

North Summit Church
Hebrews 9:11-22
January 18, 2026

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mission Trip Meeting during Third Service next week (Thailand and Cuba)
- Israel Trip Interest
- Membership Class and Meet and Greet, February 8th
- Cuba Youth Update
- Life Chain Prayer Vigil at the courthouse at 2pm today

Introduction

We're continuing our journey through **Hebrews: Encountering the Supremacy of Christ**.

Let me catch us up on where we've been in this series:

- **Chapter 1** – Christ is God's final word, the radiance of God's glory
- **Chapter 2** – Jesus became our anchor and brother through the incarnation
- **Chapter 3** – Warning against hardening our hearts in unbelief
- **Chapter 4** – We enter God's rest through our great high priest
- **Chapters 5-6** – The urgent call to spiritual maturity and the dangers of remaining as infants
- **Chapter 7** – Jesus is our eternal high priest in the order of Melchizedek
- Now as we come to chapters 8 and 9, the author has been explaining the superiority of Christ's priesthood by contrasting the old tabernacle system with the new reality we have in Christ. Last week we looked at the earthly tabernacle—its structure, its limitations, its temporary nature.

Today we come to the heart of the matter: the blood of Jesus Christ.

- There's an old hymn that many of you know: *"What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus."*
- Our culture finds that language primitive, even offensive. Blood? Sacrifice? That sounds barbaric, backwards, uncivilized.

- But here's what I want us to see today: **the blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing in all of human history that actually addresses the deepest problems of our sin stained human condition.**

READ: Hebrews 9:11-22

I. The Blood That Purifies Conscience (vv. 11-14)

Hebrews 9:11-12

"But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption."

The Greater Tabernacle

The author contrasts two tabernacles:

- The earthly one, made with hands, part of this world—temporary, limited
- The heavenly one, not made with hands, not of this world—eternal, perfect

When Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary, he didn't bring the blood of animals. He brought his own blood. And he didn't enter repeatedly, year after year. He entered **"once for all"**—the Greek word *ephapax*—unrepeatable, final, sufficient.

Hebrews 9:13-14

"For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

- Here's the critical distinction the author is making, and it's where we need to slow down and really pay attention:

The old system purified the flesh. Christ's blood purifies the conscience.

Why Conscience Matters

- Think about what conscience is. Your conscience is that internal voice that either accuses you or defends you. It's the courtroom in your own mind where you stand trial every single day.
 - When you fail, your conscience accuses: *"You're not good enough."*
 - When you sin, your conscience condemns: *"God must be disgusted with you."*
 - When you try to approach God, your conscience whispers: *"You have no right to be here."*
- The old covenant system could make you ceremonially clean—you could participate in worship, you could offer sacrifices—but it could never silence the voice of accusation in your head.

That's why the high priest had to go back year after year. Because the guilt remained. The conscience was never truly purified.

The Cultural Exhaustion of Self-Purification

- And here's where this connects to our cultural moment.

We live in a culture absolutely obsessed with self-purification:

- Therapy culture promises to heal your inner wounds
- Self-help gurus offer steps to become your best self
- Activism becomes a religious crusade to cleanse society
- Listen to the news, it's endless cycles of apology, cancellation, and attempted redemption

And none of it works.

- You know why? Because none of it can actually purify the conscience. You can deconstruct your past, process your trauma, atone for your privilege, signal your virtue—and at the end of the day, your conscience still accuses you. The guilt remains.
- This is what we talked about a few chapters ago—the culture is on a suicide mission because the lies are running out. Secular ideologies cannot address the fundamental human problem: **we know we're guilty, and the more we try to fix it ourselves the more broken we become.**

- **We yell and scream and protest, and burn down cities, but all of it only leads to an endless cycle of guilt, and brokenness.**
 - Our secular culture believes it can be both the problem and the solution.
 - **This is why we say it is either Christ or Chaos.**

Nothing but the blood of Christ can purify your conscience.

- **From condemnation to conviction**
- Lead us to the purifying blood of Christ.

How Christ's Blood Actually Works

Look at the details in verse 14:

"Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God"

This is Trinitarian language. This sacrifice involved:

- **The Son** who offered himself
- **The eternal Spirit** through whom he offered
- **God the Father** to whom he offered

This wasn't just a human being dying. This was the eternal God entering into death itself to defeat it from the inside.

Let me give you an illustration that might help.

- In the late 1800s and early 1900s, before we had modern medicine, scientists discovered something remarkable about how to create vaccines and antivenoms. If a horse was bitten by a venomous snake and survived, its blood contained antibodies—the ability to neutralize that venom. Scientists could then extract that blood, process it, and create an antivenom that could save others.

