

Jesus: A Sufficient Savior (Hebrews 9:1-10)

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Preacher: Brett Sanders

[0 : 00] I do want to say again, Happy Mother's Day. Mother's Day is typically one of our best attended services of the year, second only to Easter.

And I think this speaks volumes to the influence that mothers have in the lives of their children. I think it speaks volumes to the influence and the difference that they make.

That the way they want to be celebrated is to have their kids with them at church. I am thankful for my mother and the way that she raised us and made sure that we were always in church.

Wanted to make sure that we were always, always knew that we were prayed for. Always knew that we could have scripture cards that she would write out for us to memorize scripture. And never had to wonder if my mother was praying for me or not.

Because she would tell me that she was praying for me. She would tell me that she was praying for me to make sure that I didn't do things that I shouldn't do. And then she told me one day that she also prayed that if I did do things I shouldn't do, that I would get caught.

[1 : 08] And it took me a little while to appreciate that. But now as a parent, I appreciate her desire for me to learn from those mistakes.

But I'm also thankful for Catherine and the mother that she is to our kids. This week, I had the responsibility of getting all three of our kids ready for school on two different days all by myself. Now I know the moms in here are like, boo-hoo, you poor thing. But I did. I had to get the kids ready by myself for these two days. And if it had been the third day, we were going to my mom's to spend the night.

And she was going to help me the next morning. But it reminded me of just how much that she does. And for 14 and a half years, every single Sunday, she gets all three of our kids ready.

And make sure they're on church on time and time to greet. Some of my kids are the most eager greeters you've ever seen out there getting ready. But I am so thankful for her as well.

[2 : 11] But again, we are thankful for our mothers. And we're thankful for the difference that they make in our lives. And grateful that today is a day that we get to celebrate that and to honor that.

And thankful for so many that are here today. And so, dads, I'm going to be honest. Moms have us beat when it comes to church attendance on our special days. And so, I want to encourage us in about a month from now by coming back and celebrating Father's Day as coming to church as well. Now, while today is a day of celebrating for many, we do recognize that few holidays have such an ability to have such high highs and low lows all at the same time.

For many, Mother's Day is hard. It can be difficult because of a longing for children. Because you have lost a child. Because you aren't able to be with your children today.

And maybe because you miss your mother. No matter what emotions we bring to Mother's Day, whether it be joy, grief, excitement, anticipation, or even disappointment, God knows our hearts and has promised to be with us no matter what we're going through.

[3 : 26] Bottom line, we're reminded over and over again on a daily basis how much we need Jesus. And how much a difference of a relationship with Him makes in our lives.

So, in honor of this special day, we have a gift for all of the ladies in the room today. We want to make sure that every lady in the room today has something special to walk out with.

You'll see up here in the front, we have a table here, table here, table in the back. Full of different books that we want to encourage you to grab on your way out.

Now, kids, this is not a time to say, hey, I forgot to get Mom a present. Let me pick up. No, no, this is for all the ladies as you leave today. But we want you to grab one of those on your way out.

Just let you know how excited we are and how thankful we are for you. This is something we want to go home with each of you. We are grateful for all of the ladies.

[4 : 26] So many of them in here not only have raised children, but so many of them have been mothers to so many in the church. That's the beauty of being a part of God's family.

Not only do we have brothers and sisters in Christ that we get to share life with, but we have ladies who are in the church that may not be our mother, but have been a mother figure to us and have been a mentor.

And so we're thankful and we want to celebrate everyone today. And so as we celebrate and honor our mothers, it's my fear that many mothers, they may not feel adequate or qualified to the task of raising their kids to love the Lord.

As evidence of the commitments that the parents made earlier in our baby dedication, it's a big task. It's a tall task.

It's one that we do not take lightly. But it is also my hope and prayer that today will be a time of encouragement for you to realize that you are exactly what your kids need.

[5 : 33] They don't need perfection. They don't need someone who has the perfect answer to all their questions. They don't need someone who never loses their temper. They need you.

They need parents who love them enough to show them that Jesus is their greatest treasure. You see, our kids need real life examples to follow.

So much of the things that we think disqualify us from being good parents or the parents that God has called us to be, such as struggles with anxiety, depression, anger, temper, all of these things are real life.

And probably at least from a purely statistical standpoint, are things that many of our kids will struggle with one day as well. And so they don't need perfection.

They need us looking to Jesus as the source of our strength. They need us dependent on Jesus.

And so as we look at our passage of Scripture today, which is found in Hebrews chapter 9, I believe that our passage helps us to see Jesus more clearly.

[6 : 41] And as we see him more and more for who he actually is, then our affection for and love for him grows as well. So if what our kids need most from us, and if what the world around us needs most from believers, is believers who actually love Jesus, then let's take a look and some time this morning and let our knowledge of and affection for Jesus grow.

