

SERIES: **Better- Hope from the book of Hebrews**

HOOK- In January 2016, in Palmdale Florida, the *New birth new Life Holistic Alternative Medical Center* celebrated its grand opening. The 25 year old doctor described himself as

"a well rounded [professional] that treats, and cares for patients, using a system of practice that bases treatment of physiological functions and abnormal conditions on natural laws governing the human body... utiliz[ing] physiological, psychological, and mechanical methods, such as air, water, light, heat, earth, phototherapy, food and herb therapy, psychotherapy, electrotherapy, physiotherapy, minor and orificial surgery, mechanotherapy, naturopathic corrections and manipulation, and natural methods or modalities, together with natural medicines, natural processed foods, and herbs and nature's remedies."

The only problem though is that Malachi Love-Robinson was not 25, but 18.

And he was not even a doctor. But a fraud. Yet some people sat in his consultation & fell for it.

None of us think we will ever be fooled for a fake....

TENSION- **There's a real danger that some will fall for guilt-driven religion, and think that what they got was the real Gospel.**

Could be the way we're wired; could be we've been given bad doctrine

G.D.R. says *"Do better, and if you fail shame on you; try harder"*

The Gospel says *"Apart from Jesus all that you can do is sin. With Jesus you are empowered & forgiven"*

TEXT: **Hebrews 8:1-13**

TITLE:

OUTLINE:

- **Quick Context**
- **It's all about Jesus (V1-2)**
- **The Shadows vs The Substance (V3-6)**
- **The Old Covenant vs the New Covenant (V7-12)**
- **Deduction (V13)**

Quick Context-

The book of Hebrews was written to early Christians who were weary, tempted to leave their faith and go back to Judaism. It was written to encourage them and all future readers (us) to keep holding on to Jesus.

For the next 3 chapters the writer is making the case for a New, Better Covenant.

Which implies there's an Old Covenant (AKA the Mosaic Covenant AKA the Law) –

The basis for the First Covenant was life & blessings for obedience, and death & curses for disobedience

It can be easy for us to be detached from the ancient concept of covenants with God

Society says *"find what you like and do that well and wholeheartedly"*.

For Jews in ancient times, the only way to God was O.C.; no other ways- you could stray away to *other* gods or to *no* gods. But to *The Lord*, only one way- the Covenant of blessings and curses.

It's to this mindset that the author writes to.

Hebrews 8:1-2 Now the main point of what is being said is this: We have this kind of high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
²a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that was set up by the Lord and not man.

7 chapters behind us, 5 still ahead; the authors whole argument at the bottom of it all, his M.P. is this:

ALL THAT WE NEED IS FOUND IN JESUS ALONE!

Remember these readers are growing weary, wondering if their faith is useless-

The encouragement is not health, wealth, not even that they won't suffer any more than they already have! The encouragement is JESUS! ***Is He enough for you?***

I love the way the way the CSB translation contrasts these 2 passages:

Hebrews 7:26-28 this is the kind of high priest we need;

Hebrews 8:1-2 this is the kind of high priest we have!

William Macdonald- *There is a triumphant tone in the words **we have**. They are an answer to those Jewish people who taunted the early Christians with the words, "We have the Tabernacle; we have the priesthood; we have the offerings; we have the ceremonies; we have the temple; we have the beautiful priestly garments." The believers' confident answer is, "Yes, you have the shadows, but we have the fulfillment. You have the ceremonies, but we have the Christ. You have the pictures, but we have the person."*

If you ever look at other religions and think "that seems great..."- remember this:

You have Jesus...**Jesus is yours!**

Jesus is the better High Priest- went into God's presence on our behalf

Jesus is the better King- he sat down at the right hand of the throne of Majesty

Those are all things Jesus has DONE. But the text also reveals something else...

Q: What Jesus is doing, right now?

V2 "**a minister of the sanctuary, the true tabernacle**" ...He's mediating on your behalf!

He justified us then, he is interceding for us now.

Dane Ortlund writes: *"Who is Jesus, in our moments of spiritual blankness? Not: Who is he once you conquer that sin, but who is he in the midst of it? The apostle John says: he stands up and defies all accusers. Jesus is our Paraclete, our comforting defender, the one nearer than we know, and his heart is such that he stands and speaks in our defense when we sin, not after we get over it."*

Jesus is FOR us. He wants you to overcome. He is ministering moment by moment for his disciples.

Why do we so often paint a picture in our minds that God is just putting up with us?

³For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices;
therefore, it was necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.

What does Jesus offer??? Doesn't say yet.

What it does go on to say is something revealing about what the other guys are offering

⁴Now if he were on earth, he wouldn't be a priest, since there are those offering the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵These serve as a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was warned when he was about to complete the tabernacle. For God said, **Be careful that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain.**

Earthly priesthood= Shadows of heaven

Plato's allegory of the cave- men chained in cave/fire/ people & animals passing in front of fire.

One day one of the guys gets free and leaves the cave. Goes back to tell the other guys,
THE SHADOWS WEREN'T THE REAL THINGS!

Augustine, **"The new [testament] is in the old concealed; the old [testament] is in the new revealed."**

Dig Deeper: YOUTUBE Playlist: 'How to Find Jesus in the Old Testament' Mike Winger

Next week we'll see more how those things all pointed ultimately to Jesus and his Gospel.

⁶But Jesus has now obtained a superior ministry, and to that degree he is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been established on better promises.

Remember our cliffhanger from V3, *what then does He offer?*

Here that tension is resolved-

Jesus is the MEDIATOR of the better covenant based on better promises...

That better covenant is the Gospel of grace.

Those better promises are His faithfulness.

