

# The Unchangeable Glory of Christ

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I know we're going to read through it quickly, so it's not going to be like when you're sitting with an open Bible and you're reading all by yourself and you can actually stop and think. But as we go through this, try to make sense of this. Try to follow the flow of thought. Hebrews 13:7 "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods which have not benefited those devoted to them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood. Therefore, let us go to Him outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come."

Now, in my opinion, this is the most difficult portion of the entire epistle to the Hebrews as far as just figuring out how it all fits together. I mean, what's the flow of thought? How does v. 7 fit with v. 8? How does v. 8 fit with v. 9? I was checking an online Hebrews commentary the other day, and one of the commentators - PreceptAustin.org - I recommend that to you for study in any book. It's a tremendous online resource. But I was reading that, and one of the commentators had this to say about these very verses. His name is Steven Cole. Mr. Cole says this, "I confess (I'm quoting him) that the first twenty or so times that I read our text, it seemed to me to be a disjointed random bunch of verses. I could not see any unified theme." This guy's a pastor. He's a contemporary man. He is alive today. Twenty times through it was just disjointed.

But, you have to hear in that, after twenty times, he began to see something. But you just look at the flow here. I mean, think with me here. What do we have? V. 7: Remember your leaders. These guys are speaking the Word of God. Imitate their faith. And then, bang, you get this abrupt doctrinal expression. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. And then in v. 9, you get hit with this: Diverse and strange doctrines. Don't be led away by them. Then you get this comparison, this contrast of grace over against foods. And then in v. 10, you get an altar. Those who serve the tent? In v. 11, you get this idea about outside the camp. You get these sacrifices that are burned outside the camp. V. 12: Outside the gate. V. 13: Outside the camp. In v. 14, no lasting city. I mean, you can see that we have a lot of different thoughts here; a lot of different ideas.

Now here's one thing that I want you all to think about, we're wrapping up Hebrews. This is the last stretch before you get some closing remarks. One thing that's interesting about the end is that the author is assuming that you've read the first 12 chapters. Here's the problem. We started - I looked back at my notes - we started the first message in Hebrews a little more than three years ago. But the epistle of Hebrews was not meant to be read in three years, so that by the time you get to chapter 13, you totally don't remember what's going on in chapter 1. On Thursday, I sat down and I said you know what, these are difficult verses, and I feel like I need to get a feel for all of Hebrews again, so I sat down, I read Hebrews in about 32 1/2 minutes.

And that's how it's meant to be. Not necessarily 32 1/2, but typically you are going to read chapter 1 and chapter 13 within approximately the same hour. So you have an idea when you're reading 13 what went on in 1.

But when we preach through it at the rate we've been preaching through it, you tend to forget what's back there. And so I think we're going to need to bounce around. Your faces are going to need to be in your Bibles today. We're going to spend the whole time in the book of Hebrews, but what I want to do this morning is this: We can't cover all of this. There's just too many thoughts here. What I want to try to focus on is v. 7,8 and 9. Remember your leaders. Those who spoke to you the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. And then it's right here where you get the real abrupt change. Because trying to figure out, well, is there anything about these leaders in teaching the Word of God and outcome of their way of life and imitating their faith that would lead us into a statement about Jesus Christ being the same yesterday, and today, and forever? I mean, where's the transition? Or should there be? Maybe when the guy who made up - this is not inspired where verse divisions are and where chapter divisions are. Maybe there should be a chapter division there. Maybe that's the end of a thought and now you get something totally new. That's possible. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

And then, you get maybe not as much of an abrupt change, but do not be led away by diverse and strange doctrines. Ok, is Jesus Christ being the same yesterday, and today, and forever contrasted over against diverse and strange teachings? Perhaps. But you don't see immediately what that connection is necessarily. And then he goes on not to say because some believe that Jesus Christ is changing, and you don't want to fall into those. He actually goes on to say, it's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods.

It's like why? You're telling us Jesus Christ is the same, but then it seems like the thing that is confronting grace is food; not the idea that Jesus can change. It's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, but by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. Where does food come in? What's food got to do with diverse and strange teachings? And so these are the things I want to try to unpack this morning.

