which David laid out for his son Solomon. Even though David was a man after God's own heart, and David was right in constructing a house for God, and we understand this, we also know that God set up a tabernacle in the wilderness for his people.

So the author, just like everything else he has done, he goes back to the roots, or to the thing in its purest form. To the thing which would lead to the pure...

I always say, and we kind of bring it back to this, if we want to see what the church is supposed to be like, you've got to go back to when the church was born. You have to go back to the church in its purest form, when it was undiluted from the world, or it was undiluted from what we would call tradition, or undiluted from the way we always have done it, and undiluted from all these different denominations.

We need to go back and see what the church is supposed to look like in its purity, and that is the book of Acts, right? We go back to the book of Acts, and we see the church, and we see how the church lives, and breathes, and acts, and behaves, and we say, that's what the church is supposed to look like.

We don't want to just open up our annuals of Baptist history and say, well, we're supposed to look like the Baptist church did in the 1800s. Rather, we would open up the book of Acts and say, we're supposed to look like the church did in Acts chapter 2, in Acts chapter 3.

[8 : 35] And so the author of Hebrews here is not saying that Jesus serves in something greater than the temple, Herod's temple that he constructed. He is saying he is serving something better than the tabernacle, which God himself showed the pattern to Moses on Mount Sinai.

He always goes back to the thing in its purest form. And he introduces us to this to show us the greater cleansing which takes place in Jesus Christ.

Four things I want you to see. Number one, we see a recognized splendor. A recognized splendor. I don't know if you have noticed this as we've made our way through the book of Hebrews. And this is something that would be very becoming of us to listen to, and really would be very flattering for us to pay attention to in our own aspect.

Each time the author introduces Jesus as being better than something, he never degrades to something that Jesus is better than. Let me say that again. Every time the author says Jesus is better than something, he never degrades the thing that Jesus is better than.

When he says Jesus is better than Moses, he also says Moses was found faithful as a servant in the household of God. He exalts Moses and lifts Moses up, but he shows that even in Moses' exalted state, Jesus is greater.

[9 : 52] When he speaks of Abraham, he doesn't say Abraham was just some wondering Babylonian who was a worshiper of multitude of gods. He says Abraham was the one with the Abrahamic promise.

He exalts Abraham, but Jesus is better than Abraham. When he speaks of the high priest, he speaks of the high priest as being people of importance, and he exalts them. But then he says, But Jesus is better than the high priest, even in their importance.

And this is why I believe. It's one thing for Jesus to be better than something that's subpar, but it's a whole other thing for Jesus to be better than something that's great. And too many times in our life when we are sharing the gospel with someone, and I don't say if, I say when, when we are sharing the gospel with someone through our actions or through our words, we try to come across as if Jesus is better than every other bad thing they tried.

Listen, Jesus is not only better than every bad thing you've done, Jesus is better than the greatest thing you've ever done. That's how good he is. And the author of Hebrews is doing that very thing, as good as all these things are.

Because bad people need Christ, but good people need Jesus as well. I was a pretty good guy. You know the problem with me? I was such a good guy, I didn't think I needed a Savior. I wasn't that bad until I realized that Jesus was greater than my goodness.

[11 : 13] And I, like Paul said, all of my righteousness is like filthy rags. So what we see here is the author exalts these things, and he starts with this exaltation as recognizing the splendor of the tabernacle.

Look at what he says, and we need to pay attention to this, because we don't want to discount the Old Testament and say, well, the Old Testament is just old stuff. We don't need to pay attention to it. Well, we better pay attention to it, because we do not fully understand the New Testament without at least a partial, if not a complete, understanding of the Old Testament.

And we'll work our way through that. I didn't get to preach last Sunday, and it's so great to be preaching again. And so I'm sorry your fireworks may be delayed tonight. We're not having an evening service, because we're doing it all at one time. And that's okay.

I ate pretty good yesterday, and so I'll be fine until then. I had a non-Baptist person tell me one time, said, you Baptists are always fast to the table, while the rest of us just fast. And I said, you're right.

And so it's okay. We'll make it right now. I'm just joking. I won't get you until supper. Maybe a little bit before. But anyway, it says, now even the first covenant, now even the first covenant, had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary.

[12:22] So now he's going back to the first covenant, and this is what he says about it. We need to understand this. The Old Testament, the law, as we refer to it, the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, all those rules and regulations, the author says, those are divine things.