And so if you have a copy of God's Word, I want to invite you to follow along as we read Hebrews chapter 9, starting in verse 1 going through verse 14. This is what the Word of the Lord says.

It says, Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness.

For a tent was prepared, the first section in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of presence, and it was called the holy place.

Behind the second curtain was a second section called the most holy place. 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.

Above it were the cherubim of the glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot speak in detail. These preparations, having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, 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 : 33] 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, which is symbolic for the present age.

According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

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, he entered once for all into the holy place, not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

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, 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?

Now, I believe that the author is trying to communicate a few things to us in this passage. I believe he's very much wanting us to see that God is holy and because of our sin, the only way into his presence is Jesus.

[10:08] He's wanting us to very clearly see the holiness of God and because of our sin, we can't enter into his presence, but only by the blood of Christ can we come.

And so what I hope that we're able to see from the text today is that God is more holy than we can imagine. And because of Jesus, not only can we have a relationship with him, but we can also serve him.

And so the first thing that I want to bring our attention to is this, that is the holiness of God. I want us to clearly see the holiness of God in this passage.

Look at verse one in chapter nine again. It says, now even the first covenant had regulations for worship in an earthly place of holiness. Now, is that not the biggest understatement you've ever heard?

That the first covenant had regulations for worship. If you've ever read through the Old Testament, you will see that there are many regulations for worship. There are many things that they're supposed to be doing as they come together that the priests are doing.

[11:16] So he says, as we see in the first covenant, there are regulations for worship. And the author begins helping us see the holiness by showing us how the Old Covenant worked by giving us some details of the layout and furnishings that were in the tabernacle.

And then in verse five, it says, of these things, we cannot speak in detail. And indeed, there was no real need to discuss them in detail because his Jewish readers were well acquainted with the wilderness tabernacle.

They understood what the regulations were. They understood all of the furnishings that were in the temple. They understood all of those things. But for our purposes today, we may not be as well versed in our knowledge of the tabernacle.

So I want us to briefly take a look at some of those things. The author describes two sections of the tabernacle. He talks about the holy place and then the most holy place or the holy of holies.

And in this passage right here, he tells us a few of those things that are in the holy place in that first section. He tells us there's a lamp stand there. He tells us about the bread that is there and the lamp stands.

[12:32] They were constantly, one of the jobs of the priest was to constantly make sure that there was plenty of oil in the lamps. One of their biggest things was to make sure that the lamps never went out.

To make sure they constantly had oil in there so they would never go out in the night. There would constantly be light in the temple there. But they also had the responsibility of making sure there was bread there.

It's called the bread of presents. And what that was was there was 12 loaves of bread representative of the 12 tribes of Israel. And they were to put this in the, on the table there.

And it was something that was replaced every single week to make sure there was fresh bread there. And so the priest would replace the bread and we're told that they would consume the bread that was taken away.

And so we see this taking place, but it's also something that we see they had to do over and over again. They were constantly doing this, but it was also pointing us towards Jesus.

[13:37] You see, all of those things in the temple were reminding us of Jesus. Even the lamps and the bread. Jesus describes himself as the light of the world and the bread of life.

And so we're seeing this as a picture here. But we also, in verses 6 through 10, it gives us greater detail as to what happened there. The priests spent a lot of time in this outer section in the holy place.

They spent a lot of time there. They were constantly making sure, like we said, that the oil was in the lamp, that the bread was replaced. But it also tells us that they were constantly performing their ritual duties.

And that is, they were making and bringing sacrifices. And it says that they did this regularly. Or a better translation is probably repeatedly. Some of your translations may use repeatedly there.

And this is giving us a picture of doing this process over and over and over again. They had to do this because the problem of sin was never solved.

[14:47] You see, in verse 9, it tells us why these sacrifices didn't solve the problem of sin. It says, because they cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper.

Why? Because they were only ever provisional. They were only ever done temporarily. In fact, as soon as these sacrifices were made, as soon as the day of atonement was over, then immediately they began sinning again.

And it was something that had to go over and over again. And it was a process that reminded them of the holiness of God. But it also tells us about the second section, the most holy place or the holy of holies.

And it begins so by telling us that it was behind a curtain. Now, when you hear curtain, I don't want you to think of the window treatments that you have in your house. I don't want you to think of those little window treatments that you can see through and that are really small and thin.

Or if you have some nice ones, they may be blackout curtains. No. Think of something much bigger than this. We're told that in the temple that this curtain would have been around 60 feet high and 30 feet wide.

[15:56] Now, that's not even the most impressive part. To me, what is most impressive is how thick this curtain was. It said it was the width of a hand, so about four inches thick was this curtain.

