

Christ the Intercessor

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 0 0] the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 9. I'm reading at verse 24. Hebrews chapter 9, reading at verse 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Now this epistle is commonly termed the epistle of better things. In it, the apostle emphasizes the superiority of our Lord Jesus Christ in his priestly offers over the Levitical priesthood. Likewise, emphasizes the superiority of the one sacrifice given by Christ over all the sacrifices of the Old Testament economy. You see, these Hebrew Christians, because of their background, were inclined to fall back into practices that were no longer of any efficacy whatsoever with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were inclined to cling to or cleave to the rituals, the sacrifices, and the rituals of the Old Testament economy. There is a sense in which we cannot but sympathize with them, because after all, they had been taught regarding the importance of these prior to the coming of Christ. But now the apostle here emphasizes the fact that all these things have passed away with the coming of better days, with the coming of better things, with the coming of Christ. He is reminding them throughout the whole epistle of the superiority of Christ, of the super excellence of Christ. Now in these words before us here, the apostle is making what we might call a definite application of what he has been saying in the preceding verses that we read together in this chapter. And a contrast is now drawn between the types and their antitype, between what was typified under the Old Testament economy and what was now true in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ. We see that the one great sacrifice offered by Christ unto God was the substance of all the Old Testament shadows. His one sacrifice was efficacious. It was all sufficient. It was final.

I have glorified thee on earth, he could say. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And this is a truth which the early church found very difficult to grasp, particularly these Hebrew Christians. It may be a truth that you and I at times find very difficult to grasp, or at least forget so easily. And so we resort to our own acts, our own deeds, our own righteousnesses. And we lean so heavily upon what is nothing but an offense to God if we are to indeed suggest even that they have any efficacy whatsoever in our acceptance with God. Because we are accepted only in the beloved. We are accepted only in Christ. All our righteousnesses, all our works are as but filthy rags. But Christ is all in all.

He is the perfect Son of God, who with one offering has perfected all God's people. We are perfect in Him.

We are accepted in Him. And outside of Him we are nothing and have nothing. Friend, are you in Christ today? Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior? Do you know Him? And is He your all in all?

As you pray to God, is it Christ that is in your prayer? As you read the Scriptures, is it Christ who is more precious to you than all? As He is mirrored for you in the pages of the Old and New Testament.

[4 : 2 4] And as you meditate upon the things of God, is Christ at the center of your meditation? As you go out in the name of God, is it Christ's name you seek to magnify and glorify and not yourself? May it be true of us that we trust and look only to the Christ who is our Savior and Lord.

Now this verse 24, which I wish to meditate upon particularly today with you, is of course inseparably connected with the previous verse and of course with all that went before that.

I will read with you verse 23. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

And then he goes on, for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Now in this verse 23, the apostle sums up his previous argument concerning the typical purification of all things under the law and the spiritual purification which has been effected by the sacrifice of Christ.

[5 : 53] And the general principle involved in these words is that in the expiation, that is, in the amends made by the penalty being paid for sin, the victim used must correspond in worth or in value to the nature of the offenses, the value of the blessings procured by the expiation.

You see, what the apostle is arguing is this, that animal blood, the blood of bulls and of goats, might pay the penalty for what we might call ceremonial guilt for what we might call ceremonial guilt.

Because you see, the Israelite came under the condemnation of God because of ceremonial guilt, because of a lacking in something in regard to ceremony.

And this animal blood, the blood of bulls and of goats, did indeed secure temporary and temporal blessings for the Israelites.

But the payment of the penalty for moral guilt and the attainment of eternal blessings necessitated a much greater sacrifice than that of bulls and of goats.

[7 : 38] Necessitated nothing less than the sacrifice of the Son of God, the shedding of the blood of Christ. Nothing less can cleanse from moral pollution, from the guilt of sin.

Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. Your sins and my sins, if they are to be remitted, will be remitted only and altogether by the blood, not of bulls or of goats, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, who offered himself unto God as a lamb without spot and without blemish.