Those are regulations of divine worship. They are divine because they were God-breathed. Listen, every law, every regulation, every standard, every ritual, every cleansing, every peg in the tabernacle had one thing in common.

God told them to do it. And if God commands man to do it, it's not bad. Right? It's divine because God has breathed it out.

He says these are regulations of divine worship. God has orchestrated these things. He's commanded these things. He's ordered these things, and they are good.

And he starts speaking of the splendor of them. He said they had the earthly sanctuary, for there was the tabernacle prepared. I don't know how long it's been since you've studied the tabernacle. If you're with me on Sunday nights, it hasn't been that long.

[13:31] We're making our way through the Old Testament. We're now, you know, a good ways past it in the book of Numbers, but not that long ago we were looking at the tabernacle. Everything in the tabernacle points to Jesus Christ.

Everything in the tabernacle points to Jesus. And everything in the tabernacle was the best quality, the most expensive thing in the camp. Notice that? All the money, all the things, all the constructions, all the things that were built, it contained the best.

Yeah, the irony is, is the most precious, most expensive, the best built things in the camp nobody else got to look at. It wasn't a showpiece, right? It was in there. It was given in His commitment, and it was dedicated to God.

These were things that were leading to divine worship. You start speaking of the splendors. When you went into the outer court, you had the court in the temple. It became the court of the Gentiles. But you had this outer court in which everyone was welcome to come into.

And then you had another court, another tabernacle, or another curtain, in which only the priests were allowed to come into. And then you had that inner place called the Holy of Holies, in which only the high priest was allowed to come into.

[14:38] One time a year. And these things were wonderful. I mean, the Ark of the Covenant alone. Just think of the Ark of the Covenant. You got a perfect box, overlaid in gold, with gold rings and a gold pole of acacia wood going across it, right?

And on the top of it, you had these gold cherubim. We think they're all mystical looking, and it's kind of wild looking. Inside were the two stone tablets, which God engraved with His finger, and a jar of manna, which, if you remember, after a day, that stuff would rot.

But evidently, when God told Aaron to put some in a jar, it never rotted. And that wasn't a ball canning jar, okay? That would have been probably a clay jar, and yet it was still preserved and put in there.

And then you had Aaron's rod that budded. It not only budded, it also bore flowers and ripe almonds ready to be picked. It was there. All these things were testimonial.

And all these things, and above them was the mercy seat, the seat of propitiation. And that's important. It's really cool because Jesus is our propitiation. What does that mean? Because above that mercy seat, the Shekinah glory of God.

[15:42] So here you go, and let's just paint the picture real quick, because I don't want you to leave without seeing this. You had the standard of God, the law, and above the standard of God was God. So God's dealing with man was according to His standard, the Ten Commandments, which, by the way, raise your hand if you've ever broken a Ten Commandment.

Everybody raise your hand. Yep, we've done it. I'm not looking. You're not judging your neighbor. Every one of us have broken one of the Ten Commandments. That's only took ten great sayings for us to break one of them. And here's the standard of God.

Here's the presence of God. And He's going to deal with His people. But between God and His standard is the propitiation seat, the seat of mercy in which the blood was smeared one time a year.

That's why Jesus is our propitiation. He is our mercy seat. God's standard has not changed in how He deals with His people, but between us and God is Jesus, right? These things are wonderful. They're splendid. We see and we recognize the splendor of the divine worship God gave in the Old Testament. If you ever read the Old Testament, Genesis through Malachi, and you say, oh, this is so boring, then please slow down and read it again.

[16:52] And read it with someone. And read some things about it and see how amazing it is. The splendor of the first covenant. Number two, not only do we recognize its splendor, the second thing is we come to a regrettable shortfall.

In all of its splendor and all of its beauty, regrettably, it falls short. Because look at what it says in verse 6. Now when these things have been so prepared, and such meticulous work was put into the construction, and such meticulous work was put into the organization of it, and everything was perfectly organized.

Now when these things have been so prepared, we recognize the shortfall. What a regrettable shortfall it is. Because look, it says, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.

The first shortfall is, is that there is a continual entrance of the priest. The priest's work is never done. Every day he does it again.

Every day he goes back again. Every day, you know why his work is never done? Because the people never quit sinning. And if he was not having to go in and offer sacrifices for my sins, and he was not having to go in and offer sacrifices for your sins, then he was having to go in and offer sacrifices for his own sins.

