

Christs once for all sacrifice

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[0 : 0 0] we're going to read the bible together now so if you'd like to open up to hebrews chapter 10 james if you could come up and read that'd be great so that was hebrews chapter 10 reading from verse 1 to 18 since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of those realities it can never by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year make perfect those who draw near otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered since the worshippers having once been cleansed would no longer have any consciousness of sins but in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins consequently when christ came into the world he said sacrifices and offerings you have not desired but a body you have prepared for me in burnt offerings in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure then i said behold i have come to do your will o god as it is written of me in the scroll of the book when he said above you have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings these are offered according to the law then he added behold i have come to do your will he does away with the first in order to establish the second and by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of jesus christ once for all and every priest stands daily at his service offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins but when christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of god waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet for by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified and the holy spirit also bears witness to us for after saying this is the covenant that i will make with them after those days declares the lord i will put my laws in their hearts and write them on their minds then he adds i will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more where there is forgiveness of these there is no longer any offering for sin oh good afternoon everyone yep mic's on uh good to see you all my name is dave well i don't know if you're like me how you feel when coming into this place having your temperature checked at the door being asked about symptoms and where you've been lately it's a bit intrusive there's there's a part of me that fears that that temperature gun is going to go off and it's just going to flash red the alarm's going to go off and it's just going to say to me get out you are not allowed in here you are unclean you are defiled people need to stay away from you leave there's just a small fear in me that it's going to happen it hasn't happened yet i think perhaps more than ever i'm appreciating a bit more now what it means to be unclean and being unclean restricting us from places and more painfully from people we can't holiday interstate or overseas we can't feel completely safe when shopping or at the coffee shop i had to watch a friend's wedding via youtube last week but they didn't even know i was there really i couldn't clap um i couldn't cheer just a lot of funerals must be even harder as a church we've been split in two by this the distance there and no doubt those who are who are on zoom every week feel the distance even more being close to me is no longer an expression of intimacy it's an expression of lack of love for me figure that one it's so strange isn't it we're restricted in our singing it's just so unnatural not to express our praise of god our love of god with the lord's supper today we can't share in the one bread gluten-free bread that the wongs make an expression of intimacy in christ but we have these um little wafer things it's different all because of this virus the potential to be unclean i now think twice about hugging family members i have to decide with extended family members whether they're too unclean for me to see them and today might be hitting you hardest of all father's day for me personally it's hard that my dad is still in new zealand this virus is to differing degrees restricting our access to places and more painfully to people so what about being relationally close to god can you access his presence as you are if you think you can why do you think that because god says our sin has made us unclean we are defiled that's a big problem because god is holy how can we come near to him how can we approach him there's only one way

because god has prescribed a way for us to come to him in the days of the jewish temple in the old testament god prescribed a way for people to live with god and access his presence he prescribed daily sacrifices but most important of all was the sacrifices on the day of atonement it was the most important thing to make unclean people to be able to access a holy god so we learn about this day of atonement in levticus 16 i really encourage you to read it sometime levticus levticus 16 and we can find out more detail about what happened on this day in the jewish mishnah which was a jewish writing in the second century a.d so what we're going to do now is just transport back in time and walk in the footsteps of the high priest and see what god prescribed so that people can access god's presence and be in fellowship with him so the day of atonement

the mishnah instructs the high priest to leave his house and sleep in the temple for seven days before the day of atonement just to keep himself from any accidental uncleanness i think we're all familiar with quarantine at the moment a deputy was ready to step in in case the high priest became unclean and on the third and seventh day he was sprinkled with the blood of a heifer just in case he had some uncleanness that he wasn't aware of why all this precaution because it is dangerous to approach god it is dangerous to come close to god the very first high priest aaron learned this painfully his sons nadab and abihu went into the temple with unprescribed offerings and fire came out and killed them it is dangerous to approach a holy god if you read levticus you might get tired of all the detail people who read the bible from the beginning they can get stuck at levticus because of all the detail but the detail is what's so profound because it's yelling at us warning us you need to be careful how you approach god you cannot approach god on your own terms and yet how many of us try to we can be flippant with the lord as if he is lonely and needy and just whatever we offer him will be acceptable god is light in him there is no darkness at all for us to be in even a bit unclean a bit of darkness to come near him is dangerous but all the detail in levticus also says something else it says god wants us to come to him he wants to provide a way for us to come to him to restore fellowship to be near to him and so he graciously provides a way for us to do that and the day of atonement was critical in dealing with people's sin so the jewish calendar it had many feasts to celebrate but on this day all the people fasted the mishnah says the high priest fully bathed five times and washed his hands and his feet a further ten times to be clean instead of wearing his majestic priestly robes he wore white linen garments to represent the humility that should be characterizing the priest and the people then taking a bull the priest laid his hands on the head of the bull confessing his sin and his family's sin and then sacrificed the bull collecting some of its blood and then the moment came that would have just gripped everyone with anticipation the priest went inside not just to the outer holy place but the most holy place behind the curtain this only happened once a year