Now, some of you, for some reason, I don't know why, like to sleep with a weighted blanket. Catherine liked to do that for some time, this big, thick, heavy blanket. A weighted blanket has nothing on this curtain.

This thing's 60 feet tall, 30 feet wide, four inches thick. It would have been incredibly heavy, but it was put in place to do a couple things. One, to make sure that people didn't go in there, but also to make sure the priest didn't go in to the holy of holies or the most holy place.

We are told that the inner chamber held the altar of incense and the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered on all sides with gold. And in some ways, this Ark was a way of remembering.

It was a way of remembering what God had done for them because inside the Ark, it contained Aaron's staff. It contained manna that God provided for them in the wilderness and it also contained the Ten Commandments.

[17:08] And so, this was all inside the Ark and so it was a way of reminding them of what God had done for them. and now, while it was significant what was in it, what was really significant about the Ark of the Covenant was what it represented, the mercy seat.

And so, it talks about in detail how the top of it was and how it was representative of the mercy seat. And so, in order for the high priest to go into the temple here, it would have been very significant.

This was a picture of God's throne. The mercy seat would be represented there as a picture of God's throne. And Michael Kruger notes, he says, if as the high priest you had entered into the inner chamber, he says, you would have drawn back the curtain with a trembling hand, wondering whether you would come out alive.

It would have been terrifying. But as scary as that was, it was only ever a symbol of what God's real throne room was like.

Of God's real throne. Remember the vision in Isaiah chapter 6 where Isaiah comes to the real throne room. He says, in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.

[18:32] The train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings. With two he covered his face and with two he covered his feet and with two he flew.

And one called to another and said, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is filled full of his glory. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called.

And the house was filled with smoke and I said, woe is me for I am lost for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell amongst the people of unclean lips.

for my eyes have seen the King the Lord of hosts. And so in order to enter the most holy place which is just a shadow of the real thing, the high priest would prepare himself by many times going into the temple the week of and just staying in the temple so he wouldn't accidentally defile himself, so he wouldn't accidentally touch something unclean and he would go through this whole process of making sure he was clean before he went into the most holy place.

All of this showing that God is holy and because of our sin we cannot enter his presence. Probably my favorite movie growing up was Indiana Jones it's not probably it was my favorite movie growing up Indiana Jones The Last Crusade.

[20 : 01] Second behind that a close second behind that was Raiders of the Lost Ark Anybody seen Raiders of the Lost Ark? Okay some of you well done some of you need to go back and really revisit some of that 1980s cinema but Raiders of the Lost Ark follows the kind of an archaeologist played by Harrison Ford named Indiana Jones and so while he's the main character of the movie the movie really centers and focuses on finding the Ark of the Covenant and so in the movie there's this quest of them trying to find the Ark and this was the golden box which represented God's holy presence the God of the Ark of the Covenant was not a God you cozy up to and snuggle up to very easily you see in the movie when the lid is opened they are killed by the fire of God's holiness now I've seen this movie dozens and dozens of times but I've only seen this part of the movie just a handful of times because growing up as soon as it came on my mom would cover my eyes cover the TV stand in front of it tell us to look away don't look at this for some reason she didn't want us to see someone's face get melted off when they opened this but it's one of those things where the Raiders of the Lost Ark while it's just a movie and there's so many things around it that are just filled with speculation one of the things that it does do a very good job of is showing us what it does get right is showing us that God is more holy than you can possibly imagine and you cannot just walk right into his presence with your sin not atoned for there are many things that we don't take seriously enough as believers when it comes to the things of God but I think one of the things at the top of that list is God's holiness it's not something we take very seriously but we should you see seeing who you are before a holy and perfect God is a good thing now it can be a scary thing it can be terrifying to think about your sin before a holy God but it is the beginning of seeing and experiencing

God's grace but there's one final truth that I want to bring our attention to this morning and it's this as we see God's holiness let it open our eyes to see the beauty of God's grace see God's holiness and see the beauty of God's grace Hebrews 9 11 through 14 is some of the most beautiful words that we find in Hebrews it says this 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 the hands that is not of this creation he entered once for all into the holy places so he didn't just go behind the curtain he didn't just go into the shadow he went to where Isaiah could barely describe it to the real holy place to the real throne room not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by the means of his own blood thus securing eternal redemption for 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 how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God how much more will that purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God at this point the author begins to show us the beauty of God's grace by highlighting the superior offering for sin that Jesus provides not with the blood of animals but with his own blood with his own life last week we highlighted the importance of the new covenant and how much better the new covenant is than the old covenant and now the author is showing us the sufficiency of this new covenant if last week we were highlighting the fact that the new covenant is better this week we're highlighting the fact that the new covenant is sufficient and it's sufficient because of Christ in the previous section the author masterfully made it known that because of the holiness of God it is impossible for us to enter into his presence we long to we go to great lengths to try to but ultimately it is impossible on our own it is a never ending endeavor to be with God but now we see there is a way and the way has a name and his name is Jesus and this way to the father is final it's not a temporary fix that needs to be done again the moment you leave the holy of holies it's not something that needs to be done again as soon as you sin it's a change in status it's something that happens once and changes for us for the rest of our lives