[18:12] He is continually entering the tabernacle. He's always going in with another dead animal. He's going in with some more ashes.

He's always going in putting something else on the burnt altar. He's always going in with more blood. It is a continual process which never stops. Ad infinitum, unto affinity.

When you look at the Old Testament, there's no end in sight. Every day he goes in. Every day he comes out. Every day he goes in.

And that is regrettable because man wants to see things to completion. Man. Sometimes ladies are okay if they don't get finished. Right? Like to leave things open.

Men, I mean, let's just stop right here and let's just be honest. Men like to deal with a problem, close the door, put that problem in a box, and we're through with it. We're not dealing with that problem anymore. It's over with. Right? We completed it. We finished the task.

[19:07] It's finished. It's done. We'll send it over here and we'll never come back to it. Ladies, they just let those problems run around all the time. I don't know why. They can bring them up anytime they want to. But that was done. We're through talking about that.

It's over there. Right? But man, in his wiring, wants something to be done. You want to see things come to completion. I told you one time, and some of you kind of laughed at me.

That's okay. I like making bread. I don't eat bread anymore, so I don't make a lot of bread. But the reason I like making bread is I like watching something grow and just come to completion and being done, being finished, eating it.

I really like the eating part of it. It's really good. But I just like to see things done. Right? But there's no end. The priest is continually going in.

So that's regrettable. There's a shortfall here. Something's happening. But look at what it says. But into the second, that is the holy of holies, but into the second, only the high priest. Now that's regrettable because the holy of holies is where the presence of God is.

[20:06] So now it's regrettable because only one man can go in there. So I don't have access to God. Even as a priest, I don't even have access into the outer courts of God. But not even the priest have access to God.

Only the high priest enters once a year. Now, I don't know about you, but I need to be in God's presence more than once a year. As a matter of fact, I need to be in God's presence more than once a day, let alone more than once a week.

And it's regrettable that only once a year, one man enters into God's presence, not without taking blood which he offers for himself.

That's another regrettable thing. How many of you want someone standing between you and God that must first take care of his own problems? Right? He's got to do it for himself. And he comes up.

This is the way it works. Okay? I know I'm giving you a lot of information, but the high priest would come out. He would put his clothes. He would take his priestly garments off, all these ornate things that had the things on the shoulder, and he had the crown and all these things.

[21 : 08] He would take all these priestly garments off, and he would put nothing but white linens on. Why? Because you don't walk into God's presence showing off. Right? He would put white linen on, and he would walk into the presence of God with the blood of a bull, and he would smear the blood.

The blood of the bull was for his sin. And then he would come out of the presence of God, and he would go back out there, and he would kill a goat. And he would go back into the presence of God with the blood of the goat. The blood of the goat was for your sin and my sin.

And then they would cast lots, and the other goat would go away. Regrettable. Now, the problem with the scapegoat. The scapegoat was to take the sins of the nation into the wilderness and go away.

Sometimes that crazy thing found its way back to the camp. You can't kill it because it's a scapegoat. How sad would it be to be looking up and going, Oh, that's great.

My sins are leaving. They're forever gone. Little Jehoshaphat has taken the scapegoat and led it into the wilderness, and it will never be found. But little Jehoshaphat didn't do his job really good, and he came back, and he didn't take the goat far enough away, and everybody's happy because their sins are forgotten about, forgiven, and removed.

[22 : 15] And you look up, and the goat comes walking back into camp. Uh-oh. We can't kill it. And our sins have come back. You know what's regrettable? They were coming back anyway.

The goat didn't have to come back into camp, but bring the sins back into camp. We just had to wake up the next day. Because look at what it says. Here's the most regrettable shortfall of the old thing.

You ever read the Old Testament? You see the only sins that there ever is an offering for are the sins committed in ignorance.

I'm going to test you here. That means you did not mean to sin. Either one, you didn't know that you were sinning, or you accidentally sinned, but there was no sin, no offering for a sin committed willfully.

Now, I'm not going to ask this question. I'm not going to ask you to raise your hand. But I'm just going to assume just about every one of us have committed sins willfully. Known it was wrong, but done it anyway.

[23 : 20] According to the Old Testament, there's no sacrifice for that. Now, that's regrettable. Because you carry those. Only for the sins committed in ignorance.

And he goes on. He says, And the Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time, those according to temple worship.