The blood of the overcomer could save those who were dying.

- That's a picture of what Christ's blood does. Jesus entered into the full venom of sin and death—he took it all on himself—and he overcame. He died, but death couldn't hold him. And now, his blood—the blood of the one who conquered—becomes the medicine of immortality for us.

- The early church fathers used that exact phrase: **"the medicine of immortality."** They understood that when we partake of Christ's blood through communion, we're not just remembering a past event. We're receiving the very life of the one who defeated death.

This saves us from Dead Works to Sacrificial Living

- Notice where verse 14 lands:

"Purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

- This is crucial. The goal isn't just to feel better about yourself. The goal is to be freed from the bondage of sin and death so that we can live lives of sacrificial self-giving love for God and towards others.
- **Dead works** are works that lead to death—religious performance, self-righteousness, attempts to earn God's favor through your own effort. They're called "dead" because they don't produce life; they produce exhaustion, guilt, and spiritual death.
- But when your conscience is purified by Christ's blood, you're freed **to serve the living God**. Not out of guilt. Not to earn acceptance. But out of gratitude, joy, and genuine love.
- This connects directly to the author's call towards Spiritual maturity just a few pages earlier.
- **Spiritual maturity isn't just knowing more theology—it's being freed from the performance trap to actually live for Christ.**

II. The Blood That Secures Inheritance (vv. 15-17)

Hebrews 9:15

"Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant."

- Here the author shifts the metaphor slightly. He's been talking about priesthood and sacrifice; now he's talking about inheritance and wills.

- The Greek word can mean both "covenant" and "testament/will." The author is playing on both meanings here.

Hebrews 9:16-17

"For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive."

- Think about how an inheritance works. Your father might write you into his will, promising you his estate. But you don't receive that inheritance while he's alive. The will only takes effect when he dies.

Christ died so you could receive the inheritance he promised.

- But there's more to it than that. In the ancient world, a covenant was often ratified by a substitutionary death. When two parties made a covenant, they would sacrifice an animal and walk between the pieces, essentially saying, "May what happened to this animal happen to me if I break this covenant."

Christ's death does both:

1. It activates the inheritance (like a will taking effect)
2. It ratifies the covenant (like a treaty being sealed)

What is the promised eternal inheritance?

- Not just heaven someday
- But reconciliation with God now
- The Holy Spirit dwelling in you
- Adoption as sons and daughters
- Access to the Father
- Freedom from guilt and condemnation
- The power to actually become who God created you to be

And all of it is secured by Christ's death.

This matters for the progression of the warning passages. Remember:

- Warning 1: Don't drift from the message
- Warning 2: Don't harden your heart in unbelief
- Warning 3: Don't remain spiritually immature
- **Warning 4 is coming in chapter 10: Don't deliberately reject Christ's sacrifice**

- Why will warning 4 be so severe? Because there is no plan B. There is no other sacrifice. There is no other way to purify the conscience. If you reject the blood of Christ, there's nothing left.

Christ's death is unrepeatable because it's utterly sufficient.

III. The Blood That Establishes Covenant (vv. 18-22)

- Now the author takes us back to the original covenant to show that blood has always been essential.

Hebrews 9:18-21

"Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.' And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship."

This has been the pattern of reality from the beginning.

- This is referring to Exodus 24, when God established the covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. Moses read the Book of the Covenant to the people, they agreed to obey, and then Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the book and on the people.
- Why blood?

Hebrews 9:22

"Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

Blood represents life.

Leviticus 17:11

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life."

- **Sin demands a life.** That's the seriousness of it. When we sin, we're not just breaking arbitrary rules—we're rebelling against the source of all life, violating the very fabric of reality itself.
- And as Paul reminds us in the book of Romans, the wages of sin is death. A life must be given.
- In the old covenant, animals died in our place—thousands and thousands of them, year after year. But their blood could never actually take away sins (Hebrews 10:4). It was always pointing forward to the one sacrifice that would.

The Final Sacrifice

When Jesus hung on the cross, all of human history was converging on that moment:

- Every animal sacrifice ever offered was pointing to this
- Every drop of blood ever spilled in the temple was a shadow of this
- Every year of waiting for the Messiah was leading to this
- And when Jesus said, "**It is finished**," he meant it. The debt was paid. The conscience was purified. The covenant was established. The inheritance was secured.
- **Nothing else is needed. Nothing else will work. Nothing but the blood of Jesus.**

Conclusion:

So what do we do with this? How do we live differently this week because of the blood of Christ?

