**Hebrews- Greater Than**

**Week #9**

**Small Group Notes**

**June 10 and 13, 2021**

**Introduction:**

**Think about the various sacrifices people have made for you in recent years. Does one stand out to you that makes you feel especially grateful?**

**Where on your gratitude list does Christ’s provision of salvation sit? How often do you thank Him for what He did on the cross for you?**

In Hebrews 10, the author returned to a theme that has become a thread to his book—the once and for all sacrifice for sin made by Jesus. At this point in his writing, the author reminded readers of the need for a better sacrifice, the effects of Jesus’ sacrifice, and the proper way we should respond to His sacrifice. The better our understanding of Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins, the more joy and gratitude we will feel toward Him.

**Discuss:**

1. Jesus is the greater sacrifice. Read Hebrews 10:1-10

**What did the author of Hebrews mean when he wrote the Law was only a shadow of the good things to come? How were the covenants God made with Adam, Noah, Abraham, and David only shadows of the New Covenant?**

**What did Christ do that the Old Covenant could never do (v. 4)?**

**What is God really looking for in the sacrifices of the Old Covenant?**

A shadow is a suggestion of the shape of an object standing in front of a light. It is an impression or a pointer to the real thing. The Law and the Old Covenant are shadows of Christ because they give an impression of what is to come, but we see their better and fulfilled purpose in Christ. The Law and the sacrifices are unable to perfect or truly change the heart and conscience of the worshiper (Heb. 9:9), and God delights in changed hearts—not changed behavior. God requires sacrifices so His people feel the weight of their sin, but He is more interested in their hearts than in the sacrifices themselves. Our faith is the key.

2. The Old Covenant sacrifices were imperfect. Read Hebrews 10:11-18

**What in your life seems to be a constant repetition? How does that repetition compare to the duties of the priest (v. 11)?**

**What did the posture of the priests and of Jesus signify about their work?**

The sacrifices and burnt offerings described in Leviticus had to be repeated because they were insufficient to deal with the root of sin. Yet Jesus Christ stands as a perpetual, once and for all sacrifice for sin that has done what the blood of bulls and goats could never do. The covenant He has provided is true and better because it is lasting. There is no need to provide it again because He has decisively dealt with our sin and shame and repaired our relationship with God.

**Verse 16 tells us that God writes the laws of His New Covenant on the hearts and minds of His people. What does this mean, and how does it impact the way we respond to Him?**

**As a result of Jesus’ sacrifice, we are forgiven when we trust Christ. How does God’s forgetting your sins (v. 17) when you repent help you deal with guilt? How does it help you deal with sins committed against you?**

Under the New Covenant, believers experience God’s mercy and grace. As a result of Jesus’ willing sacrifice, people who trust Him for salvation are forgiven. Because Jesus’ sacrifice is all-sufficient and eternally effective, no further sacrifice is necessary or possible. The old, powerless, and inadequate sacrificial system has been replaced and surpassed. Christ has put the New Covenant into effect by His atoning death. What Christ provides is infinitely superior to what the Old Covenant offered.

3. There is good news for all of us! Read Hebrews 10:19-25

**According to verses 19-23, how should people bought by Jesus’ sacrifice respond to His offering on our behalf? What words are used to describe our response?**

**What does it mean to hold fast to our confession? What does this look like practically? How has Christ freed us to do this?**

Verse 19 begins with “therefore” because verses 19-23 outline the proper response to a life that has been cleansed by Christ’s sacrifice, as described in verses 1-18. Because we have been made clean by Christ’s sacrifice, we now have the ability to pursue God without the barrier of our sin. The language used by the author of Hebrews is confident and celebratory. Jesus is faithful to us, so we can look to Him with steady and unwavering confidence, knowing that He has secured our place before God. The response to such hope should be joy.

**Throughout Hebrews, the writer reminded us that Jesus is our Great High Priest. Here, he gives us three commands that arise out of knowing that Jesus is our Great High Priest (vv. 22-24). What are they?**

**How does knowing that Jesus is our Great High Priest make us able to obey these commands?**

When we recognize Jesus as our Great High Priest, we will draw near to God (v. 21), “hold fast the confession of our hope” (v. 23), and “consider how to stir up one another to love and good works” (v. 24). Trusting in Christ as our Great High Priest allows us to draw near to God because Christ’s sacrifice has cleansed us of our sin. It allows us to remain firm in our commitment to God because Christ’s sacrifice was the ultimate act of faithfulness. And finally, Christ’s role as our Great High Priest demonstrates the matter in which we are to encourage and serve one another as Jesus set aside the glory due to Him in order to meet our deepest need (see Phil. 2:5-11).