

The Book of Hebrews

Sunday, May 17, 2015

Hebrews 5:1-10

I. Introduction

Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills the qualifications for the kind of high priest that we all need.

II. The Qualifications of the High Priest (v.1-4)

The qualifications for human high priests were to mediate between men and God, to sympathize with his fellow sinners, and to be called by God to the office.

A. The work of the high priest: As a mediator, he offers gifts and sacrifices for sins on behalf of men in things pertaining to God (5:1).

If men are not sinners, separated from a holy God, then there is no need for priests. They were appointed “on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.”

This means that you cannot be reconciled to God until you see your great need as a sinner before His holy presence. The gospel is not, “If you’ve got a few problems, try Jesus. He can help you.” The gospel has to do with our fundamental alienation from God because of our sins, and the gracious provision that God has made in His Son.

B. The identification of the high priest with the people: He can sympathize with them, since he is a fellow sinner (5:2- 3).

The priest should not act indifferently toward sin, but neither should he be harsh with repentant sinners, since he knew from personal experience how prone we are to sin.

C. The appointment of the high priest: He does not take it upon himself, but must be called by God (5:4).

In the Old Testament, that mediator was the high priest. **But the fact that all of these priests were themselves sinners pointed to the inadequacy of that old covenant and the need for the perfect high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

III. Jesus A Better High Priest (v.5-10)

Jesus perfectly fulfills and exceeds the qualifications for the high priest.

A. The appointment of Jesus as high priest: He did not take it upon Himself, but God appointed Him as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (5:5-6).

The point of the two quotations here is to show that Jesus did not presume to take the office of high priest by His own authority, but God appointed Him to this place.

B. The identification of Jesus, our high priest, with us: He prayed and learned obedience through what He suffered (5:7-8).

“In the days of His flesh” refers to Jesus’ earthly life, but specifically Gethsemane

“loud crying and tears - Jesus’ suffering in the Garden and on the cross was more intense than we can ever imagine, because we do not know what it was like to be one with the Father from all eternity until that dreadful hour.

Jesus untested obedience move to suffering and came out tested and proven obedience. Jesus experienced obedience to the maximum when He went to the cross.

C. The work of Jesus, the perfect high priest: He is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (5:9-10).

“Eternal salvation” is contrasted with the temporary nature of the Old Testament sacrifices, which could never make perfect those who offered them. The word translated “the source” of eternal salvation means “the cause.”

His point, then, in this section is to show that Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills and exceeds the qualifications of the high priest in the Old Testament. **To go back to that old system would be to return to a severely inferior system and to abandon the high priest that we desperately need.**

IV. The High Priest for Us!

1) God’s wrath against sin is so dreadful, then we need to flee to the cross for refuge and daily live with gratitude that Jesus bore our penalty on the cross.

2) Stop trying to bridge the gap between God and us. Stop trying to make atonement for our own sin.

3) Obedient faith is the only kind of faith that saves.

4) Prayer and obedient faith are inextricably linked.

5) God’s love for us does not preclude His taking us through great trials.

“No one ever said that they learned their deepest lessons of life, or had their sweetest encounters with God, on the sunny days. People go deep with God when the drought comes.” John Piper

“Never interpret God’s love by your circumstances; but always interpret your circumstances by His love.” C. H. Mackintosh

6) Finally, remember you have someone praying for you 24/7. Friends may stop, but Jesus hears your prayers and is praying for you.

V. Conclusion

Respond with adoration and worship Jesus our great High Priest