

A Greater Tabernacle

Jesus is Greater #14 - Pastor Gary Combs - October 27, 2024 - Hebrews 9:1-14

INTRO: Good morning church! We are continuing our series entitled, “JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews.” Remember our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names.

Today, we’re in part #14 of our series looking at Hebrews 9:1-14 in a message entitled, “A Greater Tabernacle.” Because Jesus ministers as our High Priest in a heavenly Tabernacle that is greater than the old. And through Him, we are granted all-access, VIP status with God!

ILL: Have you ever been to Disney World. I’ve been several times. It’s a wonderful world, but the high prices and long lines take some of the wonder away for me. But now I understand that they offer a VIP ticket. It includes a personal tour guide, a personalized agenda, and an all-access, skipping to the front of the line for rides and shows, priority seating for fireworks, and even free snacks. What’s the catch? It costs a little more. Like up to \$900 per person more. So entry tickets are \$160 per person + the \$900 for the VIP, that’s \$1,060 per person!

Trans: I guess all-access, VIP treatment always costs more.

Need: Do you feel like a VIP with God? Or do you struggle with self-doubt and feelings of inadequacy? Maybe feelings of shame and guilt linger from your past and you’ve never been able to experience complete cleansing and forgiveness? Maybe you’re feeling a disconnect with God today? You’re going through a season of spiritual dryness? In fact, instead of feeling like a VIP, you feel that God is distant from you and not hearing your prayers?

Trans: That’s what this message is about today. Because through the ministry of Jesus in God’s heavenly tabernacle we are offered VIP access to God!

BODY: In Hebrews 9:1-14, the author told the Hebrew believers that the heavenly tabernacle where Jesus serves as High Priest is greater than the old. We can understand that the heavenly tabernacle where Jesus serves as High Priest is greater than the old. Why is the heavenly tabernacle, where Jesus serves as High Priest, greater than the old? The text gives **three reasons** why the heavenly Tabernacle of Jesus is greater.

Read text: Hebrews 9:1-14 (ESV) ¹ Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. ² For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. ³ Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, ⁴ having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron’s staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. ⁵ Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. ⁶ These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, ⁷ but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. ⁸ By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing ⁹ (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, ¹⁰ but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation. ¹¹ But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 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, thus securing an eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, ¹⁴ 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.

THE TABERNACLE OF JESUS IS GREATER BECAUSE...

1. It offers **unrestricted access** to God’s throne.

EXP: (11, 1-9a) 1st, look at v.11 and notice “the greater and more perfect tent.” The author compares the old testament “earthly” (1) tent or tabernacle with Christ’s new testament Tabernacle “not made with hands” (11). This new tent doesn’t suffer from the problem of restricted access that is “symbolically” (9) shown in the old Tabernacle worship. The author makes his argument by saying the old tent’s “way into the holy places is not yet opened” (8).

“**Earthly place**” (1) (κοσμικός, *kosmikos*) - earthly, i.e. of this present age.

“**Tent**” (2) (σκηνή, *skēnē*) - tent, the movable tabernacle of God made by Moses.

“**First section**” (2) (πρώτος, *prōtos*) - Lit., “first.” “the Holy Place.” Only Levite priests had access (6).

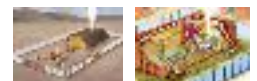
“**Second section**” (3) (δεύτερος, *deuteros*) - Lit., “second.” “Behind the second curtain..Most Holy Place.”

“**Once a year**” (7) - Only the High Priest had access and then only on *Yom Kippur*.

“**Way**” (8) (δόδος, *hodos*) - way, road, Fig., access, entry.

“**Not yet opened**” (8) (φανερῶ, *phaneroō*) - not yet made manifest, had not yet appeared.

“**Symbolic**” (9) (παραβολή, *parabolē*) - comparison, likeness, similitude, symbolic of restricted access.



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ARG: Christ's ministry in the heavenly Tabernacle has "obtained access by faith" for believers.

Romans 5:1-2 (ESV) ¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Because of Christ's work in the heavenly Tabernacle, we can "confidently" come to God's throne.

Hebrews 4:14-16 (ESV) ¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

ILL: When I bought my first car, needed a student loan for college, bought my first house, I didn't have to go through the normal bank process. Why? My Uncle Clyde was the president of the Bank of Damascus. I'd show up at the bank on a Saturday afternoon, see him, get the money, and then go his house for lunch.

APP: In Christ, we have unrestricted access to God's throne. No matter where we are or what we face, we can reach out to God instantly. We have a "direct line" to the Creator of the universe. We can confidently approach Him for help, guidance, and comfort, knowing He hears and welcomes us into His presence.

2. It is able to completely cleanse the conscience.

EXP: (9b-10) Look at v.9. The old Tabernacle sacrifices "cannot perfect the conscience." It offered only partial cleansing, but Christ's ministry in the heavenly Tabernacle is able to completely "purify our conscience" (14). The old offered "food and drink and various washing" (10), but these only cleansed the outer body.

