

Sermon Transcript

03.15.2026

Hebrews 9:11-14

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- Beware the ides of March.
- Such says the soothsayer to Julius Caesar in Shakespeare.
- So what are the ides of March and what does that have to do with Hebrews 9? That's a good question.
- The answer is that the Latin idus from which we get the word ides meant to divide and referred specifically to the middle of a month. Since the Roman calendar was based on lunar cycles, the full moon usually fell around the 15th so the term ides came to signify the 15th of each month.
- But we never hear of the ides of June or ides of November. So what makes the ides of March so significant?
- Well, on that day, March 15, 44BC, 2070 years ago today, Julius Caesar was betrayed and brutally murdered by his compatriots, stabbed 23 times by 60 conspirators on the Senate floor.
- Some 75 years later, another king with the same initials JC would also be betrayed by his friends and murdered by government officials.
- As with Caesar's death, the murder of Christ had an ironic effect, inaugurating the very thing the conspirators thought to avoid. Rather than restricting the role of the emperor and restoring the republican form of government, the death of Caesar instead signed the death warrant for the republican system and ushered in an ever expanded monarchy.
- And rather than preserve the authority of the Sanhedrin or Rome, the death of Christ stripped them bare and established His own ultimate kingdom.
- And so the death of Christ was no mere miscarriage of justice, it was the pre-ordained plan to reconcile and redeem what couldn't be reconciled and redeemed under the Mosaic covenant, the culmination of millennia of redemptive history, and the foundation of our hope and faith as we'll see this morning.
- So let's pray and we'll dive in together.
- Self, others, me.

- By now you're all well trained to understand the dominant theme of Hebrews. What three words best sum up the book? Christ is better.
- Better than the angels in chapters 1 and 2, better than Moses in chapter 3, better than Joshua and the Sabbath and the promised land in chapter 4, but the real bread and butter of Christ's superiority is that He's a better priest who has offered a better sacrifice as part of a better covenant thus offering a better hope and better reward. That's chapters 7-10.
- By this point in the book, that should be second nature to you.
- As should the proposed historical context. These are Hebrew Christians who are facing tribulation and thus experiencing a temptation. They're being persecuted, most likely by their Jewish brethren so they're tempted to fall away from Christ, to withdraw back to the comfortable confines of Jewish tradition, the Mosaic legislation and all its rules and regulations.
- So the author writes this book to encourage them to hold fast in the face of that persecution. He does so by showing how Christ is superior to each and every facet of the Mosaic Law.

- Better than the angels who spoke the law, and Moses who mediated the law, and the priests who ministered on the basis of law and not promise.
- The rhetorical effect is obvious. If Christ is better, why drift back to what is worse? If you have a choice between Texas A&M and Baylor, why would you choose Baylor? If you have a choice between Whataburger and Wendy's why choose Wendy's? If Glock or Sig, why choose Sig?
- Those are obviously silly examples, but Christ's superiority couldn't be more serious.
- The fact that Christ is better isn't just some abstract theological truth, some fact to know in order to win a game of Bible trivia, but rather a truth that is meant to encourage endurance and worship, a truth intended to motivate and move the hearer.
- And so to really grasp this, we've talked a lot about typology, the study of divinely-ordained analogies between the old and new covenants marked by both correspondence and escalation.
- By correspondence, I mean that there is a legitimate similarity, a parallel, a resemblance. Christ is like Moses in some ways. Like Melchizedek in some ways. Like the tabernacle or temple or Passover lamb in some ways.
- There is a genuine similarity between the type and the anti-type. Remember that language. The type is the OT referent and the anti-type is the NT fulfillment.
- Thus far in Hebrews, we've seen that the Sabbath is a type of Christ, the promised land is a type, Melchizedek and the tabernacle are types. The book is saturated with typology. You can't understand Hebrews without at least some understanding of typology.
- So there is correspondence or similarity, but also escalation.
- As Jesus Himself says in Matthew, something better than the temple is here. Someone better than Solomon is here. Someone better than Jonah is here.
- Jesus isn't merely the new king, but a better king. Not merely a new priest, but a better priest. The covenant He mediates isn't merely new, but better, superior.
- Remember how this idea of supremacy or superiority has been scattered about like breadcrumbs to follow the author's argument. We don't have time to walk through each of them this morning, but we've done it previously. If you want to see how prevalent this is, just read through the book & notice words & phrases like better, greater, superior, how much more, etc.
- And the last two weeks, we've explored how the author turns that typological focus onto the tabernacle.
- What was the tabernacle? Well, it was like the pre-temple, the mobile temple, the place where God would meet with man while Israel was still in the wilderness.
- As we've mentioned, the OT was very clear that the tabernacle was to follow a divinely ordained blueprint. As Hebrews 8:5 says:
 - *They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."* (Hebrews 8:5)
- In other words, God told Moses exactly how the tabernacle should be made, down to the minutest detail. As we've talked about, that was a big theme of the Old Covenant. Everything was regimented & regulated. What the priest wore & offered & ate, how often things were offered and where. How to make the incense, how to make the bread, where to arrange it, all of that was strictly and explicitly expounded in the law. Nothing was left to chance or whim or novelty.
- So God told Israel to make the tabernacle according to a plan. And the reason for that was that the plan was a representation of a better tabernacle. In other words, the tabernacle was a type, an earthly shadow of the heavenly substance. As a model car or Lego set is built to resemble something else, so the tabernacle was intended to point beyond itself.