Now before I go on, there are one or two things which perhaps I ought to explain in the light of God's word to you. You will notice that the writer to the Hebrews here says that it was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with the heavens should be purified with the heavens, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

Now these patterns and or figures of verse 24 were of course the things of which Paul had been speaking in the chapter that we read together before he came to this part. He's been speaking of particular things. He's been speaking of the covenant, the book, the people, the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the sanctuary. That's the things he's been speaking about. Now he's speaking of them as only patterns of the heavenly things. That is, they were only typical of heavenly things. Now I feel that the Christian church in our day ought to try and get a hold of the significance of all these things because, you know, our Christian lives would be all the more full of the Christian lives. And we were to realize all that was there taught the Israelites in the Old Testament. And thereby we ourselves will learn all the more about the Christ who fulfilled all that was typified to these Old Testament saints by these patterns or figures.

The patterns were the book, the people, the tabernacle, the vessels of the sanctuary. But now he's speaking of something else. He is speaking of what was typified by that. What these things typified were heavenly things.

[10 : 21] Now these other things were purified by the sacrifices of the Old Testament economy.

But he is speaking of heavenly things. What were the heavenly things? Well, the ever, the heavenly things are the everlasting covenant.

Remember, there was a covenant made with Moses that was a temporal thing, but that only typified or showed forth the everlasting covenant. And more than that, typified in these things was the church itself and all the spiritual blessings which the mediation of Christ has secured for the church.

This is what was typified by this. Now you will notice that he speaks of that the fact that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these Old Testament sacrifices.

But, he says, the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. Now how is it that the writer to the Hebrews speaks of better sacrifices than these when we know, and he is emphasizing the fact that by one sacrifice, Christ has fulfilled everything that was typified by the Old Testament Levitical priesthood?

[11 : 59] Well, there are various ways in which we might explain that, but perhaps the best is that under the law, there were five chief offerings appointed unto Israel.

There was the peace offering, the burnt offering, the meal offering, the meal offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering.

Now there are other offerings we know, but these were the five main offerings. They were of primary importance. They were the chief offerings.

Now, in Christ's one great sacrifice, we have, if you like, the antitype of all these.

Of all five. And if you look at the sacrifice of Christ, have you considered the sacrifice of Christ?

[13 : 04] You can consider his sacrifice in the light of all these. And every time you consider Christ's sacrifice, his sacrifice includes all these.

So that all the sacrifices, if you like, of the Levitical law are given by Christ in one sacrifice. So that if you're considering the sin offering, well, you look at Christ, and you say, well, that's him offering the sin offering.

If you want to look at the, any of the other, the meal offering, or the burnt offering, or the trespass offering, each one of these typified Christ.

And he offered himself, as it were, in the fulfillment of these. So that is one sense. That is the, I think that puts in a nutshell, if you like, the sense in which the apostles here using the plural there, when he speaks of the sacrifices of Christ.

He is sacrificing himself once, but in these, he is fulfilling all these sacrifices. I want then to turn with you in particular today to this verse 24.

[14 : 18] For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Now in these words, I wish to notice with you three particular things. I want to consider with you, first of all, the subject spoken of. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands.

There is the subject spoken of. It is Christ. And secondly, I want to consider what is said of him. He is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us.

He is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself. And thirdly, I want to consider the end in view in all this.

What is the end Christ had in view in so entering into heaven? It is to appear in the presence of God for us.

[15 : 41] Notice then briefly, first of all, the subject spoken of. It is Christ. Christ is spoken of here, and the word is specifically used by the apostle here.

Because, you see, from verse 15, he has been speaking indefinitely, if you like, about the mediator. The mediator of the new covenant.

What he was to be, and what he was to do, and so on. The mediator and the high priest, as we read through this chapter, we find, are the same.

But now, we are told that the mediator and high priest, who is the same, is none other than Christ, our high priest.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands. Christ is the mediator. Christ is the high priest.

[16 : 49] He is the mediator between God and man. It emphasizes this particular religious office of Christ, if you like, in his mediatorial capacity between God and man.