Aaron the first high priest is warned in levticus 16 2 by the lord not to come at any time into the holy place inside the veil before the mercy seat that is on the ark so that you may not die not even Aaron could come whenever he wanted only on this day only bringing blood only for this purpose so taking some of the bull's blood he approaches first he puts incense on hot coals so that the most holy place is filled with smoke so that the ark which represents God's presence can't be seen by the priest protecting the priest and then he sprinkles some of the bull's blood once on the ark on the mercy seat and then seven times he sprinkles it at the base by doing this the blood of the bull has been a substitute for him and his family and they are atoned for their sin so atonement is about cleansing from impurity atonement when it comes to objects is about cleansing that object to set it apart for service for the Lord but when it comes to people it's about cleansing that person to set them apart for service of the Lord and bring them into fellowship with the Lord so after making atonement for himself and his family the priest again goes outside this time two goats are brought to him lots are cast to see which goat is going to be the sin offering and which is going to be the scapegoat the one that's a sin offering the priest puts his hand on its head and confesses all the sin of the nation while having his hand on the head of that goat and then sacrifices the goat and collects the goat's blood and again once more he returns inside behind the curtain and sprinkles the blood once on the ark seven times at the base the priest goes back outside and with the other goat puts his hand on the goat's head and again confesses the sin of all the people now this time instead of sacrifice the goat is led away by another person outside away from

God's presence away from God's people the community cut off from life and blessing into the wilderness where we get our idea of scapegoat from as the people watch that goat leave the community they would be watching their sin to be taken away from them so after atonement is made the high priest bathes again and the solemn mood of the day is replaced with relief and joy he

gets dressed in his majestic robes and offers burnt offerings in worship of the Lord when the day was done the mishnah says that the high priest went home to his family and had a feast to celebrate that he didn't die that the priest survived going into the most holy place and the whole people were celebrating as well their sin had been dealt with and the women danced to express that celebration as a community so that's the day of atonement what would have been understood by this special day i think these things would be understood sin is deadly serious it separates people from god it must be dealt with and it must be dealt with in the way god prescribes i think another thing that people would have understood as well the day after the day of atonement the most holy place was again shut access is denied even to the high priest the presence of the lord could only be accessed by one man once a year for one purpose and he's got to get out this pandemic that we're in has to one degree or another made us all afraid and it's interrupted life with its blessings and we might be tempted to believe along with the rest of the world that if only a vaccine was available that took the virus away then life in all its blessings would return but i want to do a simple comparison to just regain some perspective i don't want to make light of covid of course it is serious of course a vaccine should be searched for let's just do a simple comparison okay as of yesterday i looked up the numbers and total covid cases was close to 27 million people 27 million serious but as of yesterday total and active cases of sin was approaching 8 billion covid has tragically taken close to 900 000 people's lives and devastated their families it's horrible but just consider for a moment how many people in the world are dying in their sin and are [18:56] going to be cut off from the life of knowing god sin is deadly serious it separates people from god it must be dealt with and it must be dealt with in the way god prescribes so in the past god graciously provided the day of atonement but as hebrews 10 verse 1 says this day along with the rest of the mosaic law was only ever a shadow of the real things to come it was a blueprint for the real thing and the real thing has come this is the good news of hebrews this is a good news for us this afternoon the author wants us to hear that you can access god with confidence confidence not fear but only through the once for all sacrifice of christ the old sacrifices could only point forward to forgiveness they couldn't deal with sin otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered since the worshippers having once been cleansed would no longer have any conscience of sin but they repeated year after year all that was doing is saying a reminder that sin is here sin must be dealt with it was pointing forward to the true day of atonement when christ came so why couldn't the blood of animals deal with sin because it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins animals could not be an adequate substitute for you a human being made in the image of god so jesus was sent here not to offer more animals but he was given a body like us to represent us so that he could offer it in our place unlike the high priest in the old testament he didn't need to offer sacrifices for his own sin because he was sinless he's the only man who fully pleased the father so not repeated sacrifices but one not animals but a man not just any man but the son of god his body wasn't taken away from him by force like the animals his body was offered willingly in obedience to his father so emma and i had the privilege of going to japan in december it feels weird saying that that seems like years ago so much has happened this year in kyoto there's lots of shinto shrines and buddhist temples up in a hilly mountainous area overlooking the city and we went up there walking in the bushland it was just so so beautiful we didn't quite go in autumn with the bloom but just afterwards and gee it's stunning the air was so crisp it was so quiet all i could hear was my own footsteps and in the background i could hear the chanting of buddhist monks and the temples are just these beautiful wooden beams and the curved roofs of the tile it's just it's stunning and and we went inside one of these temples took off our shoes and a man

