

Text: Heb 10.11-14

We are wrapping up the author's arguments that began in chapter 7. We've talked about:

1. Why the Law Can Do Nothing For Me (1-4)
2. Why the One Sacrifice Is better than the Many (5-10)

Today our title is:

Why the One Priest Is Enough for Me

We've talked about each of these themes earlier in Hebrews. Our summations don't add a lot of new ideas to these points, but they add *force* to them.

One of the things that I am constantly concerned about for us as we work our way through the Scriptures is this: I want you to love the Lord Jesus with all your heart.

I think that is what the author of Hebrews wants us to do also.

When you love someone, you want to be sure that the loved one's needs are met. Even more, you will want to meet your loved one's wants. You will occupy your mind with seeing that these things happen.

You may have some doubts, but I want to assure you that you are very good at this. You know how to love.

How do I know this? Paul said in Eph 5.29:

Ep 5.29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,

Think about that! You love yourself. Everyone does. You know how to take care of yourself. You are so good at it that you are as good as Christ who loves the church.

Of course, Paul is teaching us about loving someone other than ourselves, in Ephesians 5, it is husbands who need to love their wives this way.

But our object in all our messages is to move believers into a deeper love relationship with Jesus Christ.

Today, we are thinking about Jesus as the only priest we will ever need.

Let's talk about what a priest is:

“A priest is one who is duly authorized to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and **who acts as mediator between men and God.**”¹

It is that last phrase that is most important.

The priest mediates our prayers and worship to God, and he mediates God’s grace and blessing to men.

In the OT there were many priests. In the NT, there is just one. He is all we need.

Read Heb 10.11-14

Proposition: We have One Priest, whose work is done, on whom we rely, and for whom we wait to bring all things to a conclusion.

I. The great contrast: standing vs. sitting priests (11-12)

A. Contrasting priests

1. There are small particles in Greek that highlight the contrast
 - a. Usually these are untranslated, but could be “on the one hand ... on the other hand”
 - b. The contrast remains in English, but the Gk particles are helpful tip-offs
2. The persons contrasted
 - a. “Every priest” (11) [*i.e.* the OT priests]
 - b. “but He” (12) [*i.e.* Jesus Christ]

B. The posture of the contrasted priests

1. The OT priests stand — He sits

Dt 18.5 “For the LORD your God has chosen him and his sons from all your tribes, to **stand** and serve in the name of the LORD forever.

¹ William G. Moorehead, “Priest,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr et al. (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2439.

2. The OT sacrifices were conducted by a standing priest
 - a. He stood as he put the sacrificial animal to death
 - b. He stood as he collected the blood
 - c. He stood as he dismembered the body
 - d. He stood as he placed the blood and body parts on the altar
 - e. He stood as he reached out for the next victim

Every priest stands...

3. But He sits
 - a. Having offered the sacrifice, he SAT DOWN
 - b. Sitting implies the work is done

C. The schedule of the contrasting priests

1. OT priests ministered daily
 - a. Lit. “according to the day” — idiom for “day by day” or “daily”
 - b. The standing priests not only had much to do each day, but they had much to do *every* day

“After hundreds of years those sacrifices were no nearer the attainment of their aim than they had been at the beginning.”²

2. He offered one sacrifice for sins
 - a. One day he was sacrificed
 - b. It was “for all time” (12)

Word means “without interruption”³

² F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 246.

³ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

D. The work of the contrasting priests

1. Their work “could not take away sins”
2. He offered “one sacrifice for sins”

E. The glory of the sitting priest

1. The allusion is once again to Ps 110.1

Ps 110.1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

2. This resumes the argument of 8.1-2

Heb 8.1-2 ¶ Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,² a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

3. And this takes us back to the thesis of the book, 1.3

Heb 1.3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

“The concept of Christ’s session in the presence of God was first introduced in 1:3, but only now is its significance for the writer’s argument clarified. Jesus sits because his sacrifice requires no repetition. His heavenly session attests that the benefits of his sacrificial death endure perpetually. The sacrificial phase of his priestly ministry is completed.”⁴

⁴ William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, vol. 47B, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1991), 267.

II. The great anticipation: the time of the footstools (13)

- A. Our seated priest is seen as waiting, in anticipation of something that is to come
1. Two meanings for this word “wait”
 - a. It can mean to “take” or “receive” – but none of its uses in the NT have this meaning
 - b. The NT meaning

“to remain in a place or state and await an event or the arrival of someone, *expect, wait*”⁵

“to look for, *expect, wait for, await*”⁶
 - c. The receiving happens when the waiting ends
 2. The waiting is from “that time” until a future event
 - a. That time: The time of the “session” – the seating
 - b. When he was seated, it implies that the Father accepted and approved his work
- B. The coming day: when his enemies are made “A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET”
1. Footstool = “an under-foot of his feet”

“According to the metaphor ‘footstool,’ when enemies become such, they are completely subdued.”⁷
 2. The world is still full of his enemies, they rage against God and refuse to repent

Ps 2.1-4 Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ³ “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!” ⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.

⁵ Bauer, *BDAG*.

⁶ Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (International Bible Translators (IBT), Inc., 1889).

⁷ Allen, *Hebrews*, 502.

3. The Bible tells us that in the end of the age, the nations will gather against Israel, and then our priest will stand up
 - a. He will stand on the Mount of Olives
 - b. He will march towards his enemies, and put down their rebellion
 - c. Then comes the end

¹ Cor 15.24 then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

So, now we are in the time of great anticipation

III. The great accomplishment: our effective offering (14)

A. The many offerings replaced by the one offering

1. A constant theme in this argument
2. But not the main argument here: here we are considering the *effect* of the offering

B. What the offering did

1. It perfected “those who are sanctified”
 - a. Perfection = bringing to completion

Many illustrations in the Greek literature. One is of a legal document — it is only in force when it is completed.

You will often get forms to fill out from the government. If you must put your address and personal information on it, you will see this line printed on it: “Protected B when completed.”

That means that only you and people with a Secret Clearance from the government are allowed to look at the document. It is in force once it is completed.

- b. He said this on the cross: “It is finished”
 - 1) Complete
 - 2) Perfect
 - 3) Fulfilled

2. It brought about the sanctification of the subjects

a. Here we have contrasting tenses

1) Perfect tense: Perfected

The Perfect tense: work done once with ongoing effects in the present

2) Present tense: The ones being sanctified

The present tense: ongoing work

b. The marvelous work of sanctification

1) You are sanctified (if you are a believer) — positional sanctification

2) You are being sanctified — progressive sanctification

3) You will be sanctified — future glorification (final sanctification)

Conclusion:

This One Priest is enough for me!

Proposition: We have One Priest, whose work is done, on whom we rely, and for whom we wait to bring all things to a conclusion.

Some believers lack confidence in their salvation. The Hebrew Christians were wavering in their commitment to salvation.

John Bunyan addressed this uncertainty in his book, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*:

“Sinner, thou thinkest that because of thy sins and infirmities I cannot save thy soul, but behold My Son is by Me, and upon Him I look, and not on thee, and will deal with thee according as I am pleased with Him.”⁸

Here is the thing: This One Priest is enough for me! Is he enough for you?

⁸ John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), 116–17.