First, let's check out v. 7. You see there at the beginning, remember your leaders. Now, if you let your eyeball sort of drift down the page to v. 17, you find the same word again. Obey your leaders and submit to them. Now, we're going to deal with that text later. Obviously, the leaders in the church don't have authority outside of the Word of God. Our authority has been handed us by He Who has authority over us, and that authority comes through the Word of God. It's not for us to make up our own rules as far as the church goes. Obey your leaders. And then you see this word again down in v. 24. Greet all your leaders. Now, I think that's probably obvious to everybody that the leaders spoken of in v. 17 and those spoken of again in v. 24, they're living leaders, right? I mean, if you need to be submitting to them; if they're keeping watch over your souls, they're alive to do that. If you're going to greet them, they're alive. It's not walking out to their tombstone and saying something to them. These are living leaders.

But, it's not so obvious that the leaders spoken of in v. 7 are living. And I think if we look at the text, we can see that. Do you see in v. 7 where it says, "outcome?" Some of your Bibles may say "the end," or "the result." The NAS says result. The King James says the end of their conversation. Conversation doesn't mean what they speak with their mouth. It's their whole life.

The ESV says, "Consider the outcome of their way of life." It's the outcome. It's the end. It's the completion of the way of life of these leader-teachers that we're called upon to consider. Now, listen to this. Thayer's Greek Lexicon - it's just a Greek dictionary - says this about this word for completion or end: Thayer says, "it is used of the end of life, and it's not merely just the end of their physical life, but it has that idea of the manner in which they closed their life. The manner of which they closed a well-spent life as exhibited by their spirit in dying. And you know, obviously, if we're called to imitate them, the author is assuming what about the outcome of their life? That it was good! Not that it was bad. He's not wanting us to imitate bad examples. He's calling us to imitate that which is good. Our author is assuming that the outcome of these guys' lives was victorious, it was successful. The idea is that they held firm to the faith until the end.

Now, look, that is not a new idea in Hebrews. Right? Remember with me. Here's where I want you to do a quick survey. Go back to Hebrews 3. This is not a new idea. The idea that we should look at somebody and consider the outcome of a whole life. This idea of looking at those who made it to the end. Well, the idea of Hebrews of making it to the end - firm to the end. Holding our confidence to the end. Being one who endures all the way. One that makes it. That is a theme. Running well, but running all the way to the finish line. That is an emphasis in Hebrews that just hits us again and again.

And I'm just going to hit on a few of these. Hebrews 3:6 Christ is faithful over God's house as a Son, and we are His house if what? We are His house. A house is a place you live. We are the dwelling place of God. If what? If we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in hope. Our hope is in Him. We boast in Him. Our confidence in Him. We have to hold fast to it all the way to the end. How about Hebrews 3:14? Hebrews 3:14 says we have come to share in Christ. Sharing in Christ means we share in what He did. The salvation He wrought. The death He died. We share in the victory that Christ has. We share in His salvation only if what? We hold our original confidence. Just for a week? Firm to the end. That's what this book is about. Remember how it starts? That we need to pay much closer attention to the things we have heard, lest what? Lest what? Lest we drift from them. Drifting from Christ is perilous. That is the danger that these Hebrews were in. Drifting from Christ for anything else. That's why food shows up there. Food has to do with false religion. Food has to do with religions that are just lists of rules. What you eat; what you don't; what you celebrate; the liturgy - everything that's just mechanical. You do this and you don't do that. It's a set of rules. That's not what true religion is all about. True religion is found in Christ, and hope in Christ, and hoping in what He has done. And that's got to be firm to the end. You don't want to let go of that.

And as we see, if there's ever a book in the New Testament that is full of warning, that if you let go of Christ, it will end most miserably. Fearful destruction. Fearful fury of God. Beware, Hebrews says. Our God is a consuming fire. God and in His hands is the safest place to be if you're trusting Christ, but His hands are terrible if you are outside of Christ and you put your hope in anything else. Look again at Hebrews 4:14. Since then, we have a great high priest Who has passed through the heavens. Oh, don't you love that imagery? Can you see Him? A great high priest. He is victorious! Passing through the heavens. That is a picture of Him ascending up to the right hand of Majesty on High. Can you see Him? I mean, He goes forth triumphant; scepter in hand to sit down, after having made purification for sins, at the right hand of the Majesty on High. That's the picture. Passing through the heavens. He's ascending to take

His throne. He's victorious. He has conquered sin. He has conquered death. But here's the thing, we have a great high priest Who has passed through the heavens - Jesus, the Son of God. Because that's true, let us hold fast our confession. There it is again. Hold fast. Hold fast. Hold fast.