was in there on his knees bowing and praying to buddha now it felt like a special place it felt like a holy place i could see the appeal to it but that's nothing nothing compared to what christ offers you and i hebrews 9 24 christ has entered into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of god on our behalf he didn't go into a temple made by human hands in the bible that kind of phrase is really about false gods false temples christ has gone into heaven itself if you want to be in the presence of deity christ has gone there he is there the good news of that is no matter where you are on earth whether you're in your office or you're at home with sick and crying children and the house is a mess you are in the presence of god in heaven through faith in christ you don't need to be on a mountain christ has gone into heaven itself the very presence of god and in japan i also saw that with shinto beliefs to keep evil spirits away to stop them wreaking havoc in your life they would go to the shrines of their ancestors they would wash their hands they would bow in respect and clap to

drive the evil spirits away and repeat that again but the real problem says god is not the evil that is outside but the evil that is inside it's what's inside that defiles a person jesus said this in mark 7 it's what comes out of a person that defiles him for from within out of the heart of man come evil thoughts sexual immorality theft murder adultery coveting wickedness deceit sensuality envy slander pride foolishness all these evil things come from within and they defile a person the problem is in here in me not out there you can try and clap evil away you can try and drink a lot of alcohol to numb the pain of your conscience but jesus offers you a real way to cleanse your conscience because he actually deals with your sin his blood actually pays for your sin he came as a sin offering in your place a scapegoat to take your sins away from you and so unlike the priests of many religions around the world who are still standing and offering sacrifices unlike the jewish priests who stood every day in the temple christ is sitting down not because he's lazy but because his work is done you can't do anything for the rest of the day that can add to your cleansing before god he's done it it is done so he's sat down but don't think that you can approach god on your own that you don't need a priest that david isn't a priest bow and adam rob none of us are priests well we're all priests in christ but none of us are high priests but don't think you can just waltz up to god you need someone to represent you but that person is christ he is our high priest and he is sitting at the right hand of the father you can't get any closer by faith in him you have access direct access to god the father and all this is offered to us only because god wants to have fellowship with us it's his idea we we aren't searching for it we haven't been asking for it we don't even want it he took the initiative he promised a day would come when he would fully and finally forgive so that relationship can be restored verse 10 says that christ came and by that will the father's will to save we have been sanctified we have been made clean we have been made holy through the offering of the body of jesus christ once for all that promised day of cleansing is today if you rely on christ as your scapegoat as your sin offering and the lord says to you i will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more how good is that so a man named charles simeon was converted by reading the story of the day of atonement because when he read that when the priest confessed the sin while having his hand on the head of the bull and the goat it just clicked with him has god really offered a way for my sin to be transferred to someone else and the answer is yes and so he gave his life to christ friends you too can transfer your sin your uncleanness your defilement to someone else to jesus christ he's the only one who can bear it and you must transfer it you must if you are to know god nothing is as urgent nothing will give you more joy and delight than to confess your sin and ask christ to take it from you matthew records in his gospel that when jesus breathed his last breath this happened behold the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom the most holy place the real presence of god in heaven itself is now completely open to us full access all the time through christ alone and so we're urged in hebrews 9 10 19 therefore brothers and sisters since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of jesus by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh and since we have a great priest over the house of god let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water don't bring with you as you come to god any fear of punishment don't bring anything in your hand to offer him to let you in christ has done it all his once for all sacrifice for your sin your uncleanness your cleansing is complete so god calls you to come to him and know him as your father forever that's the good news will you pray with me please pray with me father we we praise you that you have provided a way for us to come back to you we praise you that you took the initiative to draw us back to yourself we pray we praise you that you didn't or you sent your son to take our place lord without you we wouldn't even be aware of our sin thank you for the cross of jesus that that shows us a sin but at the same time shows that our sin is dealt with thank you lord jesus for being willing to die in our place father help each one of us to know that we truly are clean so that we can live close to you that we can serve you with a clear conscience we thank you for your great love for us in jesus name amen for an

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