He is there as mediator. He is there as high priest. Who is this great person? It is none other than Christ, the anointed one. The anointed of God. He has been put there by Christ, by God.

Appointed there by God. This is our great high priest, our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. He is there as priest, offering an offering to God.

What is the offering he offers? It is himself. None other than himself. Nothing less than himself. He is offering there. The sacrifice of Christ's priesthood is himself.

He gives himself without spot unto God. He pours out his soul. And therein he pours out himself unto God, unto death for us.

[18 : 02] He becomes obedient unto death in giving himself a sacrifice for our sins. This is what Christ has done. This is the person brought before us here.

Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah. Now that's an important word to the Jew. To the Christian Jew. It's an important word to you today if you're a Christian.

I might ask you the question scripture asks, all of us. What think ye of Christ today? What does he mean to you? What understanding do you have of who he is and what he has done?

But I want to go on hurriedly to consider secondly with you what is said of him here. He is Christ. But certain things are said about the Christ here, if you like.

Now, the particular honor given to the high priest under the Old Testament economy lay in the fact that he alone entered into the holiest of all.

[19 : 15] Which was, of course, the typical representation of the presence of God. The high priest alone was allowed to enter right into the presence of God, if you like.

That was the particular honor that God placed upon the high priest in Israel. But this was not only an honor, it was a duty.

He must not come short in this. This he must do. But this he and he alone must do. And this he must do only once a year on the day of atonement. That was his office.

That was his right. That was his privilege. That was his honor. That was his duty. Now, the apostles here speaking of Christ, our high priest, who has offered himself once for all.

Now, what he is saying is this, that he also must enter into the presence of God. Because he is a high priest. That is the great honor God has bestowed upon him.

[20 : 25] And it is his duty to enter into the very presence of God as the high priest. But you will notice what the apostle here says is that he has entered into the holiest, but not into the holy places made with hands.

That is the holy place in the sanctuary. Or the most holy place in the tabernacle. You know, it is places that are, the words, that is used there. He didn't enter into these, into the holy places made with hands.

Oh no. These were holy places. Let us not forget that everything that was ordained of God in regard to the sanctuary was holy.

It was ordained of God. Sanctified by God. Set apart by God. All that was there was unique and special. And was held in high esteem by the Israelite.

Looked upon with awe and reverence. And rightly so. That. Although that was so. They were but patterns. They were but patterns.

[21 : 49] They were but types. Figures. They were but figures of the true. That is of the true holy place. Of heaven itself.

They were but typified. The heavenly things. Now. This is what the apostle is saying. Christ has not entered into that earthly tabernacle.

But he has entered into heaven itself. That is where Christ has gone. He has gone. Oh yes.

God was there present. In the tabernacle. In the wilderness. The presence was there. But that was only typical. Of the holy place.

In heaven. Where God dwells. Christ has entered heaven itself. Where God dwells. As Owen puts it. The peculiar residence.

[22 : 43] Of the peasant's majesty. And glory of God. And of his throne. That is where Christ has gone. God. The entrance of Christ. God. The entrance of Christ into heaven.

Was into the temple of God. If you like. Where the throne of grace is.

And that was typified of course. In the most holy place in the tabernacle. Where the ark was.

And the mercy seat. And the cherubim of glory. Overshadowing them. That is where Christ entered in. Having.

Offered himself. A sacrifice. Unto God. He entered. Into heaven. This he did. Immediately. He died.

[23 : 48] On the cross. You remember the high priest. Under the old testament economy. He entered there. Into the holiest of all. Not without blood. But the blood had to be shed.

Before he could enter in. The sacrifice had to be given. Before he could go in there. He must not. Dare not enter in there. Without blood. So Christ. Having shed his blood on the cross.

Entered into glory immediately. Now there was another entrance of Christ. Into heaven.

After this. That is after his resurrection. You will remember that he lived for a term.