In essence, what he promised, and he offers, is HIMSELF.

Think about it...this is better! What could you possibly offer me that outweighs God's grace??

What could beat the message that God seeks and saves and sanctifies and glorifies and sinners????

Griffith Thomas, **"The covenant is better because it is absolute not conditional, spiritual not carnal, universal not local, eternal not temporal, individual not national, internal not external."**

⁷For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second one.

TBC- the F.C. wasn't bad, God gave it to them. But it was not meant to **save**, it was meant to **reveal**.

It was not faulty in the sense that a stuntman's dirt bike can't make the jump because the engine blew out, but rather it's faulty because the engine on this bike is too small for this jump.

It's faulty because it's inadequate, it's not enough.

And anything else that anyone else ever puts in the place of the Gospel of Grace will never be enough.

What do you default to when you feel less than worthy?

What do you default to when you feel the guilt of your decisions?

What do you default to when you feel a longing within you for more in life?

Be better? Work harder? Be smarter? It all falls short. The jump is too wide.

Here's why the First Covenant was faulty....because the people were.

⁸ But finding fault with his people, he says:

What follows would forever change the landscape of humanity-

See, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—⁹ not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.

I showed no concern for them, says the Lord, because they did not continue in my covenant.

They couldn't continue in the covenant! The law was meant to show that we couldn't keep it.

Everyone tried in their own way, yet everyone failed in every way.

So God Himself takes the initiative. It came from His Heart. From His Mind. From His Desire.

The next time you feel weighed down by sin, and you feel like a hypocrite calling out to God, keep in mind, IT'S HIS IDEA!

Here's the beautiful thing; the author of Hebrews here is quoting an Old Testament prophecy.

It's found in the book of **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

That whole section was written to a people, not who had impressed God with their faithfulness!....it was written to a people who were suffering the consequences of their sin, and were exiled, dragged away to a foreign land and made to serve their enemies. To THEM, in that STATE of failure and fatigue God says:

You couldn't do it yourself, so I will do it for you.

¹⁰ **For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord:**

I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

It's not that moral values and righteous living are not important.

Both covenants expect obedience, God has a standard, but here's the difference:

The First Covenant demands obedience, the New Covenant provokes it

That's because this New Covenant is relational not religious.

¹¹ And each person will not teach his fellow citizen, and each his brother or sister, saying, “Know the Lord,” because they will all know me, from the least to the greatest of them.

If you enter into this New Covenant with God (not all are in it, but it is available to all), here’s what He promises: you don’t have to be a religious elite to know God,
 you don’t have to know the church lingo or have grown up in a Christian home to know Him.

The First Covenant revealed God from behind the veil, the New Covenant breaks all barriers

That’s because his New Covenant is personal not national or racial or for the religious elites only

¹² For I will forgive their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins.

Do you understand the weight of what God is promising??

Think back to a moment of complete failure in your life, utter sin, and picture God in that moment saying, *“I forgive you, I already put it out of my mind”*

The Old Covenant was about getting what we deserved, good or bad,

the New Covenant is about giving Jesus our sin and being rewarded for His righteousness

Just in case any of the readers of this book weren’t convinced how serious God was about this New Covenant, he finishes with saying-

¹³ By saying **a new covenant, he has declared that the first is obsolete.**

And what is obsolete and growing old is about to pass away.

Don’t go back to the O.C...that was the danger for them.

What is it that you are prone to go back to, when you feel disconnected from God?

The true gospel of Jesus is a gospel of grace, not guilt.

Illustration- ‘Anonymous’ sharing about their spiritual life-

“I feel like God’s disappointed with me”...

“have you ever thought instead that He just misses you?”

I had a hard time figuring out how to land this plane, but here is what I want to leave you with:

Q: What must change for me to know & enjoy God better?

*****CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM**

(READ THEN PRAY) **Psalm 145:8-19**

BULPEN-

- V1-2 M.P. is Jesus = superior high priest
- V3-5 earthly priesthood= shadows of heaven
- V6 the substance > the shadows
- V7-9 the need for a new covenant
- V10 N.C. is relational
- V11 N.C. is accessible
- V12 N.C. is merciful
- V13 O/C. is obsolete

“It is a consoling thought that Christ is praying for us, even when we are negligent in our prayer life; that He is presenting to the Father those spiritual needs which were not present to our minds and which we often neglect to include in our prayers; and that He prays for our protection against the dangers of which we are not even conscious, and against the enemies which threaten us, though we do not notice it. He is praying that our faith may not cease, and that we may come out victoriously in the end.”

— Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology

7-9 oc based on service/ nc based on surrender

V7, 9 the OC was faulty and the people were faulty

V12 wrongdoings = lit. “not justice”

We have to be careful not to throw the baby out with the bath water.

Its unfair to paint the OC as only external ceremonial obedience devoid of depth of relationship with God and wholehearted devotion. The same is true for the NC; its not as if its all about deep intimacy but no concern for obedience in righteous living.

The difference is positional- the oc people were working their way into deeper relationship w God; under the nc however, people are working out of from intimacy with God

Both covenants expect obedience, **one demands it, the other provokes it**

Good vs Better illustration- the weekend= good....3-day weekend= better

A covenant is based on trust; a contract is based on distrust. That’s why when you get married you make a covenant with each other but when you agree on divorce settlements you sign a contract.

Matt Chandler explains that we were created to live in 3 worlds- the matter, the mind, the spirit

There are things in the first two worlds that are but shadows of the spirit world

Illustration- when you get something new but fail to throw the old one out. Like the story of the kings robe given to a beggar.

The tabernacle was real, God's presence was there- but its not where salvation was poured out. That happens in the true tabernacle in heaven.