

HEBREWS
“NO TURNING BACK”
Hebrews Lesson 13

Ice Breaker: Have you ever suffered from a guilty conscience? How did it affect your relationships?

INTRO: In this passage, the writer of Hebrews makes the argument that the old law could never clean your conscience or remove the barrier between you and God. Now, because of Jesus' blood, we are free to enter the presence of God and experience clean conscience Christianity!

READ: Hebrews 8:6-9:15

*6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and **it is founded on better promises.***

*7 For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault with the people and said: **“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. 9 It 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 did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 11 No 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. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*****

13 By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

1 Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. 2 A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. 3 Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, 4 which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. 5 Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.

*6 When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. 7 But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, **and never without blood**, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. 8 The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. 9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered **were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. 10 They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.***

*11 When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. 12 **He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal***

redemption. 13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those **who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.** 14 **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!**

15 For this reason **Christ is the mediator of a new covenant**, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Q: Verse 6 tells us that the new covenant is founded on better promises than the old covenant. What were the promises under the old covenant?

- Duet. 28:9-11 *"The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. 10 Then **all the peoples on earth** will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they **will fear you.** 11 The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you."*
 - National prestige, prosperity and security over enemies
 - The promises of the Old Covenant are all about the earthly Nation of Israel.
 - They had an earthly tabernacle and earthly promises.
 - There is no offer of salvation or heaven under the old covenant.
 - Salvation couldn't be attained on the basis of the law.

Q: Verses 8-12 are a quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34. What do these verses tell us the "better promises" of the new covenant are?

- God puts into us to a desire to obey Him. (Vs. 10)
 - The old covenant was built around an external set of laws imposed on people to restrain their behavior.
- Everyone in His Kingdom will **know** Him. (Vs. 11)
 - Most of the people under the law never really knew God... they only knew about Him through His rules.
- God will totally forgive our sins so there will be no separation between us and Him. (Vs. 12)
 - Sins were never forgiven under the old covenant; they were rolled ahead each year so you died with a debt of sin left unpaid. (Heb. 10:1-4)

Q: What does verse 9 say the problem with the sacrificial system was?

- *"...the gifts and sacrifices being offered **were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.**"*

Why was this such a big problem?

- Your conscience is the part of you that **knows or thinks** you have or haven't sinned.
 - When your conscience is not clear, it is usually because you aren't sure of where you stand with God.
- 1John 3:21-22 *"Dear friends, **if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.**"*

- A clean conscience gives us confidence which allows us to:
 - Get from God whatever we ask for (1John 3:22).
 - Approach the Throne of Grace to **receive mercy and find grace to help** in time of need. (Heb. 4:16)
 - Serve the Living God. (Heb. 9:14)
 - When you have a guilty conscience you lose confidence before God and you can't do these things.
 - You Can See From This Why the Devil is an accuser!
 - Rev. 12:10 *"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the **accuser** of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down."*
 - Satan will accuse you fairly or unfairly – either way he gets what he's really after.
 - He wants you to have a guilty conscience so you will be robbed of confidence and rendered powerless and unable to serve the Living God. (Heb. 9:14)
 - We were not cleansed from sin just to give us access to Heaven; we were cleansed from sin **in order to serve God!**
 - By His sacrifice on your behalf, you can stand up to the Accuser and testify that His blood covers your sin and causes you to serve Him.
 - Rev. 12:10-11 *"... For the **accuser** of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by **the blood of the Lamb** and by **the word of their testimony**; ..."*
 - 1John 3:18-20 *"Dear children, **let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 19 This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence 20 whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.***
 - Loving God & people is the most visible proof of God's ownership of you.
-

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. What are "better promises" doing for your confidence?
2. Do you have a clean conscience or a guilty one?
 - a. If you struggle with a guilty conscience, how will you make it clean so you can have confidence?
3. Jesus' blood has provided you the confidence you need to:
 - a. Approach God to receive mercy and find grace,
 - b. Get what you ask God for in prayer,
 - c. Serve the Living God

Which ones have you experienced? Which ones have you not experienced?