How about turn over to Hebrews 6:11? Hebrews 6:11 - you jump in right there. "Show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end." There you have it again. Until the end. Before in Hebrews 3:14, firm to the end. You have this "hold fast our confidence." Hold our original confidence firm to the end. Let us hold fast our confession. We are to have the same earnestness, to have the full assurance of hope until the end. How about Hebrews 10:23? Again, you get this idea again about holding, holding, holding fast; let us hold fast. Hebrews 10:23, Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering; for He Who promised is faithful.

I'll give you one more. Hebrews 12:1 Right there towards the end of the verse. "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." Here the word is endurance. But that's the same thing: hold fast, keep enduring, keep going. So when it comes to those who taught us the Word - here's what the author of Hebrews is doing. He's saying those who taught us the Word of God - think about what the Word of God is. The Word of God is the Gospel. This is the message that Christ is set forth in. The very message of Christ. The message that we are to continue holding on to by faith until the end. We ask ourselves, how did those who taught us run? Did they hold fast? Did they continue themselves? Convinced of what they taught? Did they hold their original confidence firm to the end? You see, this is a picture of those who have gone before us. Now, we're a young church. You guys don't have elders who aren't here anymore. But there are people - you sit under the teaching of Spurgeon, many of you. Yeah, he died over a hundred years ago, but you sat under him. Read his autobiography. Read what was said about him. Read how he died. I just this morning and yesterday, I pulled up that message.

It wasn't long ago when Bob Jennings stood right here and gave the last message to our church that he would ever give. And I went back and I listened to his preaching. You know what the problem is with those who are living? What's the problem with those who are living? They haven't made it all the way to the end yet. You don't know if they're going to fall out. David mentioned Bill Gothard. How about Doug Phillips? I mean, we see guys fall out of the race. We see guys fall into sin. We see guys that don't make it to the end all the time. And sometimes they have big names. Sometimes they're at the high end of circles where you think the doctrine is good and it looks orthodox. And these guys make shipwreck. It happens.

You know what? There are lots of things you can imitate in those who are living. But there's something that those who made it successfully to the end have that the living don't have. They have a testimony all the way to the end. They made it. They did well. They got through. The thing about men like Bob Jennings, they shined right to the end. Was he perfect? No. But his hope was in Christ. I pulled up that message. As he was closing the message, do you know what Bob was saying? This was just two months before he died. He says, "I'm going to keep on with Christ. I'm going to stay away from sin. I'm going to abhor the world. I'm going to live for Christ and for eternity. I'm putting my eggs in one basket. I want to do all for Him. I want to finish well. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. That's it. That's the ultimate." Here's a man. He's

at the end. He's run his race. And that's his testimony. He believed what he taught all those years. And that's what we're being told to imitate.

Now, here's the thing that we need to understand about making it to the end; persevering; keeping on in the race. The perseverance itself is not what saves us. It's not like we're being told persevere because persevering saves you. Jesus said that if you make it to the end; you persevere to the end; you keep going to the end, you'll be saved. But the merit in our salvation is never in the perseverance. It's never there. The warrant for our salvation is found in Christ alone. The perseverance doesn't earn salvation for us. It doesn't earn forgiveness for our sins. Christ alone saves.

But listen, those He saves, He saves well. And He pours His grace that their faith might maintain to the end. The proof that you have truly been saved by this God Who saves well is that you make it to the end. The fact is that if you fall out, you're showing that your salvation is not of God's making. It's something of man's making. It's some religion that you've dreamt up. God puts power in His people that their faith might make it to the end. He saves people. And you know what? Perseverance proves that the saving power of God is behind a person's being a Christian so that they finish well. That's the question. That's the question on the table. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

And look, this isn't the first time this idea of imitating those - just jump back to Hebrews 6 very quickly. V. 11 - you see this sort of language found there as well. This idea about imitating. Hebrews 6:11 "We desire each one of you to show the same earnestness, to have the same assurance of hope until the end." Now, I know we just looked at that a few moments ago, but keep reading. We need to have full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. So here's that idea again. Imitate. You have faith. Until the end. That's the idea. Until the end. Imitate those who through faith gain the fulfillment of the promises. They make it. So that's the idea there in 13:7.

