

## *Valley Bible Church - Sermon Transcript*

### Christ's Atoning Death and Eternal Redemption Hebrews 9:11-14

There are people in this world who live with guilt. No matter what they do to wipe their conscience clean they can't get rid of their guilt for past transgressions. In fact they may come to a place where they conclude that no matter what they do that their guilt will be forever with them.

There was a man named Albert Speer who once was interviewed on ABC's "Good Morning, America." This man had been a Hitler confidant whose technological skills were credited with keeping Nazi factories humming throughout World War II. And at the end of the war he was deemed along with many other Germans of being a war criminal.

But there was something about him that set him apart from all the other criminals. He was the only one that pleaded guilty to the charges that had been brought against him. And what was his sentence? He was sentenced to 20 years in prison, which he served, but even those 20 years in prison did not cleanse his conscience. And how do we know this? We know this because prior to this interview he had written that he did not believe that his guilt could ever be forgiven.

So this interviewer asked him, "Do you still feel this way?" He responded, "I served a sentence of twenty years, and I could say, I'm a free man, my conscience has been cleared by serving out my sentence of 20 years. But I can't do that. I still carry the burden of what happened to millions of people during Hitler's lifetime, and I can't get rid of that burden and the guilt attached to it."

So are there people in this world who have tried to get rid of guilt and can't? Yes! Absolutely! In fact I don't believe anyone can get rid of guilt. They can manage their guilt. And some can manage their guilt better than others. But no one can get rid of the guilt associated with past transgressions.

But what we cannot do God has done for us through the blood of Christ. And if we will accept what He has done for us through faith in Christ we will be able to enter into the blessedness of what He has done free of guilt and full of gratitude.

And hopefully what I have just shared with you will come alive for us this morning as we return back to our study of Hebrews.

As you know the Book of Hebrews was written to a group of struggling Hebrew believers, who under a great persecution, were being tempted, to turn away from Christ and return back to Judaism.

So how did the author of this book counter this danger that was facing this vulnerable congregation? The author focused on Christ's superiority. So what have we seen so far?

Having set forth the superiority of Christ to prophets, to angels, and to Moses the author then set out to show the superiority of Christ's priesthood over all other **priesthoods**. In doing so the author initially focused Christ's appointment as high priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:1-7:28) and how he is focusing on Christ's superior high priestly offering (Hebrews 8:1-10:18).

We are beginning to examine a part of this particular section that we will entitle: The decisive cleansing through the blood of Christ (Hebrews 9:11-28).

This part of the larger section that we will begin to examine this morning is composed of a number of different thoughts.

This morning we will consider only the first of those thoughts. So what was the first thought? It was this: Christ's **atonement** death secured eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-14) or in other words a redemption that would last forever and ever and ever, without ever coming to an end.

And what is my hope for this message? My hope is this, that as we examine how Christ's atoning death secured eternal redemption for us through the blood of Christ that through the outgoing of God's grace that all guilt we may have brought into this room this morning be removed from us and replaced with such a sense of gratitude that will result in a life of service to God.

So now let us look at this decisive cleansing through the blood of Christ as detailed for us in Hebrews 9:11-14. And what does it say? It says this, "**But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation. (12) and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (13) For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer / sprinkling those who have been defiled / sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh. (14) how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit**

**offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

So based on these verses did the author communicate to his readers that Christ's atoning death secured eternal redemption? Yes. I believe these verses did in fact communicate that. So now let us look at these verses more carefully.

So how did author, looking first at **verse 11** begin? The author began by establishing the superiority of the New Covenant tabernacle over the Old Covenant tabernacle (Hebrews 9:11). Let me read for you **Hebrews 9:11** and see if this is not so. And what does it say? It says this, **"But when Christ appeared as high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation."** So did this author here in **Hebrews 9:11** establish the superiority of the New Covenant tabernacle over the Old Covenant tabernacle? Yes, I believe he did.

