

Word of Life Lutheran Brethren Church
Community Group Bible Study – week of Feb. 1st
Jesus our great High Priest – Hebrews 9:1-28

Last week we considered how Jesus is our great Prophet. He came as God's Word in the flesh, naming sin and proclaiming forgiveness for the humble and judgment for the proud. This week we will look at the way Jesus made the promise of forgiveness a reality. In order to pay the ransom for sinners, Jesus became our Priest.

Open with prayer as you begin. Pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind in order to understand God's Word.

Read Hebrews 9:1-10

Think about the most elaborate and ornate church that you've ever seen. Think about and briefly describe what you remember about that place. Did the priests or ministers wear robes or ornate vestments? Was there elaborate ritual included in the worship service?

In these verses the author describes the temple in Jerusalem and the center of that temple was a room called the Holy of Holies. The temple in Jerusalem was the only place where sacrifice could be made for the Jews, and the priests at the temple were the only ones allowed to offer those sacrifices.

What were the limitations of this temple and the priests? (See Hebrews 10:1-4)

How much do you want to have a clean conscience? Do you care? Should you?

Read Hebrews 9:11-28

How is Jesus a better sacrifice than goats or calves? What makes Him so special?

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v. 15 says that Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant. What was wrong with the old?

It is important here to note that the covenant that we are talking about replacing is the Sinai covenant mediated by Moses after the people of Israel left Egypt. While this new covenant replaces the Sinai covenant it fulfills another. Do you remember the covenant that God initiated in Genesis? With whom did God covenant with in Genesis 15?

Jesus is the mediator of the new, better covenant, and a covenant always includes the shedding of blood (The Hebrew term for making a covenant means literally “to cut”). The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ death make this connection very clear! Read Matt 27:50-51; Mark 15:37-38; Luke 23:44-46. Why do you think the writers of the first three Gospels all made a point to connect the death of Jesus with the tearing of the temple veil?

Jesus fulfilled the role of a priest, but unlike the priests at the temple (v. 25) Jesus also offers himself as the sacrifice! For those of you who have known this for a long time, do you think you start to take this truth for granted after a while? Why? How can you keep from sliding into this kind of thinking?

As you close in prayer thank Jesus, our great High Priest, for giving you a gift that you could never earn. Thank him that as your great Prophet he revealed your need for a Redeemer and that as your great Priest he became that Redeemer. May God’s Peace be with you all.