For a while on earth. After his resurrection. And then he ascended. But that was his triumphant entrance. Into heaven. That is not that of which we are reading here at all.

[24 : 46] It's two different things altogether. But that doesn't mean to say that he didn't enter in. Of course he did. Immediately. He gave himself on the cross. He entered in.

This entry. In other words. Has to do with the sacerdotal work. It has to do with his high priestly offering of a sacrifice. And as a consequence of his having offered one sacrifice.

Once for all. He has accepted into the very presence of God. And it may be that by now some of you at least are saying. Well what has all this to do with us?

What has it to do with us here today in Dingville. As we sit together here on this Lord's day. Well my friends it has much to do with us. It has much to do with us.

And that brings me to my third and final point. The end in view here. What was the end in view in Christ's. Entering into the holiest of all.

[25 : 51] Well. We read here. That it was now. To appear. In the presence of God.

For us. It was to appear. In the presence of God.

For us. That Christ entered in there. Now perhaps you overlooked. As I did for quite some time.

The word now here. Now to appear. In the presence. Of God. For us. What is the word?

The word means. At this present time. But someone says. Surely. The apostle has been talking here. Of something that took place. Thousands of years ago.

[26 : 49] Yes. But the fact is. That. The appearing of Christ. In the presence of God. Is an ever present.

Now. Now. He appears. In the presence of God. Now. That is at this present time. Now and always. What is your hope of heaven?

Is it not this very fact. That Christ is in there. Our elder brother. He is in there. Having fulfilled all righteousness. He has entered into heaven.

He appears there. Now. Now. You see. The old testament. High priest's entrance. Into the holy place. Made with hand. Had no continuance.

It was just an annual event. But you see. Christ. Christ. Has entered heaven. And is appearing there. Now for us. For us. Always.

[27 : 46] Now and always. Oh. You feel your sin. You sense your sin. As a child of God. And you feel there is no hope for you. If you were a Christian. This wouldn't be true of you.

You wouldn't do this. You wouldn't do that. And that is. Perhaps one of the most difficult parts. Of our old Christian lives. Here on earth. That we feel. And we know. We are anything but what we should be.

But although we are not what we should be. Christ is everything. And he is always there. Although we fail. He fails not. We change. He changes not.

We are accepted in the beloved. In the living Christ. Who is appearing now. And always. In the presence of God for us. My believing friends. Lay hold of that fact today. That Christ now.

Is appearing. In the presence of God. For us. The entrance of Christ into heaven. At many ends of course. But this is the only end.

[28 : 41] Of his entry into heaven. As God's temple. The seat of the throne of grace. As our great high priest. The high priest.

The high priest. Of old appeared before the ark. Before the mercy seat. Remember. According to the law. Christ appears.

The high priest. But Christ appears. Has entered into. The very presence of God himself. For us. And friend.

That is. Your safety. And mine. If we are his. There is safety for us. In none other. But in him. And in him alone. He is standing there. Before God.

Before his face. Before the face of God. Christ is standing there. For the believer. And herein lies the proof.

[29 : 42] That his sacrifice. Has been successful. That all that he has done. In the removal of sin. Has been received by God.

Because as I have already indicated. Until the animal was slain. And the blood was shed. There was no entrance. For the high priest. Into the holy's.

Place made with hands. And so it is. Christ has done all well. And he has entered into. Heaven for us. Only thus could he have appeared.

Before God for us. Oh. What you glory today. In what Christ has done. In that he has finished the work. He appears there for us.

I have glorified thee on earth. I have finished the work. Which thou gavest me to do. And now he says. I come unto thee. As he looks to the immediate future.

[30 : 38] When that would be so. Christ is thus speaking on the cross. And he has left these words for us. For our comfort. For our edification. For our consolation. For our sanctification.

Oh. Christ has left nothing. Undone. He has left nothing to chance. In the life of the Christian. He has left nothing to chance. In the furtherance. Of his kingdom. You know.

We so foolishly. Get so concerned at times. About the kingdom of God. As if it depended on man. As if it depended on you and me. As if anything depended on us.