So how did this author establish that superiority? First of all he declared it to be superior by referring to it as **"the greater and more perfect tabernacle."** Then what did the author do? He then supported that contention by saying the following about that superior tabernacle, **"not made with hands, that is to say not of this creation."** So what does this mean?

When the Old Covenant priests entered the Old Covenant tabernacle they were entering a tabernacle that had been made by men, out of earthly materials but this was not true of the New Covenant tabernacle that Christ entered when he began His New Covenant ministry. The tabernacle that Christ entered when he began His New Covenant ministry had **"not been made with hands"** or in other words had not been made with human hands like the Old Covenant tabernacle.

And why couldn't this New Covenant tabernacle have been made with human hands? It could not have been made with human hands because it was **"not of this creation."** Or in other words we could say it this way: It was not of this world nor was it made of the things of this world. It was a heavenly tabernacle made with heavenly materials not by man but by God. So after the author established the superiority of the New Covenant tabernacle, in which Christ is now ministering in **Hebrews 9:11**, what then did the author do?

The author then established the superiority of Christ's offering over and against the yearly offerings of the former high priests (Hebrews 9:12)

So now let me read for you **Hebrews 9:12** and see if this is not so. And what does this verse say? It says this, "**And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the Holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.**" So how was Christ's offering superior to the yearly offerings of the high priests based on this verse?

First of all: The blood of goats and calves offered up by the high priests of Israel under the Law gained them one day of access to an inferior earthly tabernacle on the Day of Atonement. But based on **verse 12** the blood that Christ offered up on the cross of Calvary, which was His own blood, did not simply gain Him access to an earthly tabernacle for a very brief period of time but rather it gained Him "**entrance**" into the far superior heavenly tabernacle "**once for all**" or in other words "forever".

So this was the first reason why Christ's offering was superior to the yearly offerings of the high priests. It gained Him a once-for-all entrance into the superior heavenly tabernacle. But this was not the only reason that **verse 12** highlighted. So what was the second reason?

The second reason why Christ's offering was superior because, unlike the yearly offerings of the high priests of Israel, Christ's offering was able to obtain "**eternal redemption.**"

So what does this expression "**eternal redemption**" mean? Let us begin with the word "redemption"? The verbal form of the word "**redemption**" (LUTROSIS) means, "to release on receipt of ransom, to redeem or liberate by payment of a ransom." So what would Christ, through His blood offering have wanted us to be set free from, as He shed His blood on the cross of Calvary as a ransom? It would have been "**sin.**"

Listen to the words of Christ in **John 8:34** "**truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.**" So what would Christ have wanted us to be set free from, as He shed His blood on the cross of Calvary as a ransom? He would have wanted us to be set free from sin and our slavery to it, for if we were not set free from sin and our slavery to it, we would have remained forever separated from God, for the scriptures are clear that the wages of sin is death, as stated in **Romans 6:23.**

So certainly Christ would have wanted us, through His blood offering, to be set free from sin and slavery to it for the reason that I just stated.

But for how long should those who have been set free from sin and their slavery to it, expect to remain free based on the blood offering of Christ? They should expect to remain free forever.

This is why the author in referring to the redemption that Christ obtained through His blood offering, referred to it as "**eternal**".

Christ's blood offering was able to obtain "**eternal redemption**" because Christ's offering did not simply atone for the sins committed in ignorance as was the case with the blood offerings of priests according to **Hebrews 9:7** but rather His offering atoned for all sin, for all time, for all people.

Sinners are slaves of sin. Christ through the shedding of His own **blood** paid the necessary ransom to set us free from sin and thus from death forever (John 8:34 cf. Romans 6:23).

Therefore if we have accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior by grace through faith and have therefore taken advantage of what Christ has done for us on the cross of Calvary we can know that we have not been set free from sin and our slavery to it, not for just a week or a month but rather forever.

And why would this be? It is because Christ's blood, His precious blood, paid the debt for all sin, for all time, for all people. So can we loose our salvation once we have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior by grace through faith! No! How could we? We have been eternally redeemed.