1. Stop Trying to Purify Your Own Conscience

- If Christ's blood purifies your conscience, stop trying to do it yourself.
 - **Stop beating yourself up** for past failures as if your self-punishment somehow makes you more acceptable to God
 - **Stop performing** for God's approval as if you can add to what Christ has done
 - **Stop avoiding God** when you fail, as if you need to clean yourself up before approaching him

- When your conscience accuses you, don't argue with it by defending yourself. Look to the cross. Say, "Yes, I'm guilty. But Christ's blood has purified my conscience. I stand before God not on my own merit, but on his."
- When guilt or shame hits you, immediately take it to the cross in prayer. Don't try to fix it yourself first. Run to Christ, not away from him.

2. Receive the Inheritance Christ Secured

- You have an inheritance waiting for you. Don't live like a spiritual pauper when you're a child of God.
 - **Approach God with confidence**, not cowering in fear
 - **Serve out of freedom**, not obligation or guilt
 - **Walk in the power of the Holy Spirit**, not your own strength
 - **Live like you've been reconciled to God**, because you are in Christ Jesus
- Remember what we learned in chapter 7—Jesus lives forever to make intercession for you. Right now, at this moment, your great high priest is representing you before the Father. You're not on probation. You're not hoping to be accepted. You are accepted in Christ.
- **Practice:** Thank God every morning for one specific aspect of your inheritance in Christ. Let that shape how you walk through your day.

3. Share The Hope of the Gospel with Others

Our culture is exhausted from trying to purify itself through activism, therapy, self-help, and performative morality. As we see the lies running out—and they are running out—people are hungry for something real.

- They need to know that Christ's blood actually works. That it addresses the deepest problem: a guilty conscience that won't let you rest.
- This is why spiritual maturity matters. The world doesn't need moral therapeutic deism, and cultural Christianity. It needs Christians who understand they are in desperate need of the blood of Jesus every single day. That Christ is the only

antidote to the guilt and stain of sin. They need believers who know Christ deeply and can show them the way, by living in that reality every single day.

- Desperate, dependent, in the complete sufficiency of the blood of Christ.
- Have a conversation with someone about what Christ has done for you. Don't make it complicated. Just share what Christ has done for you, share how he has set you free, and the freedom from sin that He purchased through His shed blood.

The author of Hebrews is building toward warning passage #4, which will say: **"If we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins."**

- Why is that warning so severe? Because this is it. There is no plan B. There is no other sacrifice. There is no other blood that can purify your conscience.

Christ's blood is sufficient—but it's also singular.

- So hold fast to him. Don't drift (warning 1). Don't harden your heart (warning 2). Don't remain immature (warning 3). And don't treat his sacrifice as worthless (warning 4 coming).
- The blood of Jesus Christ—shed once for all, in the heavenly sanctuary, through the eternal Spirit—is the only thing that can purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

[Benediction] Hebrew 13:20-21

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Conscience and Cultural Exhaustion

Our culture is obsessed with self-purification through therapy, activism, and self-help—but none of it can actually cleanse a guilty conscience. The sermon reminded us that Christ's blood does what no amount of self-improvement can: it purifies our conscience from dead works.

When I'm struggling with guilt or shame, what is my first instinct—to try to fix myself through my own efforts, or to immediately run to Christ? What would it look like for me to take my guilt directly to the cross this week instead of trying to manage it myself?

2. Dead Works vs. Living Service

The passage says Christ's blood purifies us "from dead works to serve the living God." Dead works are our attempts to earn God's favor through religious performance and self-righteousness—they exhaust us and produce spiritual death rather than life.

What "dead works" am I currently engaging in—ways I'm trying to earn God's approval or make myself acceptable? How would my service to God change if I truly believed my conscience is already purified by Christ's blood?

3. Living in Your Inheritance

Christ's death secured an eternal inheritance for us—not just heaven someday, but reconciliation with God now, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, adoption as sons and daughters, freedom from condemnation, and the power to become who God created us to be.

Am I living like a spiritual pauper or like a child of God who has received an inheritance? What specific aspect of my inheritance in Christ do I need to thank God for and actually live in this week?

4. Sharing the Only Solution

The sermon challenged us to share the gospel with a culture exhausted from trying to purify itself. We know people who are drowning in guilt and don't know how to fix it—they need to hear that Christ's blood actually works.

Who in my life is exhausted from trying to fix themselves through self-help, activism, or performance? How can I share my own story this week about how Christ's blood purified my conscience and gave me freedom to actually live?