It's all in the hands. It's all in the hands. Of the great high priest. Of the church. Of God. He appears there.

In the presence of God. As a lamb that had been slain. He is now alive. And lives forever. There he appears.

[31 : 37] In the presence of God. For us. Oh. He is the great representative. Of the church of Christ. He is there as our advocate.

Always. Pleading our cause. Always. Always pleading our cause. Oh. You say. What about my sin?

Christ knows your sin. He has atoned for your sin. And even now. At this very moment. He is. Pleading your cause. Not only for the sin. You have committed in the past.

Not only for the sin. That is true. Now. As you're sitting here. In this church. But for the sin. You commit yet. Today. And tomorrow. And the next day. You remember.

How Christ. Clearly taught this. To his disciples of old. Remember poor Peter. He said to him. Simon. Simon. Satan has desired. To have you. To sift you as wheat. But I have.

[32 : 37] What? Prayed the father. That your faith fail not. Christ knew. That Peter was going to deny him. Christ knew. The awful sin. Peter was going to be guilty of. But he says. I have prayed the father for you.

And that's your safety. And so your faith will not fail. And so it is. Therein was but a. A type. If you like. A fore running.

Of what was true. Or is. To be true. In Christ's own experience. And is true of him now. As he pleads. The good of his people. Before God the father continually.

Because I live. Says he. Ye shall live also. You're not going to live because of the grace you have received. That's not why you're going to live forever at all. It is because I live. Ye shall live also.

It's all because of me. Your salvation is in me. I am your salvation. I am your all. I am your everything. And he is there for us good.

[33 : 34] For our good that is. Behold I says he and the children. And God has given me. And as he is saying that to his father. As he pleads to it.

Behold me. And you can't behold me. Without beholding the children you gave me. Thine they were. And you gave them me. I am the head. They are the body. God looks upon his son always in love.

And he looks always upon his people in love. As he looks upon them in Christ. As he looks upon you in Christ. As he looks upon you. As you are safe. In him. And he is more or less saying to him.

I present them into your love. And your care. That they may enjoy all the benefits of my death and my sacrifice. These things cannot be denied them. Now.

Why? Because God is true. And God is just. And God is righteous. Nothing. Not one of the benefits of the covenant can be denied the children of God.

[34 : 34] As he pleads there in the presence of God for them. And this will ensure the prosperity and advancement. Of every single individual within the church of Christ.

Christ. And the church of Christ herself collectively. In every age. And to all be gathered in. And we will join with him in glory.

There. In that place. Where Christ is. To be forever. To be forever. With the Lord. With the Lord. With the Lord. And there is no better place. As Paul says elsewhere.

To be with Christ. Is far better. Oh you say. I'm afraid. I'm afraid. Will I be there? If you've believed you will. Because he's there for you.

And as your great high priest. He lives evermore. To intercede. And in that day you will see him as he is. You know we've become so.

[35 : 39] So conditioned by this. Modern world of ours. This materialistic age of ours. That the Christian church. Lives as if.

What. She has. Is but temporal. And temporary. Whereas what the church of Christ is. Is eternal. And spiritual. Friends. Christ lives.

He is our hope. He is our everything. May we glory. In him. And in him alone. May he bless his word to us. Let us pray. Oh eternal one.

We pray that we would know. In reality. That Christ lives. There is so much.

[36 : 41] Death around us. There is so much. Spiritual apathy. So little interest. In the vital truths. Of scripture. That are so precious. That are so precious. To thy people. May we be of such as. Dwell more upon these.

And learn more about the Christ. And the God. whom we will learn more of. And more of. Throughout. Eternity.

Bless us as a congregation. Oh spirit of God. Grant that thou wouldst. Come among us. We plead the finished work.

The intercession of Christ. Praying for prosperity. Praying for. Quickening. Quickening. Power.

[37 : 42] Be with us today. Keep us. By thy power. Watch over us. On life's way. Pardon us. For Jesus sake. Amen.