- The earthly tabernacle was designed as a picture of a greater reality, heaven itself. That doesn't mean that heaven physically looks like the tabernacle, but at the very least, there is a heavenly or spiritual principle that it represents.
- And as part of that design, the tabernacle was composed of three sections. There was the courtyard in which all clean Israelites could enter and sacrifices were offered, and then the outer tent, the holy place, in which Levitical priests could enter each day, and then the inner tent, the most holy place or holy of holies in which only the Aaronic high priest could enter, and only once a year, and only after elaborate ritualistic preparations.
- And that distinct feature of the tabernacle symbolized something according to our text last week.
- As we read then, the fact that God's presence was veiled by multiple curtains and guarded by cherubim and all of that symbolized inaccessibility. It signified incompleteness.
- As verse 8 said, it showed that the way into the holy places is not yet opened.
- In other words, there was a tragic irony in the Mosaic covenant in that it didn't actually atone, it didn't actually work, it was, to use the language of Hebrews, weak and imperfect. A tabernacle which was supposed to symbolize God's dwelling among His people actually showed the opposite.
- It showed that man could not enter God's presence. The sanctuary was closed.
- In order to be saved, Israel couldn't be near her Savior because the work wasn't finished.
- As the cherubim stood guard over the garden so that Adam and Eve could no longer enter after the Fall, so the cherubim stand guard over God's presence in the tabernacle as a warning lest any enter.
- The whole tabernacle and later temple edifice not only didn't lay out a welcome mat, but shouted, do not enter, trespassers will be killed.
- We'll see how that compares and contrasts to the new covenant as we look at vs. 11-14 today.
- So with that in mind, let's look at vs. 11 and 12.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. (Hebrews 9:11-12)

- Notice the word *but*. That signifies contrast. Remember, typology is about noticing not only the points of similarity, but also dissimilarity between the old & new. Correspondence & escalation.
- So the word *but* here is emphasizing a distinction, a juxtaposition between Christ's priestly ministry and that of the Levitical and Aaronic priests. We'll see the nature of that contrast shortly, but first focus on the word Christ.
- As you know, the English Christ is a transliteration of the Greek Christos which is a translation of the Hebrew meshiach meaning anointed one. In the OT, various persons were anointed, but the primary image of anointing revolves around the 3 offices of prophet, priest, & king.
- Each of these was anointed for his respective ministry. However the term meshiach eventually became a more technical term for one who served as the Davidic king, the messianic king.
- So literally Christ means, one who is anointed, but in technical usage, it eventually just functioned as a shorthand for the ultimate eschatological king.
- We see hints of that in the OT itself. For example, we read in Psalm 2:2
 - *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed...* (Psalm 2:2)

