

## 22—Hebrews 9:15-28—Christ Will Rescue Those Eagerly Waiting for Him

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### I. Introduction

- A. There might be a lingering question as to why the old covenant was necessary before the new covenant arrived. Why didn't Jesus come immediately to rescue Adam and Eve or later when Israel failed to keep the first covenant. There are several answers to this question, but I want to focus on one aspect of it.
1. Here's an overly simple answer: So when we are born, our parents teach us rules to obey. When the child takes someone's toy away by force, we correct them and show them their wrong and we make them apologize. In other words, we are teaching them how to respond. At first it is against their will and the child mumbles the words, "I'm sorry" and gives the toy back. And yes, this is repeated over and over again. I know, it's exhausting. That's similar to what the old covenant did. It was our tutor.
  2. At some point, the child is supposed to see the error of their ways and respond as they have been taught. They were never to be permanent. The parent patiently waits for the child to get it, not just mimic the behavior taught but rather to have genuine sorrow. Dad wants his son to respond from the heart—that is, he really is sorry and he really wants to make amends.
  3. It's like I've told my daughters and son, there comes a time when you come tell us what you did before we find out about it. There comes a time where you tell that person you have wronged that you are sorry. It has always been about the heart. Outward conformity is not willfully from the heart. Behavior modification isn't necessarily heart changing.
  4. If you've read through the old testament (covenant) then you have heard God say that he is sick of their sacrifices. What he desires is a broken and contrite heart. The worshiper should have noticed this was never going to cut it and caused the sinner to plead for a permanent and just payment to be made that he might worship the Lord with a clean conscience knowing that his sins were forever wiped away.
    - a) Some of them got it—Psalm 49:7-9, 15 <sup>7</sup> Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, <sup>8</sup> for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, <sup>9</sup> that he should live on forever and never see the pit...But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me.
    - b) Have you come to understand this or are you merely trusting in the responses and rules you were taught?
    - c) There are significant differences in the old and new covenant. One is the fact that you were born into the covenant community and marked off by circumcision. However, you are not born into the new covenant community until you are born again and then you are willing mark by baptism. Baptism is a response from the heart.

### II. Main Point

- A. This text further explains why Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant through a better sacrifice.
1. The inheritance of the old covenant was the land and depended on their keeping of the law. It was not eternal. If they broke the covenant then the land was taken from them. If they turned back to God it was given back but this cycle never stopped until the new covenant promises arrived to bring about an eternal inheritance.

### III. Outline

- A. How the Called Receive the Eternal Inheritance
- B. What Christ Accomplished in the First Appearing
- C. What Christ Will Do in the Second Appearing

### IV. Exposition

- A. The issue is that the old covenant could not accomplish eternal redemption and therefore could not secure the inheritance. The covenant was based on the law which only took away their sins temporarily. The sacrifices were not sufficient and therefore needed to be offered regularly. But the new covenant promised that God would remember their sins no more. Therefore, a sufficient payment was necessary

and when that payment was made, that secured the eternal inheritance. That's what the preacher is unfolding for us in this first section—How the Called Receive the Eternal Inheritance.

1. Jesus is a unique mediator. Unique in the since that he mediates the inheritance but he had to die for those who are called in order that they may receive the eternal inheritance. Let's dig in to see why this is unique because normally an inheritance is given to the heirs but the one who died doesn't see to it that they get the inheritance.
  - a) Let's get the context which is connected to verse 14 that we discussed last week—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?
    - (1) The preacher is still trying to persuade the church that Christ's sacrifice is better and superior to the old covenant sacrifices.
    - (2) V. 15 begins with—and because of this
      - (a) That is, because the blood of Christ purifies our conscience from dead works to serve the living God—he is the mediator of a new covenant.
      - (b) Christ's offering of himself without blemish, through the eternal Spirit, is the only effective means to cleanse our hearts.
        - i) As the preacher has argued already—to serve God.
        - ii) And that the blood sacrifice of Christ was only for those called to receive the promised eternal inheritance.
          - (1) The inheritance comes through the new covenant that we talked about two weeks ago in chapter 8.
            - (a) He will put his law into their minds and write it on their hearts
            - (b) They shall know the Lord from the least of these to the greatest.
            - (c) And he will be merciful toward their iniquities, and he will remember their sin no more.
          - (2) This inheritance is God himself and all that is his. We shall see his face!
            - (a) But for now, like the call to worship stated—the Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until we acquire full possession of it! (Eph. 1:13-14)
            - (b) If you want God...if you want to behold the one who died for you then you who are called may receive it through faith in Christ.
            - (c) He will forgive you and justify you so that you can have a right legal standing before God.
    - b) Now comes the process of explaining in more detail why Christ's blood sacrifice was superior but necessary to legally establish the eternal inheritance.
      - (1) In the middle of verse 15, the preacher points out that a death was necessary for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant.
      - (2) Beginning in verse 16 he explains how death was necessary in a covenant by way of an analogy.
        - (a) The analogy is comparing a covenant with a last will and testament in 16-17.
          - i) He begins with a statement we should all understand—where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it is legally necessary.
            - (1) Similar to what we may have created for our family, you likely have decided how your property and assets are to be divided and distributed.
            - (2) As the one who made the will, you decide the terms of the inheritance. Those who may receive the inheritance take it as it is. They do not get to decide those things.
            - (3) And this is a legal document with legal proceedings that will be carried out by an executor of the estate.
            - (4) And the simple point is this—the will is not legally binding until the person who made it dies.
              - (a) My parents house has been deeded over to me but it is not mine yet.