Accordingly, both gifts and sacrifices are offered. Here is the worst news yet, which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience. Because you know the most regrettable thing about the first covenant is even if you try to convince yourself the blood of that goat paid for your sins, your conscience is still screaming on the inside of you, you're guilty.

Because you know just as much as I know, just as much as everyone else knows, not every one of my sins were committed in ignorance. Some of my sins I knew about and I did it anyway.

Some of them were okay. And the most regrettable shortfall of the first covenant is there's no sacrifice to cleanse your conscience. Nothing.

[24 : 36] Now, number three. We see the realized Savior. I love when Scripture doesn't leave us there. Because we see the realized Savior.

Look at verse 11. Because he says in verse 10 that these were regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. And that time of reformation has come because but when Christ appeared, but when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this creation, and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood.

He entered the holy place once for all having obtained eternal redemption. I've told you over and over and over and over again, I believe in the eternal security of the saints. I believe that once you are truly saved and genuinely saved, then you are forever saved.

And I know Hebrews chapter 6 is in this Bible and I know we've already made our way through Hebrews 6. If you did not hear it, you can go back and watch it on one of our media channels or you can go back and listen to it on the website.

It is a very difficult passage and it seems to imply that one could lose their salvation. But in Hebrews chapter 5, it speaks of the eternal salvation which Jesus offers. And here in Hebrews chapter 9, it says that Jesus is the author of eternal redemption.

[26 : 00] He doesn't redeem you for a moment. He redeems you for all of eternity. He doesn't temporarily save you. He eternally saves you. That is the beauty.

Listen, the old law, the first covenant, someone could temporarily cleanse you. Jesus eternally redeems you. Here is Jesus, the realized Savior, that which man has longed for, that which man has hoped for.

And we stand in more wonder. Yes, there is splendor in the Old Testament, but the splendor in the Old Testament causes us to stand in awestruck wonder of Jesus Christ.

And it says it here, for if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctified for the cleansing of the flesh.

What is he saying? If God could say you were clean then, how much more? How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, look at this, cleanse your conscience.

[27 : 10] The regrettable shortfall of the first order is there is nothing to do with your conscience. The most splendid thing in the realized Savior is that what he does, is he does what nothing else could do.

He does not deal with the external, he deals with the internal. He cleanses your conscience. And he works inside of the individual from the inside out.

That ashes of the heifer is a great, great study. We looked at that not too long ago in the book of Numbers for those that were with us on Sunday nights. And that's why I love going through the Old Testament.

The ashes of the red heifer. It seems like you just, you know, almost feel bad saying that sometimes, you know, but it's a reality. Here's the beautiful thing. You know about the ashes of the red heifers, if you had done something that had made you unclean and it had defiled you, whatever that is, whatever that something is, you were not allowed to be in the people of God.

So you could not even be inside the camp of the nation of Israel because you, God's presence was in the camp of his people and you could not defile the presence of God. Right? So if you had done something that made you unclean, you had to remove yourself from the presence of the camp.

[28 : 20] You couldn't even be among God's people. But here's what's so awesome. That the red heifer, which was burned completely, and we're not going to get into it so much, but the ashes of this heifer, God had said is if you were unclean, you could take the ashes of the heifer, mix it with water, and cleanse your bodies and therefore he would see you as clean and you would be welcomed back into the presence of the people of God and back into the presence of God.

But you know what the coolest thing about that was? Is where they kept the ashes and who could do it. Every other offering and every other sacrifice, you had to go to a priest. You had to bring your animal to a priest and they had to burn it on the altar, right?

But the ashes of the heifer were kept perpetually in a pile outside the camp. Now if you were unclean, where did you have to go? You were unclean outside the camp, which means God made it accessible to the unclean.

And you didn't have to have a priest. You could do it yourself. Which means now all of a sudden, see the Old Testament's not bad. God's not a big mean God. This big mean God who said, don't bring your ugliness in my presence made a way for you to go cleanse yourself and come back into his presence.

He made it accessible where you were at in your uncleanliness outside the camp and he made it possible because you didn't need anyone else. You could come to him personally. What is that pointing to?

[29 : 33] Hebrews chapter 9. If God could do that with a burnt up cow, how much more can he do it when you personally go to Jesus Christ and all of your ugliness and all your filth and all of your dirtiness?

If you could walk up somewhere in a wilderness and find a pile of ashes and put it in water and you'd be welcomed back into his presence, how much more, no matter how defiled you may be, can you walk up to Jesus Christ and he meets you.