- So there are certainly hints of this in the OT, but much of the messianic fever really took place in the intertestamental period as Israel continued to experience oppression by foreign nations, even after being brought back from exile. In that context, the expectation for a future king began to really take shape.
- So when you see the word Christ, you should think of the king. Christ Jesus means King Jesus.
- What's so significant about the usage here in Hebrews 9? Well, this king is also priest. The Christ appears as high priest.
- That's an oxymoron under the Mosaic administration because those two offices were strictly divided in Israel. Priests were from the tribe of Levi, kings from Judah.
- That's why a new priesthood was necessary. One after the order of Melchizedek as we saw in chapter 7. Remember how Melchizedek functioned as a type of this combination of priest and king. Remember how Psalm 110 puts those together for us. Verse 1 speaks of the messianic king:
 - *The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."* (Psalm 110:1)
- And then in verse 4 we read this:
 - *The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."* (Psalm 110:4)
- So the combination of a priest king was hinted at in the OT, but it wasn't until the light of Christ Himself that we can see how the pieces are put together.
- And besides the fact that this priest is a king and isn't from the Levitical or Aaronic line, Christ is unlike the Levitical priests in various other ways.
- For example, His ministry isn't weak and useless as we've seen of the Levitical administration. He has actually ushered in the good things.
- We'll see that same phrase good things in chapter 10
 - *For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.* (Hebrews 10:1)
- Notice shadow vs. substance. Type and anti-type. Picture and fulfillment. The law has a shadow, a picture, a type of good things, but Christ has the real thing.
- So what are these "good things"? The author doesn't specify, but from the context, we can deduce that they have to do with bringing about completion, perfection. In other words, He has actually fulfilled what the OT merely symbolized and anticipated and foreshadowed.
- And he's done so because of two facts.
- First, He's passed through the greater and more perfect tent. Remember that word for tent is the same word as is used of the tabernacle. So He's passed through a better tabernacle, a more heavenly tabernacle.
- Why is it greater and more perfect? Because it's the thing to which the earthly tabernacle merely pointed. As real money is better than monopoly money, or real food better than plastic fruit, so the heavenly tabernacle is greater than the earthly.
- After all, the earthly was built by hands. That's a phrase that is used throughout the OT mostly for idols, but in the NT it mostly refers to regulations of the Mosaic Law as opposed to the new covenant. So for something to be "made by hands," is generally derogatory in the Bible. It symbolizes idolatry on one hand or at least works righteousness on the other.
- And that's kinda what the Mosaic covenant symbolized. Man made the tabernacle. Man sacrificed animals. Man brought sacrifices and sprinkled blood and burned incense. Though the Mosaic covenant was gracious from God's perspective, it involved man's effort in a way that

kinda confuses the source of salvation. That's why strict adherence to the Mosaic law so easily bled over into works righteousness by the Pharisees. The whole Mosaic system makes it appear as though man is reaching up to God by means of his own action whereas in the new covenant, it is much clearer that salvation is entirely a work of the Creator condescending to save creation.

- BTW, this derogatory connotation of the phrase made by hands and its application to the various elements of the Mosaic administration not only points to the uselessness of the works of the law, but also shows that doing such merits God's disapproval. Unlike the dual covenant theology that teaches that there are now two paths to God, Gentiles enter through Christ and the new covenant while Jews can still enter through the Mosaic, we've seen that the new covenant has rendered the old obsolete in chapter 8.
- There is therefore now and forever one and only one way to God and that is through Christ. In fact, to try to enter through the old covenant is to put yourself under a curse according to Paul.
- Why? Because it demands absolute and unerring perfection. The slightest blip or blemish or flaw or failure renders heaven inaccessible if you try to enter through the law. That's what Moses' himself symbolically represents. Though faithful for 40 years, one tiny slip up, Moses strikes a rock rather than speak to it and he is forbidden to enter the promised land as a result. That's what the law does. It functions not as a blessing, but as a curse because we ourselves are cursed.
- That which is made by man is defiled, defaced, insufficient, incomplete as compared to that which is heavenly.
- So Christ has entered thru the greater & more perfect tent & what did He enter into? The holy places. Not the representation of the holy places in the tabernacle, but the actual holy places, the actual dwelling place of God, the actual throne room of heaven. That's where He has entered.
- And notice that He's done so once for all. Not regularly like the Levitical priests who would have to offer bread each week and incense each day. Not annually like the Aaronic priests who would have to make atonement each year. He has entered once for all.
- The fact that it was once for all means that it was accomplished. It was finished. Tetelestai.
- In fact, He entered in and sat down as another sign that the work was done.
- So that's the first way He has brought perfection and completion. By entering through a better tabernacle into a better holy place.
- Second, He has done so by means of better blood.
- Not the blood of goats and calves. And that's a good thing because, as we'll read in 10:4
 - *For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* (Hebrews 10:4)
- And that's a big problem because as we read in chapter 9
 - *...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.* (Hebrews 9:22)
- So, blood is necessary, without it, there is no forgiveness, and yet animal blood won't suffice.
- Attempting to atone for sins by means of beastly blood is like trying to clean a stain by means of dirt or oil. It reminds me of the time that my roommate in college filled up his car only to find out about a mile down the road that the gas station had accidentally leaked some water into the gas storage tank. Well, water won't power a gas engine and the blood of beasts won't atone for sin.
- Human sin needs human blood.
- And because of His better blood He has secured an eternal redemption. Not a temporal one. Priests could offer temporary redemption, but it was never complete, never finished, never eternal. They could offer a symbol, but not the real thing, a shadow, but not the substance.

