

**BLESSEDNESS OF THE TRUTH: CHRIST, GOD'S PRIEST**

- Intro:** - What is a priest? Christ Jesus is anointed to be our only high priest. The title priest tells us that it is **one who approaches** unto God.  
 - Originally, we did not need another to approach unto God. We were created so that with our volitional side of our human nature we willed the will of God.  
 - But since the fall, the way to God is shut off for the sinner. This is indicated by the Cherubim with the flaming sword, and the curtain in the tabernacle.  
 - We may not approach unto God, we now need a priest, one who approaches unto God for us: the Patriarchs and later the priesthood established by Moses.

**I. A PRIEST'S WORK.**

- A. The main work of the priest is **consecration** of the people to God.
1. The great need and misery of people is that they are separated from God by their sin.
  2. The greatest blessing for a person is communion with God.
  3. The idea of consecration is that one is taken out and separated from the common to be devoted and be given unto God.
  4. The priest sanctifies the people in order to consecrate them and bring them to God. To do this, the priest must be holy.
  5. The High Priest does all his work as representative of the people.
- B. The priest must bring **reconciliation**.
1. Reconciliation is a covenant idea, presupposing a relation existing between God and his people of love and friendship.
  2. That relationship was violated, so that now instead of love and obedience towards God, we are separated and at variance.
  3. Reconciliation consists in the removal of the cause of this break: God changes our state of guilt to that of righteousness.
  4. The way of this reconciliation is that of satisfaction of God's justice.
- C. The priest must **sacrifice** for the people.
1. God's justice against our sins can only be satisfied by a perfect sacrifice. The punishment for sin is death.
  2. To make atonement for sin, one must suffer this punishment. The vials of God's wrath must be emptied upon him.
  3. This suffering of death must be a voluntary and obedient action.
  4. Priests must bring this sacrifice, esp. on the great day of atonement. But the blood of goats and bulls cannot remove sin.
- D. Priests must **intercede** for and **bless** God's people.
1. Approaching God through prayer, the priest would claim God's promises.
  2. The priest would often stand between the sinning people and the wrathful God making confession of their awful sins.
  3. On the basis of this mediating work and the sprinkled blood of the covenant that God's wrath would be removed.
  4. The priest would then be able to pronounce God's blessing upon his people.

**II. THE SUPERIOR WORK THAT CHRIST PERFORMS. –an ONLY High Priest!**

- A. Christ is superior to the line of Aaron and the work of Aaron because he is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps.110).
1. The family of Aaron, and the work of the Levites was by birth and temporary: only as long as one lived.
  2. These priests were themselves sinful, and often their lines were cut off.
  3. The work of these priests was an outward work, not changing the heart, and the sacrifices were not voluntary or obedient.
  4. Pointing out the superiority of Christ over Judaism, the author of Hebrews points out that Aaron's work was never finished
  5. Jesus Christ did not come from the tribe of Levi. Christ's priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek.
- B. The superiority of Melchizedek.
1. The superiority is set forth first that in Melchizedek the priestly and kingly offices are combined! He is a royal priest.
  2. The priest hood of Aaron is temporal, coming to an end when the perfect sacrifice is offered, of Melchizedek is everlasting.
  3. Christ's priesthood is ordained by God (Ps.110:4) and made a priest by an oath (Heb7:20-22).
  4. Christ has an unchangeable priesthood (Heb. 7:24).
  5. Christ is himself consecrated forevermore, holy, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens (Heb.7:26-28).
- C. Christ has redeemed us!
1. Christ the consecrated one sets us apart by his blood and Spirit to be holy unto the Lord.
  2. We are reconciled unto God by Christ's perfect sacrifice: he is the priest who brings himself as the perfect sacrifice.
  3. Christ's work as priest is not finished with his death on the cross. Christ is in heaven on our behalf.
  4. We have a great high priest that is passed into the heaven, Jesus the Son of God: a sympathetic high priest.
  5. Christ makes continual intercession for us with the Father.
  6. Christ in heaven is able to pour out the benefits of his atonement for us: the Holy Spirit being the great gift to the church.

**III. THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST'S WORK.**

- A. Forgiveness of sins.
1. Christ brought not a sacrifice, but the sacrifice. The result was an eternal and all-sufficient atonement.
  2. By that one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified (Heb.10:14).
  3. By the one sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have justification. All of our sins are blotted out! Paid in full.
  4. We are given eternally righteousness.
- B. Sanctification.
1. Christ in heaven pours out his blessings upon us. The greatest blessing given to us is Christ's spirit.
  2. The Holy Spirit not only assures us of our justification, but continually works in us cleansing us and gives us new life.
  3. Christ Jesus our sympathetic high priest bestows upon us all the blessings of salvation:
  4. Christ imparts himself, his life, his holiness,
  5. In Christ we have our adoption as children of God, sanctification, perseveration, and the hope of everlasting life,
- C. We are brought near to God.
1. We may enter boldly unto the throne of grace, confident that we will find mercy.
  2. We have a sympathetic high priest who knows our needs. He constantly prays for us that we will receive what we need.
  3. We enjoy constant fellowship with God by his Word and Spirit.
  4. One day we will be with Christ, see him face to face, perfectly worshipping and serving him forever.