"Cannot perfect" (9) (τελειῶ, *teleiōō*) - not able to make perfect, complete, or finish.

"Conscience" (9, 14) (συνείδησις, *suneidēsis*) - "Man's inner knowledge of himself, especially the sense of answerability... [when he] must give an account himself to the Creator" (Allen, *NAC Hebrews*, 467, quoting Hughes).

"Regulations for the body" (10) (δικαιώμασιν σαρκὸς, *dikaiōmasin sarkos*) - rules or ordinances for the flesh, merely for the body. These awaited reformation.

"Reformation" (10) (διόρθωσις, *diorthōsis*) - meaning to straighten thoroughly; rectification, i.e. In the time of the Messianic restoration; in a physical sense, a making straight of that which is out of alignment.

ARG: Apart from Christ, our consciences are corrupted. More than a heavy curtain separates us—a corrupted, impure conscience separates us from God.

Titus 1:15 (NIV) To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.

Look at the NIV of v. 14. Christ completing cleanses (purifies) our conscience.

Hebrews 9:14 (NIV) 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!

ILL: Imagine using a stain remover on a dirty shirt. You scrub and scrub, and while the stain may fade a little, it never fully disappears. It's still visible, and you're constantly aware of it. Now, imagine finding a powerful new solution that not only removes the stain completely but restores the shirt to brand new, as if it had never been dirty. There's no trace of the stain, no reminder of the dirt—it's gone.

APP: Believing in Christ, our consciences are completely cleansed. Many people carry a burden of guilt, shame, or a sense that they're never truly clean, despite their best efforts to "scrub away" their sins or mistakes through good deeds or rituals. But through Christ's perfect sacrifice, we are not just outwardly clean—we are inwardly transformed, with our consciences completely purified.

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3. It secures a once for all eternal redemption.

EXP: (11-14) Look at v.12. Christ's ministry in the heavenly Tabernacle is described as "securing an eternal redemption." Remember, the old only covered "the unintentional sins of the people" (7) and that only for that year. The intentional sins required individual sacrifices to be offered, so that the people never had a sense of being fully and finally redeemed.

"Greater and more perfect" (11) (μέγας, *meγas*... τέλειος, *teleios*) - Of the great and perfect (complete) ministry of the heavenly Tabernacle.

"Entered once for all" (12) (ἐφάπαξ, *ephapax*) - upon one occasion (only); once for all. The earthly priests had to enter every year, the divine high priest only had to enter once for all of time.

"Redemption" (12) (λύτρωσις, *lutrōsis*) - redemption; payment. **"Eternal"** - everlasting redemption.

"Sanctify" (13) (ἀγιάζω, *hagiazō*) - to separate, to consecrate things to God

"Purification of the flesh" (13) (καθαρότης, *katharotēs*) - cleanness (ceremonially):—purification. Here, of the outer man, but not the inner man.

"Blood of Christ" (14) (αἷμα, *haima*) - blood: the atoning blood of Christ

"Without blemish" (14) (ἄμωμος, *amōmos*) - without blemish: faultless, sinless.

"From dead works" (14) (νεκρῶν ἔργων, *nekrōn ergōn*) - "All operations of sin, which come from spiritually dead souls, and work eternal death." — Matthew Poole

"Serve the living God" (14) (λατρεύω, *latreuō*) - to serve, minister to; to worship God truly and wholly.

ARG: In Christ we have redemption, which is total forgiveness for our sins for all time.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace

What the old Tabernacle system of law couldn't do, Christ has done.

Romans 8:1-4 (ESV) ¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

ILL: In 2013, I bought lifetime brakes for my wife's Taurus. Earlier this year, that came in handy...

APP: Christ has secured for us a once for all eternal redemption. Because it is "once for all," we don't need to keep trying to earn our salvation or fear that we might lose it. Our redemption is secure. When guilt or doubt creep in, we can rest in the truth that Jesus' work on the cross was paid-in-full.

CONCLUSION: As we reflect on Hebrews 9:1-14, it reveals the greatness of the heavenly tabernacle where Jesus serves as our High Priest. It's far greater the old because ...

- 1) It offers unrestricted access to God's throne, inviting us to come boldly before Him with no barriers.
- 2) It completely cleanses the conscience, removing the weight of guilt and sin, giving us true peace and freedom.
- 3) It secures a once-for-all eternal redemption, ensuring that through Christ's perfect sacrifice, we are forever redeemed, with no need for further payment or sacrifice. Christ has paid for our VIP pass to God's throne room!

As we reflect on these truths, let us live with the confidence and assurance that Jesus has opened the way for us to be in God's presence, cleansed our hearts, and secured our salvation for eternity. We no longer need to rely on the self-effort, or carry the burden of guilt. Instead, we can walk in the freedom and joy that Christ's greater tabernacle offers. Will you embrace this greater reality today and live in the fullness of what Jesus has accomplished?

Let's pray.