

# A Cleansed Conscience

HVFC

July 20, 2025

Jesus is Better Series

Hebrews 9:9-15

Continuing with our series in Hebrews.

As I have been thinking back on the past several weeks of study and sermons. I have been fascinated by where the Holy Spirit has led us. It started with a modern look at the three main topics the writer used to show how Jesus was better than them. We took those and translated them with modern day issues believers are often tempted to follow rather than Jesus. And at the root of those temptations is the allure of gaining access to God.

The following week, we took that to the next step, saying that we often seek the copy and the shadow of heavenly things because those are the man-made copies which we can see, taste, hear, smell and feel. Those are easier to put faith in because we have a measure of control. Jesus however points us to seek the Spirit and the Truth of Jesus to gain access to God.

Last week, again we took the next step, looking at the symbolic items within the tabernacle that taught us characteristics of God while illuminating truths needed to access God. Each item showcased a truth about Jesus, who paved the way for us to access God through his sacrifice. Jesus who is now in heaven's holy of holies is in constant intercession for each of the believers. We talked a little about the blood that was applied to the mercy seat, and this week we will take a more focused look at the blood and what it does. It allows the final step of completely cleansing us to be able to enter God's presence and receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Turn with me to Hebrews 9:9

I want to read several passages.

## Hebrews 9:9-14

9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience —

10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

NKJV

Let's Pray!

Listen to this Parable.

In a quiet village nestled beneath the mountains, there stood an ancient clock tower with a bell at its peak. Tradition held that every morning at sunrise, someone must climb the tower and ring the bell — not just to mark time, but to welcome the new day with intention, gratitude, and hope.

Over generations, the ritual was honored deeply. Elders spoke of how the bell's sound wasn't just noise; it was a symbol of collective renewal and awareness.

Eventually, a young man named Elías inherited the responsibility. Ambitious and punctual, Elías took great pride in ringing the bell at precisely the right time — 6:00 a.m. sharp. He tracked the sunrise to the second, polished the rope, measured the echo's length, and bragged about his consistency.

But something changed in the village. People stopped gathering to watch the sunrise. The mornings felt colder. The bell sounded the same, but its heart seemed missing.

One day, an old woman approached Elías and said, “You ring the bell perfectly. But do you hear it?”

Confused, Elías replied, “Of course I do. I track the reverberation every day.” She shook her head. “You ring it for the sound. We rang it for the silence it broke. For the reminder it brought. For the space it created inside us to begin again.”

This story illustrates our passage this morning.

Elías is Israel. They inherited this responsibility to proclaim God to the whole world but put all their focus on the rules and laws to the neglect of the true plan God had.

They grasped on to the symbolic nature of the temporary plan and missed the eternal plan of complete salvation. They were trying to do cleanliness, rather than be cleaned on the inside.

My goal is to work through these passages and land on verse 14 and flesh out the truth I hope to arrive at this morning.

Hebrews 9:9-10

9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience —

10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

NKJV

Verse nine tells us the bullseye God was aiming for. Man's heart, his mind, his conscience.

My professor would always tell us, the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart.

God was not really concerned with the cleanliness of the body.

Remember in Matthew 23:20-27 when Jesus addressed the Pharisees roughly. He accused them of having clean exteriors, but in their hearts was wickedness and lawlessness, and dead man's bones.

They had perfected the art of looking and acting clean, thinking that this was God's plan.

As verse 10 says, along with what has been said in the past couple of sermons, people tend to focus on what they can manufacture, what they can do, and project salvation on that premise.

And we all do it. If everything is going well, the thought comes to our mind, oh yea, I have been doing good lately. I haven't lied, I have read my bible twice this past week, (not including Sunday at church), and I was kind to that guy with is blinker on and let him cut in front of me. It must be the favor of God because I am doing more good than bad...

This was the mindset of the OT believer. Righteousness was solely based on doing the right things. It didn't matter if they were muttering curses in their heart. Yet they as do many today, believed that by living right, doing the right things, it grants us privilege and blessings from God.

And by our own admission, we believe that our actions bring us closer to God. Yet we cannot fool God.

Listen to God speaking through the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 29:13

And so the Lord says, "These people say they are mine. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. And their worship of me is nothing but man-made rules learned by rote.

NLT

Many people who say they are Christians, are so with the honor of lips, mere words, only. God says in reality they are far from me, because they worship the copy and shadow.

I only repeat this here, because the writer is walking us through this line of thought. And since I have covered this in each of the last three sermons, I want to move on, as to not weary you with the same observation. And the writer is now pointing us deeper within, to man's conscience.