I love how Jerry Bridges refers to it he says it is a point in time event resulting in a continuing permanent change of status we see things like this all of the time we may not pick up on it but we see things that that this takes place all the time the adoption of a child when someone becomes a naturalized citizen this point in time experience changes their status for the rest of their lives when we come to faith in Christ there is a point in time where we have trusted Christ and we're by faith united with him in his death and his death became our death his obedience became our obedience his righteousness became our righteousness righteousness where he becomes our representative where his victory over death hell and the grave becomes our victory over death hell and the grave there's a point in time when we give Christ our sin our shame our regret and in return he clothes us with his righteousness and so

God when he looks at us he doesn't see that sin and that shame he looks at us and sees his son's perfect life given for us there's a change it happens where you go from death to life from being an enemy to being God's child and the most important question we could ever ask is this how can I a sinful human being come into a right relationship with a holy and just God I believe our passage today not only sets this question up for us to ask I believe it not only tees it up and begs us to ask the question how can this be but it also answers the question and the only way we can do this is because of Jesus because he offers a better sacrifice verse 14 tells us that Christ accomplished our forgiveness by his blood that he has cleansed our consciousness something only he could do and he does this so that we can serve the living

God listen to verse 14 it says how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish before to God purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God from dead works to serve the living God you see religion is filled with all kinds of works but they are dead because before the gospel the reason we were doing good works was to try to get God to approve of us but this is not how the gospel works in fact if you are doing something so that God will reward you for it that's not loving God that's loving yourself if you're doing something in order that God will reward you for it that's not loving God that's loving yourself think of it like this imagine that one of you has a vacation home maybe at the beach or maybe a cabin in the mountains and I realize that you like to let your friends stay there for free that you say hey all of my friends can go there whenever they want they can stay there for free and all of a sudden [28 : 44] I start texting hey buddy how are you doing today I hope you're having a great day hey why don't you come over to to our house tonight for supper how about I take you out to lunch today how about I do all of these things for you you see that's not love for you that's an investment on my part that's not love I'm not doing that because I love you I'm doing that so that I can get something from you this is the difference between religion and the gospel in religion you do good works in order to be accepted with the gospel you do good works because you have been accepted religion you try to stop gossiping in hopes that you will be accepted by God with the gospel you stop putting down others because you love Jesus and following him is what gives your life meaning and not what others think of you religion tries to stop lying cheating stealing looking at pornography focusing on earthly things and the gospel says

Jesus is better than all of these things the picture that comes to my mind is that of a child a young child young enough to still think that their parents are great and they try to do everything that they can to please them you know that three month window that your children fall into that category where they think you're great and they try to do everything to please you Charlotte is close she's kind of getting out of that window right now but she's still there a little bit and there'll be times where she'll be like daddy mommy who do you want me to ride home with maybe we're at church together maybe we're somewhere and we both drove separately she's like who wants me to ride with them and I'm like I want you to ride with me Catherine's like I want you to ride with me and Charlotte gets a big grin on her face and then she'll choose one of us to ride home with and then on the way home she'll be like daddy aren't you so glad I chose you and I say yes sweetheart I'm so glad you did this is the picture that comes to mind where we love our heavenly father so much that it is a joy to serve him we're not serving him out of obligation we're not serving him to try to get something from him but we're serving him because we love him and we love to do what pleases the father and we love to give our life to him you see my hope and prayer this morning is that we see clearly that God is more holy than we can imagine and because of Jesus we not only can have a relationship with God but we also get to serve him father thank you so very much for everything that you do for us each and every day lord we thank you for your word we thank you for how it draws us into you and to a closer walk with you and so lord I pray that if there's someone here today that needs to know you lord they would see your holiness they would see their sinfulness and realize that there is only one hope and that is to put their faith and trust in you so lord I pray that you give them the boldness to do that to step out maybe it's having a conversation with me maybe it's talking with the person that they came here with today but whatever the case may be lord I pray that you give them the boldness to follow you but lord I also pray that you be with the rest of us those of us who have placed our faith and our trust in you lord help us to see your holiness help us to see the gift that we've been given in christ to save us from our sins and from that lord help us to willingly and boldly and courageously proclaim lord here is my life take it and use it lord we ask all these things in jesus precious name amen who have been who have been who have been who have been who have

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