- (5) That's what verse 17 is affirming—For a valid will is upon death, since it is NOT in force (legally) as long as the one how made it is alive.
2. So, what's he getting at? Well verse 18 concludes for us—not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.
    - a) You might be thinking, “Why so much blood? Why do we sing about the blood?”
      - (1) The answer is that from the beginning, the cost of sin against God the Creator was death.
      - (2) The life of people created in the image of God is of the highest value therefore is of the highest payment.
        - (a) There is no higher cost than life.
    - b) Therefore, a covenant relationship with God demands that payment—death—to reconcile us back to God. But not just any death.
      - (1) For God's justice to stand, just payment must be received. He cannot act against his nature. If all are sinner then all must die.
      - (2) That's a serious legal problem because we cannot pay the debt we owe to God.
        - (a) Unless, someone else paid it for us.
    - c) But for now, the preacher is making the point that the old way of maintaining a relationship with God—began with blood sacrifices.
      - (1) At Sinai that day, Moses declared the law of the covenant to all the people and they responded, “we will obey every commandment.”
      - (2) Then Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the book of the covenant and the people.
      - (3) He also took blood and sprinkled in on all the vessels of worship.
      - (4) Indeed, there in verse 22—almost everything is purified with blood.
    - d) And to conclude this section with a statement from Leviticus 17:11 —without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.
      - (1) God cannot forgive someone's debt without sufficient payment.
  3. Before we move on, I'd like to explore a few weaknesses of the old covenant blood sacrifices.
    - a) First, when they offered animal sacrifices to pay for their sins, they were not offering a sufficient payment.
      - (1) The life of an animal does not equal the life of a human being.
      - (2) The cost was human life for human sin. The animal was the substitute but it did not commit the crime.
        - (a) The one who offers the sacrifice was saying, I deserve this but this lamb is taking my place.
      - (3) Animal sacrifices were tokens, not payments.
        - (a) Used to, if you went to Chuck E. Cheese they would give you tokens to spend on the games.
          - i) If you had some tokens left over, you couldn't buy a stick of gum with them in a store.
      - (4) In God's old covenant economy, animal sacrifices were tokens that temporarily worked AND pointed to the real payment to come—Jesus.
    - b) But what if you were poor? Well there were provisions made for the poor.
      - (1) Two turtle doves could be substituted. But seriously, two doves are not even close to the value of a calf or a goat.
      - (2) What if there was a famine? What if you were under siege?
      - (3) Do they not finally get it? You go to the tent and tell the priest—I've sinned but I don't have anything to offer.
        - (a) Does he not cry out to God for mercy? Maybe he even tells the priest, take me—I'm the one who deserves to die.
        - (b) Maybe he wonders, how can I ever be made right with God?
    - c) These tokens were insufficient funds but today sufficient payment has been made!
- B. To that sufficient payment we turn in this next section where we will see what Christ accomplished in his FIRST appearing.