The question turns to how can our conscience be cleansed from dead works?

We must understand that there is a heavenly perfect tabernacle, and an earthly one.

Jesus serves as High Priest in the greater more perfect tabernacle.

And like the High Priest in the earthly tabernacle, Jesus enters the Holy of Holies in heaven with his own blood to apply it to the mercy seat and obtain eternal redemption for all those who put their faith in Him.

I believe that all makes sense to us.

If Moses built the copy, and through God's instruction, told him to do the services just as he was told to do according to the pattern. Jesus would have followed through with all that needed to be done in the heavenly tabernacle.

And now this changes things.

Every Hebrew understood the ceremonial cleansing rituals.

Hebrews 9:13

13 Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity.

NLT

If you want to truly understand the symbolism, you can read about it in Numbers 19. The whole chapter is about cleansing from ceremonial impurity.

Here is the just of it.

Offerings for sin, the day of atonement happened once a year.

But as many of you know who have read the OT, you could become unclean in any of a hundred ways. Imagine if every time you became unclean, you had to sacrifice a lamb? How many of you own any lambs?

I do, and I can say that it would take me less than a day to go through all my sheep.

So God allowed for a heifer to be burned, and the ashes taken and added to water to sprinkle on those who were unclean and be cleansed.

This is what God established, and every Jewish person believed.

That the sprinkling of heifer ashes and water could cleanse the flesh of ceremonial impurities.

Now the hammer is laid to the true ringing of the bell in verse 14.

Hebrews 9:14

Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from dead works so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

NLT

Now this passage is loaded.

The full plan of God is revealed in this one scripture. His goal all along was to get our conscience cleansed from sin, which started in the garden.

Do you remember the first two things that happened after Adam and Eve's eyes were opened from disobeying God?

First was shame. It says that they noticed they were naked, and they sowed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness.

Then God shows up and asked what happened and Adam blamed Eve, Eve the serpent because of the guilt that had overtaken them.

Since that day, man's conscience had been immersed in guilt and shame. Their sin was always with them, there was no forgiveness, no absolution, no relief.

Then Jesus enters the scene, lives a perfect life, lays down that perfect life to the cruelty of death by crucifixion. He was buried.

Many things happened while he laid in the tomb, but Hebrews 9:14 shares one of the first things.

Hebrews 9:14

how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the (His) eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works

NKJV

He offered the blood from his own perfect sacrifice of his body on the heavenly mercy seat, for the forgiveness of my sin.

Man for the first time since Adam has the ability to experience a clear conscience before God because his sin is forgiven and remembered no more.

We no longer have to wrestle with guilt and shame that our sin brings us. Jesus has covered our sin with his blood, and forgiven us all of our trespasses.

Romans 8:1 echoes this thought.

Romans 8:1-2

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

NKJV

We don't have to walk in condemnation because our conscience has be free from the bonds of guilt and shame that sin brings.

How many of you like loopholes? When it comes to taxes, we look for any loophole we can find. But when someone uses a loophole regarding us, we don't like it so much.

There are those who would seek to find a loophole with having a clean conscience regarding sin.



And Paul addresses them.

Romans 5:20

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

NKJV

Continuing in chapter 6.

Romans 6:1-2

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

NKJV

It is a sad reality how comfortable we get with our sin, understanding that God will forgive us.

God did not send Jesus to cleanse the conscience so that we could continue in them thinking that there are no consequences.

Jesus came to give us freedom from sin so that we could learn to live more like Jesus, sinless. He did not come to give us freedom to live like the devil and make it into heaven.

Remember the woman caught in adultery, that was dragged before Jesus in John 8. What did Jesus tell her, I don't condemn you, go and continue to live like you want, don't worry, I forgive you.

John 8:11

Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Stand with me this morning.

Jesus' eternal spirit presented his own perfect blood to God for the penalty of sin to fulfill the plan and purpose of God to redeem man from sin.

This redemption was given to allow us the ability to become more like Jesus, not to live like the devil, relishing our sin, and taking God's grace for granted.

I find all too often it is easy to live out Isaiah 29:13.

Where with my mouth I say I belong to God, I honor him with my words, and practice lip service Christianity, only to have my heart wandering far from God.

This morning, as has been the cry for the past couple of weeks.

Don't just keep the outside clean, allow the cleansing blood of Jesus to wash over your heart and conscience and cleanse you from within.

God is seeking consciences, hearts and minds that are continually set on Him.

Don't let the fleeting pleasure of sin keep you from experiencing the true cleansing power of Jesus. We have been given the gift of salvation without condemnation, but we must walk away from our sin and run to Jesus.

Let's Pray.