



Purified for His Presence: Hebrews 9v1-14

Is there any kind of barrier between you and God? The astonishing news of the gospel is that God has made it possible to share life with him.

1) Parable (v1-7)

The tabernacle is an illustration (v9), or picture parable, which vividly teaches us about relationship between God and people, and points us towards the better hope and better covenant. The holy of holies was a special place behind the curtain (v3), associated with the word of God (stone tablets, v4) and the relational presence of God (above the atonement cover, v5).

Only the high priest could enter behind the barrier of the curtain and that only once a year, on the day of atonement for sins (v6-7). There was, under the old covenant, very restricted access to the immediate, relational presence of God. **When we look back, we see two things: God wants to dwell with his people, but sin (v7) creates a barrier to that relationship.**

2) Problem (v8-10)

The problem is the sin within human hearts. Under the old covenant, the way into the true holy of holies, into the "greater and more perfect tabernacle...not a part of this creation" (v11), wasn't disclosed. **The earthly tabernacle points to the need for a better promise and a better hope.** The problem was that the sacrifices of the Levitical priests couldn't solve our heart problem: they couldn't cleanse the conscience and make the heart whole for worship (v9); they dealt with the external (v10, v13).

The problem is between God's heart (pure and beautiful in its holiness and love) and our heart (twisted, dark, sinful and grieving God). Only God can solve the problem for us and remove the barrier. And he has! There is a new order/ covenant (v10) and a way for us to be in the Most Holy Place.

3) Purified (v11-14)

Jesus has ascended and entered the Most Holy Place (v12), the heavenly presence of God, on our behalf (6v19-20). There, he ministers to us (8v1-2). But the news just gets better! **Our priest takes our hand and brings us into God's relational presence in the holy of holies itself (10v19-22), the problem of our sin completely dealt with. We're joined to Jesus: where he goes, we go.** Because the Lord has decided to do this for us, past, present and future sin is completely cleansed, all barrier removed forever. Jesus' blood and death for us (v12) are completely effective because of who Jesus is. God himself has stepped in, cleansing and purifying our hearts and conscience, so that we can worship, love him and live for him in freedom (v14).

Is our main goal and priority to consciously live in and enjoy that relational presence as Jesus ministers his love to us?