By the way, where does the Bible tell us he is? Outside the camp. He meets you outside the camp. You may not be in the camp of God's people because of your sins.

The good news is Jesus doesn't only hang out in the camp. He's omniscient and omnipotent. He's everywhere. He can meet you where you're at and you can walk up to him in the condition you are at and he will cleanse you from the inside out.

Now, one more thing. I told you I was going to keep you until supper time. One more thing. I'll make it quick. Because these things are true. Because these things are true.

[30 : 39] Number four, there is a redeemed service. And I feel like as a pastor, I could not leave this off. Because when we read of the first covenants, the covenant of works, and when we open up the Old Testament, we see God's people working.

I mean, they're working and they're working and they're working and they're working. If they sin, they go get an animal. If they're unclean, they go find an ash pile. If they mess up, they do this. They're always working and always laboring and always hoping that whatever they do would somehow appease the holy God they serve.

And then we move to the New Testament and God does it. And we still see God's people working and working and working because God has done it.

Not in order that they may do it, but because He has done it. And then we move through the ages and we see God's people sitting. But God has still done it.

Look at what it says. The wonder of the greater cleansing of Christ doesn't mean you stop working. Look at what it says.

[31 : 56] How much more, verse 14, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

You know one of the saddest tragedies we'll ever see is that before a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and God starts pricking at his heart and God starts pricking at his mind, that individual will do whatever he can to cleanse his conscience.

If it means he has to open up his Bible, though he doesn't understand it, he'll try. You know how I know that's a testimony of mine. If somebody tells you, if you pray, you'll feel better, well, he'll pray about it because hoping he'll cleanse his conscience.

If it means he has to put some money in an offering plate, he'll do it if that will cleanse his conscience. If he has to go sit in a wooden pew even though it's uncomfortable and the preacher's sweating and I really wish he'd be quiet, he would do it if it would cleanse his conscience.

And he does it and he does it and he does it and he works and he works and he works and he works but yet his conscience isn't clean. And then someday by the grace of God, by the goodness Jesus Christ woos him and draws him and calls him to himself and that individual realizes it doesn't matter how much I read, it doesn't matter how much I give, it doesn't matter how much I go, it doesn't matter how much I pray, Jesus has done it.

[33 : 09] The only thing that matters is if his blood was shed for me and the saddest thing is after he realizes that he stops because he doesn't feel guilty anymore.

Friend, I don't want you to work because you feel guilty, I think you ought to work twice as hard because you're no longer committed to dead works, now you're committed to living works and the blood of Jesus Christ has paid the price for us to labor for the kingdom.

We don't work to be saved, we work because we are saved, we don't have to do dead deeds anymore, we get to do righteous deeds because of the cleansing, we ought to work twice as hard after salvation than we did before salvation, but sadly, that is not a reality.

Look at what it says, the testimony of how good the blood of Christ is, is often times in this life measured by how hard his people work.

do you want to know why in our day and time people don't think Jesus is better? It's because they don't see Jesus' people doing better.

[34 : 19] They don't see any difference. They're not working harder, they're not loving greater. You know what turned the world upside down? In about 300 years, 120 disciples gathered in an upper room after the crucifixion, death, and burial of Christ.

Paul says about 500 people saw the risen Savior, so you got 500 people in all the Roman Empire. Within about 300 years of the resurrection of Christ, the Roman Empire was turned upside down. It went from emperor worship to being a, at least pseudo Christ-worshipping empire. It went from being one of paganism to a Christian empire.

You know what done it? It's when the church saw babies being abandoned on the hill, they went and took them in. It's when the church saw widows being mistreated, they went and took care of them.

It's when the church saw people being hungry, they fed them. It's when the church saw people being mistreated in prison, they prayed for them. It's when the church saw people being persecuted, they helped them out.

[35 : 25] It wasn't just the things the church said, it was the work the redeemed did and it literally turned their world upside down and it's the same thing that's turning the world upside down in other parts of this world the only question is why is it not turning it upside down in my world we see the wonder of the greatness of the cleansing of Christ let's pray Lord I thank you so much thank you for this day and God I thank you for your word we pray that the truth of your word would grip our hearts Lord we pray that not only would it grip us temporarily Lord that it would grip us and move us forward eternally Lord may our focus always be upon you and may you be glorified and honored in all that we do for your name's sake we ask it all in Jesus name Amen so

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.