Now, let's transition. Go back to chapter 13. Look at v. 8. This just seems abrupt. Now look, I don't think - you tell me. If I was talking to you and I told you that you were to imitate the outcome of the life. You were to look and study and remember the outcome of men's life and imitate their faith - men who made it to the end. For me to go right into what that faith is, wouldn't be unusual. There'd be a connection. There'd be a flow there. Because faith isn't just some obscure thing. Faith is my eyes set on Jesus Christ and my full hope is set right there. So to have something about the object of our faith to follow immediately after is not strange.

To me, what's strange about it is not that something is said about Christ. It's what is said about Christ. Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. How does that fit? What does the sameness of Christ have to do with what he just said? Perhaps these guys have died; these leaders, these guys that have taught you the Word of God, they've died. Jesus doesn't die. Perhaps that's the connection. Let's look at it. As far as flow goes, if you look at the next verse - v. 9, it starts out with not being led away by diverse and strange teachings. It doesn't seem strange to me either that you would get the author giving us that which is not strange, and then contrasting it with that which is. But again, what's unusual to me is what is said about Christ. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

I mean think about this. The author is really wanting to encourage us to hold fast to Christ the way that our teachers held fast to Christ. But how does this statement help us do that? I mean, when you hear that, does that really... Oh yeah, that makes me really want to trust Him more! He's the same. How does knowing that Christ is the same help me not be led away by diverse and strange teachings? I mean, think about this, was there a prevalent error? Anywhere in the New Testament, do you come across a prevalent error in that day in the early church that said that Jesus Christ changes? I mean how does that statement help us? Where is that statement coming from? Jesus Christ is the same. Well, the same as what? What is He the same as? I mean, clear, the text tells us He's the same today as He was yesterday, and He's the same yesterday as He is today, and that the way He was yesterday and the way He is today is the way He's going to be through all the ages. It literally reads: Jesus Christ yesterday and today the same and through the ages. That's literally how it reads.

But how is it applicable to imitating the faith of our teachers? How is it applicable to not being led away by diverse and strange teachings? Do we know of any error that said that Jesus Christ changes? When we're told that Jesus Christ is the same - the same as what? I know He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, but what does the sameness apply to? Sameness. (Incomplete thought) In and of itself, if you think about it, if you tell me that something is the same, it isn't necessarily good news to me. I mean, you think about it. The devil was the devil yesterday. And the devil is the devil today. And the devil is going to be the devil forever. Just because there's an aspect about somebody that doesn't change, doesn't necessarily make it good news to us. What is it in this book of Hebrews that is really prompting the author to want to go here as he's shutting down this letter?

And you know what the thing is? I can actually think of ways that Jesus Christ has changed. I mean, let's be honest about it. Yes, if we're talking about His deity, He doesn't change. He's the eternal Word of God. In the beginning, He was with God. In the beginning, He was God. That's how He was in the beginning. We know that as God, He has equality with the Father. We know that as divine, He doesn't change. But the truth is, there are a lot of things about Jesus that do change. Right? The Word became flesh. Think about that word "became." He became something that He wasn't before. That's what became means. He became flesh. He took on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. He didn't have that before. I mean, that's one of the things in Hebrews that we find out about Christ is that for Him to become the perfect high priest, He had to become like His brethren in every respect. He had to become something He wasn't before, in order to become that perfect high priest. There was a time before which He rose from the dead. There was a time before which He made atonement for sin. There was a time before which He ascended to His Father. You see, there is a work Christ did that at one time wasn't done. A change took place in that it was accomplished. He became man when He was not man. He took upon Himself humanity and He will be humanity forever more. You understand this. His nature as man at one time did not exist.

Now, I know in the mind of God, God might count certain things true about Him before they happened, but the truth is, in time, many things happened. And one of them is He took upon Himself the nature of mankind. That's a change. I mean, we're not being honest with ourselves if we say it isn't. It is. And Scripture everywhere tells us He became something He wasn't before. He became... The Word became flesh.

I'm just wanting to be honest with Scripture. These are questions we have. When we come across: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we need to be thinking about what this really means. Well, let me tell you what I believe this means. I think this has everything to do with what he's been talking about in the book of Hebrews. I'll tell you this right off. When it says the same yesterday, today and forever, a lot of people like to reach in and pull it out. They give you no context in Hebrews. They just pull it out. And they typically apply it to His deity. And I don't believe that's right. I don't believe that yesterday means eternity past. I don't believe that. Because I don't believe that's a message we've been getting in Hebrews, and I want to show you this.