1. Verse 23 looks back at verses 15-22 and concludes that it was necessary (legally) for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with blood sacrifices.
  - a) I think this is pretty simple to understand. The articles and vessels of worship were defiled by the people who made them.
  - b) God is not defiled and cannot be worshiped except on his terms.
  - c) Thus it was necessary for even the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with blood.
2. However, it was also necessary that the heavenly things to be purified with better sacrifices.
  - a) This is a much more difficult statement to unravel.
  - b) There are a number of ways people have tried to explain this. The problem is—are the heavenly things in need of purification?
    - (1) We might think that Satan has defiled it or from Eph. 6:12 “spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”
    - (2) Maybe that is the reason.
  - c) But it seems the explanation is in verse 24 where Christ entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God—literally to the face of God—but notice how verse 24 ends—for us!
    - (1) We are the ones who are defiled. We would defile heaven.
    - (2) Therefore to come into God’s presence and live we must be clean—inside and out.
    - (3) The better sacrifice of Jesus purifies us so that we do not defile heaven.
    - (4) That is our only hope!
  - d) To circle back to the analogy at the beginning.
    - (1) The way a will and testament work is for example, my wife and I determine the details of the inheritance for our kids. That document is a legally binding agreement with an executor who will see to it after we die that our kids get the inheritance legally.
    - (2) The extraordinary reason Christ’s death is superior to old covenant sacrifices is that he makes the payment in full for us but—don’t miss this—he is the executor of the inheritance too.
      - (a) By way of death and resurrection, Christ purchases our eternal redemption so that we can receive an eternal inheritance and then he mediates the receiving of the inheritance!
  - e) The preacher continues—So, he appeared to the face of God for us but not repeatedly.
    - (1) I doubt we can really feel the weight of this but can you imagine not having to offer sacrifices repeatedly to fix your uncleannesses?
      - (a) It like the analogy of renting a house. The payment never stops.
      - (2) This was repeated daily and year by year, the high priest went before God in the holy places with blood but notice—blood not his own.
        - (a) That means as long as it wasn’t his blood, it was never really finished.
        - (b) It was just a temporary token.
          - i) That’s why hell is eternal because sufficient payment was never received by faith.
      - (3) The preacher is correcting a possible misunderstanding about Christ’s offering of himself in heaven for us.
        - (a) The efficacy of his blood was eternal. He is not repeatedly offering his blood in heaven.
        - (b) Rather, he has appeared once for all TIME at the end of the ages.
          - i) This verb tense is absolutely amazing—has appeared.
            - (1) It is a perfect tense which means that he has completed once and for all but it has continuing results—continuing effect.
          - ii) This first appearing was for the express purpose—there in v. 26—to put away sin by the blood sacrifice of himself.
            - (1) The record of sin against us has been wiped clean.
            - (2) In the words of Paul in Colossians—they have been nailed to the cross.
            - (3) The removal of sin by the death of Christ was legally necessary so that we could receive the eternal inheritance legally.

(4) Forgiveness and Christ's righteousness accomplish for us a right legal standing before God.

(a) It is received by faith, willing.

C. Now the last point. We've heard how we could legally receive the eternal inheritance and we've heard what Christ accomplished at his first appearing. But Scripture teaches that Christ will return a second time. What will he do at this appearing?

1. How do the redeemed get to heaven and lay claim to our eternal inheritance?

a) Well part of the path is death. Verse 27 makes clear that God has appointed for man to die once, and after this, judgment.

(1) Like the terms of a last will and testament, the maker of the will determines its conditions.

(2) God has determined that man die once.

(a) Why? Romans 5:12 just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

(b) There is no reality in which reincarnation is a valid outcome. It has no biblical warrant.

(c) Nor is nothingness on the other side of death but rather judgment is.

(d) You have one life to live. What you do in this life matters.

(e) How you respond to the gospel call to repent and believe in Jesus will determine how that judgment will go.

i) If he is your all-sufficient Savior, he will be there to mediate your trial.

ii) If he is your Mediator, then there are no sins there to judge for Christ has put them away—removed them forever.

(3) Man dies once, so also there in v. 28, Christ having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time.

(a) Here's a verse that skips all the ideas about what this looks like and simply says that Christ will appear a second time.

i) This second appearing without sin offering.

ii) But rather, he will appear to him who eagerly waits for salvation.

(1) Are you eagerly waiting for Jesus to come save you?

(2) Are you not sick of this world and the evil in it?

(3) Do you not pray the Lord's prayer—may your Kingdom come!

iii) Well the preacher identifies Jesus with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah with the final words of this chapter.

(1) Isaiah 53:12 he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

(2) It is fitting that we come to table today.

2. Are you prepared to meet God face to face? Are you eagerly waiting for his salvation?

a) The Lord's Supper is preparing us for that day.

(1) Have you repented of your sins? Are they nailed to the cross of Christ?

(2) If so, do you long to sit at the King's table and dine with him at the wedding feast?

(a) If you are not clothed the wedding garments, you will be removed from the Table and cast out into utter darkness forever.

(3) But if you are clothed in the righteousness of Christ, you will receive the eternal inheritance and behold your Savior forever!