- The perpetual nature of the Levitical and Aaronic ministries pointed to their inefficacy, inefficiency, insufficiency. The priests were in and out of the holy places as a symbol that the work was never done. But Christ has offered something finished, something perfect as reflected in the once for all nature of His work.
- Everything in this text is pointing to the supremacy of Christ. Even that word appeared at the beginning of the verse hints at more below the surface. It connotes presence, nearness. It could also be translated as to become present. And, again, that is fundamentally different from the Mosaic covenant in which God was anything but near. No one could approach God without trepidation.
- And yet, this text occurs between two passages in Hebrews that beckon believers to do just that.
- Let me refresh your memory because this is important to understand the context of the book. Look at 4:16
 - *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* (Hebrews 4:16)
- Now look at 10:19-22
 - *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* (Hebrews 10:19–22)
- As we've mentioned before, these two passages form an inclusio, which is spelled like the word inclusion, minus the n on the end. An inclusio is a rhetorical device in which some idea is repeated to form bookends. The idea is that somehow everything that is discussed between those bookends relate to the theme expressed in those verses.
- So, as it relates to Hebrews, the inclusio of chapters 4 and 10 function to show how we can have confidence and how we can draw near. In the Mosaic covenant, you could not draw near. If you entered the holy place or most holy place, you would be killed. And even the high priest didn't draw near with confidence, but fear and trepidation.
- Perhaps you may recall the story of Martin Luther when he was still a RC monk and he was called upon to give his first communion and he was terrified to handle the body and blood of Christ. Now, consider if you were an Aaronic high priest and you have to enter the holy of holies and God has given elaborate and explicit instructions and has said in his word that the slightest imperfection could result in death.
- As you enter that room, I doubt there is much presumption and freedom and confidence. I would imagine a lot of terror and fear and uncertainty.
- So the gospel calling to us draw near in confidence is totally foreign to the OT.
- That's one of the good things that come with the good news. In Christ, the veil has been torn down and you're not only allowed, but encouraged and commanded to draw near and to do so in confidence, with assurance.
- That's the good stuff that Christ has done.
- Now, you might ask, when exactly did Christ enter into this place? Well, it mentions His blood, so you could say His crucifixion since that was when the sacrifice was made. But you may also recall that priests would first offer a sacrifice in the courtyard and then bring the blood into the tent to sprinkle the mercy seat. In other words there was a temporal delay between the shedding of blood outside the tabernacle and the sprinkling of that blood within so perhaps we should think of Christ's resurrection or ascension as the moment in question.

- In reality, I think that's a bit too granular for the author. I don't think He's intending to parse out the various temporal aspects of Christ's death and resurrection and exaltation, but is instead viewing it in its totality.
- Remember, in dealing with typology, we aren't saying that there is a direct one-to-one correspondence between every detail of the analogy. There is similarity, but also dissimilarity.
- In other words, unlike the multiple stages of the OT priestly ministry, when it comes to Christ, his death, resurrection, exaltation, and ascension are all being viewed as one event that collectively accomplished this eternal redemption. In fact, even His life prior to death would have to be included in this given the fact that His sinlessness was a necessary aspect of His atonement as we'll see in vss. 13-14.
- Let's look at that.