Listen. Hebrews is all about what changes and what does not change. And I want to show you this. Go back to chapter 7. I think you'll get a feel for this. If you want to interpret Scripture, we interpret Scripture with Scripture. And if you want to interpret Scripture, the best way to interpret it is to look at the same author in other places and preferably in the same book. Listen, Hebrews is a package. Hebrews has a message. Hebrews flows. The author starts somewhere and he's going somewhere. It's not just disjointed. It's not just random. There is a cohesiveness about Hebrews. And so when we get to a statement like this at the end of a book, you really want to go back and look throughout the book to see is there anything that leads us to be able to determine and define, to discern where this is coming from.

So if you go back to Hebrews 7. Look at this. V. 11 I'm going to tell you, I don't believe this statement has to do with Christ's deity. I believe it has to do with His priesthood, and with His sacrifice, and what was accomplished by it. The high priestly capacity of our Lord Jesus Christ is certainly a prominent message throughout Hebrews. Here we are right in the heart of it. But, watch this, Hebrews 7:11. "Now, if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood..." Now think about that. The Levitical priesthood was the priesthood you found in the Old Testament. Was perfection available through it? Was anybody perfected through that priesthood? No. And because of it, it was changeable. It needed to be replaced. It changed. "For under it, the people received the law." The whole idea here is if under that priesthood people would have been made perfect, what further need would there have been for another priest - that's Christ - to arise after the order of Melchizedek?

Who's Melchizedek? Well, he's this really mystical, strange guy that shows up, just fleeting. Has this run-in with Abraham. But the thing about him that our author of Hebrews is gleaning is you never even know where he comes from. And he comes and he goes. And there's no indication of genealogy. There's no indication of who he's related to. There's no indication that he ever died. And the author of Hebrews picks up on that. In fact, God brought him into the biblical record, and took him out on purpose, so that later he could say about His own Son: You are a priest forever. Forever! Not after the order of Levi, but after the order of Melchizedek.

And what was it about Melchizedek? There's no record of a death. He lives forever. And that's where he's headed here. "What further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?" And by the way, Aaron and Levi - they're the same family. Aaron was the high priest. The Levites were the underling priests. They were priests - they were not the high priest. They could not enter the holy of holies. Now watch this, "when there is a change..." now think with me there. Jesus Christ

is the same. Here there is a change. We don't have time to do this, but if you meticulously walk through Hebrews and look for every place where change over against what's being said about Christ. He doesn't change. His ministry is permanent. His sacrifice is once for all. His priesthood is forever.

But there's a change. "Where there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law." And you remember, there was a change in the old covenant. It was weak. It was imperfect. It's replaced. But what's the New Testament called in Hebrews 13? We haven't gotten to it yet, but what's it called? It's an eternal covenant. You find in Hebrews eternal salvation, eternal redemption. But here, you see things being replaced. "For the one of whom these things are spoken, (Christ) belong to another tribe from which no one ever served at the altar. Not under Moses. They were all from the Levitical line. Never from the line of Judah. "For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe, Moses said nothing about priests." In other words, Jesus Christ does not have His authority to be a priest coming from Moses. It came directly from God Himself Who pronounced Him a priest after the order of Melchizedek. And we'll see that. V. 15 "This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek."

And what was Melchizedek like? Well, we see it earlier in Hebrews 7. No genealogy. No death. V. 16 "Who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent." He's not a priest because He was descended from Levi. "But by the power of an indestructible life." Do you see that? The other priesthood changes. It's law changes. It's covenant changes. But here, it doesn't change. Why? Because it's built on an indestructible life. Was the old priesthood built on an indestructible life? No. They died all the time. You'll see that. V. 17 "For it's witnessed of Him, 'You're a priest forever.'" When you think of Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever, think here. He is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. "For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside." Again, change. That which was former is set aside. "Because of its weakness and uselessness. For the law made nothing perfect. But on the other hand, a better hope." Wow.

Why is it better? Because it's based on an indestructible life. Because it's forever. He doesn't change. He's the same. When it says yesterday, I believe what he means is not necessarily looking into eternity past. I think he means yesterday in the days that those who have gone before us that taught you the Word of God; the One they put their trust in. They put their trust in Christ and yesterday that was good enough for them, and today, He is no different. And right out into eternity, He is going to be the same. Because His priesthood is indestructible.