So after the author had established the superiority of Christ's offering over the yearly offerings of the former high priests in **verse 12** what did the author do next? This is what he did:

The author further highlighted how the blood of Christ, having secured our eternal redemption, impacts our conscience before God using a lesser to greater **argument** (Hebrews 9:13-14).

So let me read for you **Hebrews 9:13-14** and see if this is not so. And what do these verses say? They say this, "**For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer / sprinkling those who have been defiled / sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh. (14) how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.**" So did this author in these verses highlight further how the blood of Christ, having secured our eternal redemption, impacts our conscience before God, using a lesser to greater argument? Yes. I believe he did.

The author began with the lesser part of his argument in **verse 13**. In **verse 13** the author acknowledged that the various priestly offerings as represented by his reference to the "**blood of goats and bulls**" and priestly functions as represented by his reference to "**the ashes of a**

**heifer"** being sprinkled on those who had become defiled by their contact with a dead body in accordance with the instructions provided in **Numbers 19** did in fact together, have an impact.

And what was the impact of these various offerings and functions? This was the impact. It resulted in "**the cleansing of the flesh**" or in other words, it resulted in a very superficial cleansing that only dealt with external issues related to sin rather than the internal or core issues related to sin.

And because of this the people of Israel could never, with a clear conscience, approach the earthly tabernacle where the presence of God was being manifested. They could only go as far as the "altar of burnt offerings," which was at the very front part of the court of the tabernacle. And that is where they would have to stop.

So did the priestly offerings and the priestly functions provide some degree of cleansing? Yes! They provided a very superficial cleansing, which in respect to their conscience, only allowed to get as far as the altar of burnt offerings within the tabernacle courtyard but no further.

So having established the less than stellar impact of the priestly offerings and functions on the conscience under the Law in **verse 13** as he presented the lesser part of his argument he is now ready to move on to **verse 14** where he will now present the greater part of his argument.

Let me now read for you **verse 14**. And what does it say? It says this, "**... how much more (as compared with what the offerings of the priests accomplished) will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**"

Because, Christ the eternal Son of God, offered up His blood on the cross of Calvary on our behalf, through the eternal Spirit or in other words through the Holy Spirit, without blemish to God, the offering of Christ was able to accomplish what the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on the defiled was not able to accomplish. And what was that?

The blood of Christ was able to cleanse our conscience from dead works? And what does this mean?

Cleansing our consciences from dead works means that they are consciences are cleansed from all those practices and attitudes, which belong to the way of **death**, which pollute the soul and erect a barrier between it and God.

I have over the course of my life done some terrible things. And I have thought some terrible thoughts, but those things and those thoughts are not blocking me from gaining access to God nor prevent me from enjoy His presence.

So why is this all possible. This is all possible for we know that Christ through His superior offering has secured for us eternal redemption. He has set us forever free sin and its slavery therefore I can at any time, through Christ's offering, enter boldly into the presence of God with a totally clear conscience.

And for what purpose have we been set free from sin and slavery and given this access into God's presence? Let us continue to read the verse, "**to serve the living God**".

### CONCLUSION

There are people in this world who carry around the guilt of past sins and no matter how hard they work to cleanse their consciences that can't get rid of their guilt. We can understand why. No one can get rid of their guilt, they can only manage their guilt.

But what they cannot do God has done through Christ's blood, for it was through Christ's blood that eternal redemption was obtained that consciences defiled by sin could be cleansed.

What stands between eternal redemption and a clear conscience? The only thing that would stand between an eternal redemption and a clear conscience is a lack of faith, a lack of willingness to turn from sin and to embrace Christ as our Lord and Savior.

And what will happen to those who do this? Rather than being filled with guilt they will be filled with gratitude and therefore a willingness and even a desire to serve the living God.

May we knowing that Christ's blood has not only secured our eternal redemption but has also made it possible for our conscience to be completely cleansed **choose** to live our lives in light of this knowledge.