For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 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. (Hebrews 9:13–14)

- As we begin notice the phrase how much more right in the middle of this text. That's the point that the author is drawing. That's the escalation of typology.
- If the OT system provided some sort of cleansing, how much more is provided in Christ.
- In the Hebrew language this is called a qal wahomer argument which means light to heavy. It was a common rabbinical rule of exegesis that functioned like an a fortiori argument in logic.
- You might recall that an a fortiori argument is a basic logical argument that says something like, if you can bench press 250 pounds, then you can bench 200 pounds. If you can run a 6 minute mile, then you can run an 8 minute mile. If you can dodge a wrench, then you can dodge a ball.
- If you can do the harder thing, you can do the easier.
- Jesus does this when healing the paralytic and says which is easier to say your sins are forgiven or you are healed? If you can do the harder thing, then you can do the easier. He heals the body as a sign of his authority to heal the soul.
- And the principle of qal wahomer in Jewish literature is somewhat similar.
- Again it means light to heavy. Essentially what applies in a lesser or lighter case will apply in a greater or heavier case.
- We see Jesus utilize qal wahomer in Matthew 7:11 for instance:
 - *If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:11)*
- In other words, if evil fathers do good things, then it stands to reason that a perfectly good Father does even better things.
- That's what Hebrews is arguing here. If there was some benefit in the sprinkling of beastly blood, how much more benefit in the better blood of Christ?
- Now, the author references the blood of goats and bulls which is similar to what we've already read, but then he uses this cryptic reference to the ashes of a heifer. That's cryptic because it comes from Numbers 19 and deals with the case of someone who comes into contact with a dead body and it rendered unclean as a result.
- What does that have to do with Hebrews?
- Well, Numbers 19 outlines the process to be made clean and it involves sacrificing a heifer and keeping its ashes to mix with water in order to sprinkle on someone who has been rendered unclean.

- Why, exactly the author references this ritual is difficult to know, except to simply show that idea of ritualistic external purification, the cleansing of the body, the flesh.
- The author draws a distinction here between the flesh and the conscience. Now, by flesh, he isn't using the term in the Pauline sense of sin. He is using it as a synonym for body, the same way that we might say flesh and blood. So flesh just means physical, bodily, external.
- We saw that same difference last week in vss. 9-10 which said:
 - *...According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation. (Hebrews 9:9-10)*
- Notice there the distinction between the body and the conscience, the external and the internal.
- Remember what we talked about last week.
- Part of the problem of the old covenant was that it never really penetrated beyond the surface. Jesus critiques the Pharisees for that. They clean the outside of the cup, while the inside is the problem. They paint the outside of tombs, but don't remove the corpses within. They have clean bodies, but dirty hearts and that's no good because what matters isn't so much what goes into the body as what comes out because the problem is the heart.
- The Mosaic system didn't penetrate to the heart. It simply cleanses the body. It can't actually remove the stain, it just whitewashes it.
- The Mosaic system is like soap and water. Its great for a little superficial cut, but does nothing for the sepsis, the underlying infection moving through your veins whereas Christ is soap and antibiotic in one.
- And you can kinda get a sense of that in the way that the sacrifices under each covenant are described.
- Both the animals slaughtered under the Mosaic covenant and Christ are described as without blemish, but the type of blemish is fundamentally different.
- For example, according to the OT, an animal that is offered must be without blemish. But what kind of blemish is meant by that? A physical blemish. He can't be missing an eye or leg or something.
- Now, Christ, too is described as without blemish. For example, 1 Peter 1:19 says that we were ransomed
 - *...with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. (1 Peter 1:19)*
- And yet blemish there means something beyond the physical. In reference to Him, this is an internal purity, a moral quality, not something physical.
- We saw that hinted at in 4:15:
 - *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)*
- That without sin is just left hanging there in chapter 4, waiting to be explored which the author eventually begins to do in chapter 7 where he writes:
 - *For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. (Hebrews 7:26)*
- So we have a distinction between animals which are physically unblemished and Christ who is morally unblemished and notice how that corresponds to their efficacy.
- Physically unblemished animals suffice to cleanse physical uncleanness. They can purify the body or flesh.

