

High Priest and the perfect sacrifice, but he was tempted in every way we are. Jesus was tempted as the Israelites were. In fact, Jesus was the Israel of one, but faithful in all things. Jesus was tempted as David was, yet was without sin. Jesus was tempted as we are, yet was without sin. All of our hopes and dreams are bound up with Jesus and his sacrifice for us.

The result of all of it is that we can approach the throne of grace with confidence. Not arrogance, but confidence. We can be confident because of our perfect High Priest and his perfect sacrifice. Because we know his sacrifice is perfect and covers all of our sins, we can approach God and expect to receive his mercy and grace in times of need, whether that is for our sin or suffering. TS: In John 12:20-25, Jesus describes what must be done for us to enjoy forgiveness and a New Covenant written on our hearts.

Finding And Losing Life

(John 12:20–26)

John 12:20-25 says, ²⁰Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. ²³Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

Around the time of the feast of Passover, there were some Greeks, or Gentiles, who had come to worship. Through Philip, they asked to talk to Jesus. Philip and Andrew then went to talk to Jesus about the request. The response is unexpected, that is, Jesus didn't respond at all. What he says next

explains why: the time had come for him to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus then uses a metaphor to explain the necessity of his death. Just as a seed must die in order for a new plant to come to life, so Jesus must die in order for a New Covenant to be established between God and his people. As Paul says in Romans 5:15, “...if the many died by the trespass of the one man, Adam, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!” The death of the one man Jesus led to life for all who would believe on him. However, in order to enjoy that new life, the one who would follow him must lay down their life as well. Without the death of Jesus, we could never experience new life. But neither can we experience new life unless we die to ourselves, so that as Paul says, we might be “*raised with him* (Colossians 3:1).” So what do we take away from this?

Conclusions

One, even under the New Covenant, David's prayer provides a model for us to pray: create in me a pure heart, O God. While through the sacrifice of Jesus our hearts are made pure by God, we must still seek to live with a pure heart. Jesus himself blesses the pure in heart, “for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8).” James tells his readers, “Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded (James 4:8).” Or Psalm 24:3-4, “³Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? ⁴He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.” We don't long to see our hearts purified because Jesus didn't already purify them, but because he did. It's our offering of love and worship to him.

Two, the blood of Jesus is the basis of our covenant with God, nothing else. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice made once for all people and once for all time. It is not only the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah, but the last covenant. Hebrews 10:1

says, “*the law can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.*” But, verse 12 says, “*But when this priest, Jesus, had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.*” Verse 14 concludes, “*by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*” If you want to experience complete forgiveness for every sin you've ever committed, and every sin you will ever commit, Jesus is the only way and he offers that forgiveness to you as a gift.

Three, Jesus is worthy to be worshiped, both now and forevermore, because he was the perfect sacrifice for sins, who selflessly humbled himself and died a shameful death so that we might be saved. In all of that, however, it is good to remember that Jesus has been glorified and is even now exalted above all things. When we see Jesus, and when we worship him, we will see Jesus something the way John did, which he describes in John 1 will worship the Jesus described Revelation 1:12-16: “¹²I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”



March 21, 2021

Pastor Jared Stoner



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Easter 2021 #3

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Good morning! I pray all of you have been blessed by the service so far. This morning we're going to continue working our way through some texts of Scripture that will help us prepare our hearts to celebrate the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. But in that process, we're also looking at the prophecies God gave hundreds of years before those events ever unfolded. Jesus didn't just drop out of the sky unannounced, but came, lived, died, and was raised again just as the prophets said he would be. So, this morning we're going to begin our journey in Psalm 51:10-17. But first, let's pray.

Written On The Heart (Psalm 51:10-17)

Psalm 51:10-17 says, ¹⁰*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. ¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. ¹⁴Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. ¹⁶You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

The superscript says that Psalm 51 was written in response to the prophet Nathan confronting David about his sin with Bathsheeba, which not only involved adultery, but then the murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite. In verses 10-17, David expresses his longing to have his heart purified because to borrow from Jesus, David committed adultery and murder in his heart before he ever acted on those things. David prays for a willing

spirit. David prays for God's grace, knowing that he does not deserve it, but instead by the law deserves death. In response to God's grace, David offers to bring praise to the Lord.

Here's the other point worth mentioning: David recognizes that God does not delight in sacrifice or burnt offerings. Instead, God desires that his people would have a repentant spirit and a broken heart in response to their sin. However, verses 18-19 say this: ¹⁸*In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar.* It's not that God did not care whether his people obeyed his commands to make sacrifices, but he wanted those sacrifices to come from a repentant heart. He didn't want rote, perfunctory sacrifices that over looked the grave offense that the sin of his people was to him. TS: God's desire for his people to have repentant hearts and David's desire to have a purified heart would both be answered with the same event. For that we now turn to Jeremiah 31:31-34.

A New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Jeremiah 31:31-34 says, ³¹*The time is coming,* declares the LORD, *“when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,”* declares the LORD. ³³*This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,* declares the LORD. *“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,”* declares the LORD. *“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*

There's a lot to these few verses, so let me just summarize some of the most important points. One, it's interesting to note that this is the only passage in the Old Testament that refers to the New Covenant, or what we call the New Testament. Of course, Jesus uses that phrase to describe his own death in Luke 22:20, when he says to his disciples at Passover, *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”* So, Jesus identifies himself as the one through whom this new covenant would be established. That covenant would include both Israel and Judah, the divided kingdoms of God's people, as well as the Gentiles who would be grafted into Israel and receive the blessing of Abraham through faith in Christ (Galatians 3:14).

Two, this covenant would not be broken as the first one was. In spite of the fact that God was a good husband to his people, that is he was faithful to the covenant he made with them, they rebelled against him. They worshiped other gods, failed to obey his laws, complained incessantly, and even made plans to kill Moses and voluntarily go back into slavery in Egypt. God doesn't describe their sin in a clinical, sanitized words, but as adultery—the most personal and painful sort of rejection. The New Covenant would not be broken in such a way.

Three, unlike the Old Covenant, which was written on tablets of stone, God says that the New Covenant would be written on the hearts and minds of his people. Please note that God always wanted his law on the hearts and minds of his people. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says, ⁴*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”*

In the New Covenant, God's law would be written on the hearts and minds of his people by the forgiveness of sins (Romans 11:27) and the work of the Holy Spirit, so that his people would obey him from their hearts. Writing about the New Covenant, Paul says that the New Covenant is *“not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2Corinthians 3:6).”* God says the result of the New Covenant is this: *“I will be there God and they will be my people.”* God's relationship with his people will be reestablished and they would both be committed to the other. TS: With that in mind, let's jump to Hebrews 4:14-16.

High Priest of the New Covenant (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Hebrews 4:14-16 says, ¹⁴*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

In this passage, the author of Hebrews declares for the second time that Jesus is our High Priest. However, he's not a High Priest like all of the others who had come before him, that is, he's not of human origin, but one who has passed through the heavens, one who was with God from all eternity. As such, Jesus is not only our High Priest, but is himself the Son of God. He is the both the priest and the offering, the one whose blood would be the basis of the New Covenant Jeremiah prophesied.

Since Jesus was the perfect High Priest, who offered the perfect sacrifice, we can hold firmly to the faith we profess. Not only is Jesus the perfect