But remember, His priesthood was not from eternity past. His priesthood is based on the fact that He had to become like His brethren in every respect - and He had to suffer - in order to be this merciful and faithful high priest. He had to become like us in every respect. And He had to suffer like us. That's what the teaching of Hebrews says. Go back to the text. V. 19 Again, "(for the law made nothing perfect,) but on the other hand a better hope." Oh, brethren, have you ever thought about Hebrews here too? Christ is better than the prophets. Christ is superior to the angels. Christ is beyond His companions. Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses. He's greater than Levi. He's greater than Aaron. His altar is greater than the one that those guys eat from. His blood is greater - it's superior to the blood of Abel. It's a greater sacrifice. It's a greater covenant. Is He not the guarantor of a better covenant? It's built on better promises. He has a

ministry that's better. All throughout this book: better, better, better. Here it is: a better hope. Why? Why is it a better hope? Because it's based on an indestructible life.

And you'll see it. "Through which we draw near to God. And it was not without an oath." God made an oath. "For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath." They were made priests according to bodily descent. They were descended from Levi. Not with an oath. But this one was made a priest with an oath, by the One, His Father, Who said to Him, 'The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind. You are a priest forever.' This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. The former priests were many in number. Here's the thing, theirs was changeable. Why? Because those high priests were many in number. Why? Because they were prevented by death. There's change again. They came. They went. There was a high priest. Yeah, but he was only going to live so long and then he died. He was prevented from continuing in office.

But, He (Christ) holds His priesthood permanently. Because He continues forever. You see, here is the sameness of Hebrews. Here is that upon which the author of Hebrews wants our minds locked in. Can you imagine? Remember when the Hebrews lived. They're living at a time when the Passover's going away. They're living at a time when the Day of Atonement is going away. They're living at a time when the temple is going to go away. All the Old Testament system - they're living at a time when there's all this change, change, change... Well, how do we know if that's all changing? The Jews put their confidence in that Old Testament system. And now, you're telling us it's going away? I mean, what if this thing with Christ is going away? We put our trust there that one day and our forefathers did? And you're telling us it's gone? You're telling us it's obsolete? You're telling us that it's incomplete? You're telling us that there's some weakness about it? Something isn't good? It's useless? You're telling us that? Well, what makes us think that this priesthood of Christ is any better? Because you yourselves know that that Levitical priesthood - they couldn't continue in office because they were dying all the time.

And if you remember your Bibles, you know about who Melchizedek was. And he didn't have an end of days. And you know that the psalm says that God swore to His Son, to the Messiah, that He was going to be a priest. What do we need a priest for? One Who is going to bring an offering to His Father on our behalf. That offering was one sacrifice. He is the priest and He is the Lamb. He is in His own hands. He offers Himself on that cross. Once for all. And the thing about the permanence here is it's done. It's complete. Who He is - victorious, passing through the heavens to the right hand of the Father, triumphant. It's done. And He doesn't change. This priesthood is solid. It's indestructible. It's there.

And watch. You'll see where he's going with this. You are a priest forever. V. 22 This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. Why? Because it's sealed in His blood and it's never going to change. The former priests, many in number, they were prevented by death from continuing in office. He holds His priesthood permanently. Because He continues forever. Consequently, here's why it is so glorious. Look, if you were reading this book straight through, you would have read this fifteen minutes before you got to chapter 13. This is what he wants our faith to lock into: The sameness of Christ.

Consequently, He is able to save. Why? Consequently. Consequent on what? That He is a priest forever. Because He is a priest forever. And because His priesthood is permanent. And because it continues forever. And it's based on this: Consequently, He is able to save to the

uttermost. You see, whatever the Old Testament priests did, they couldn't save you to the uttermost because their time came to an end. Whatever they could do, it ran out. But "He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him since..."

This is so important. I don't think we grasp this. "Since He always lives to make intercession." This is why. This is why it's so important that He doesn't change. You know why? If He once sets His love on you... Remember what happened right before this? In Hebrews 13? "I will never leave you or forsake you." Therefore, we can confidently say, "the Lord is my helper." You see, once He sets His love on you, it's rock solid. It's permanent. It doesn't change. The basis of His priesthood - it's forever. And because priests intercede and He doesn't ever die, He lives to make intercession for them. "For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest - holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens." He has no need like those high priests of old under Moses to offer sacrifices daily. He doesn't have to come back and do it. We don't need an offering over and over. We do not need to offer Christ up over and over and over and over. We don't have to. He's been offered once.