- Whereas for the purification of the soul, the spirit, the conscience, a morally, spiritually unblemished sacrifice is needed. Only that can penetrate beyond the external.
- Another contrast to note is that the ashes of the heifer could cleanse you from contact with death, but couldn't save you from death. Only Christ's death can do that.
- So, again we see the qualitative difference and superiority of Christ's sacrifice.
- It was better because He is better. Not just quantitatively, but qualitatively, ontologically better. He was offered through the eternal Spirit because He Himself is eternal as chapter 1 took pains to point out.
- Again, this is why Christology plays such a huge role in the book of Hebrews. Its no accident that this book has the highest and clearest expressions of both Christ's deity and His humanity because both of those are necessary in order for His death to be effective and sufficient.
- Unless Christ is both truly God and truly man, His sacrifice is impotent. But because He is eternal, His death has infinite value. And because He is human, His death is possible.
- And the end result is the purification or cleansing not merely of the body, but of the conscience. We talked about this last week. How Christ's work has both objective and subjective elements.
- Objectively, it makes God accessible. It satisfies His wrath, it pacifies His anger, it forgives our sin, it washes us clean. Those are objective accomplishments of Christ's atonement.
- But subjectively, it also compels us to walk in light of that freedom. To become subjectively who we already are objectively.
- Notice that His blood purifies our conscience so that we might serve the living God.
- Think about how often our feelings of guilt or shame paralyze us from actually serving.
- You feel like too much of a mess to serve, too dirty, too broken, too disordered and chaotic. Your conscience is clogged by images and memories and assumptions.
- Perhaps you can relate. You avoid opportunities to share the gospel or confess your sin or participate in some ministry or partake of communion because you're so burdened and weighed down by a conscience that hasn't yet grasped the objective reality of Christ's work.
- As we said last week, that's almost always a sign that you are still thinking of your relationship with God as based on law and not gospel. On works and not faith. On yourself and not Christ.
- So its an amazing thing that Christ has purified our consciences and in doing so, He has purified our efforts.
- Not longer are our righteous deeds like dirty rags. No longer are our works dead. As faith without works are dead, so are works without faith. But works done in faith are now empowered by God to be living works in service of the living God.
- Because the living God now lives in us, our works are quickened, enlivened, and filled with purpose and hope.
- So we no longer have to serve in an effort to earn, to deserve, to merit, but simply out of an overflow of a believing and grateful heart.
- So my question for you as we wrap up this sermon is whether or not you are walking in that freedom? Whether or not you are subjectively walking in what is objectively true?
- Does your conscience feel unburdened and free and purified or are you still living as though you're still under the law, still under the curse, still under sin, still burdened by a conscience weighed down by sin and self-righteousness?
- I'll end by reading from Romans 8 which we've read a few times in the past couple of months because it happens to be my favorite chapter in the Bible and it ties in nicely with what the author of Hebrews is getting at:
 - *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God*

has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1–4)

- In other words, it is finished because God has done all that was necessary. And all of the good things are now ours in Christ and Christ alone.
- Let's pray.

Communion

- Fence table
- As our text ended by talking about a purified conscience, I wanted to focus in on Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11 where he gives this warning:
 - *Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. (1 Corinthians 11:27–28)*
- Now, this doesn't mean that if you are a sinner you shouldn't eat or drink, but it does mean that if you are just going through the motions, if you are a hypocrite, there is a warning here.
- Christ says, I didn't come for the healthy, but the sick and the primary distinction between the two is that in context, the sick are the ones who are humble enough to admit their infirmity.
- So if you messed up this week. If you said something you shouldn't have, looked at something you shouldn't have, thought something you shouldn't have, coveted something, lusted for something, blasphemed something, there is hope.
- If you're honest.
- So, I just want to give you a second and confess and repent and then we'll eat together.
- In 1 Corinthians, this is how Paul talks about communion. Follow along with me and we'll partake together.
- For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23–26)