But you see, we observe the Lord's Supper, right? But Jesus said, "do this in remembrance of Me." We remember His death. But in many religious circles, it is believed that the bread actually become His flesh and the wine actually becomes His blood, and He's offered afresh again. And you know why that's necessary oftentimes in the mindset, is because salvation is not complete and resting on Christ. More needs to be done. More needs to be done. And it comes back to the whole food thing that gets compared to grace in 13:9.

Why the thing about food? Well, because we have to keep doing things. There's always something incomplete. We have this sin and we just have this sense that we have to keep doing something. We have to keep doing something. More and more and more is needed. Why? Because we're never sure if it's just right. We're never sure if enough has been done. They were never certain under that old covenant system. Why? Because they kept having to bring these, having to bring these. When you get to Hebrews 10, he says the very proof that it didn't accomplish anything was the fact that it had to be brought again and again and again... because if an offering was ever made that truly washed away sin, it would never have to be made again. And that's why with Christ, it's done. It's done. (Incomplete thought)

What we have to do, is all the way to the end, we just hold on to Him. Firm to the end. We hold on to Him. Why? Because all the merit is there. He shed His blood. He lived His life. He is that high priest. Not just a priest - He's a King. He is the Priest-King. He came from the lineage of David. Melchizedek was a king and a priest. And He is of the order of Melchizedek. And He sits there triumphant. He made purification. Did you hear that? In Hebrews 1, He made - having made purification for sins. He sat down. The priests in the Old Testament never were allowed to sit down while they were at work. They had no chairs in the temple. They had no chairs in the tent. They had no chairs in the tabernacle. Why? Because their work was never done. But what the author of Hebrews says is Christ offered Himself and sat down. Done. It's finished. The work is complete. And it doesn't change. He is forevermore the same. The victorious Priest-King. His work is done. But you can see the changes with everything else. The old priesthood - it just changes. Everything changes. Even at the beginning of this book, it's like the heaven and the earth are going to change. They're going to be rolled up. But You - You don't change. There's so much change. Change throughout this book. Their leaders in 13:7 - there

was change. They used to preach to us and they're gone now. Bob stood in this pulpit before, and he's gone now. Men come and they go and circumstances change. But what we have is this rock solid confidence. "I will never leave you or forsake you." It's unchangeable. We have a priest Who has a priesthood and He always lives to make intercession for them.

And it goes on to say, v. 28 "The law appoints men in their weakness as high priest, but the word of the oath which came later than the law appoints a Son Who has been made perfect forever. Forever. What this is saying is He is the same, perfect Savior yesterday, and He is the same perfect Savior today, and He will be forevermore. And I know that before He actually came and poured out His blood and poured out His life, God looked forward and applied that work backward to men like Samuel and Moses and Abel. I know that. But Jesus Christ had to come and be made like His brethren in time to become this perfect high priest that He might be superior - Oh, His covenant is superior. His covenant. What a glorious better covenant it is! Why? Because it's not based on performance. It's not based on whether I eat the bread or don't eat the bread. It's not based on what festivals I observe or holy days I observe. It's not based on that. It's based on the merits; it's based on Him. It's superior.

You know that old covenant said if you do this, then I will treat you accordingly. If you do good, I will treat you well. If you do bad, I will treat you bad. That's the old covenant. You know how much of the world lives on the old covenant still today? That covenant is death. You know why? Because none of us has kept it perfectly and that's what that covenant demanded. If you don't keep everything written in the book of the law and do it, you are under a curse. And yet, people come along and they say, oh, well, I'm trying, I'm trying, I'm trying to be good. Yeah, but that law said, do me and live; break me and die. The wage of sin is death. That doesn't mean ten. It's like Ray Comfort says. It's not like you tell a hundred lies and a bell goes off. Bing! One sin and Adam and Eve fell. One sin destroyed mankind. One sin will put you in hell. One unforgiven sin. Jesus Christ came with a superior covenant that's guaranteed by His blood.

And you see, it's a promise not made between us and God; it's a promise made between the Father and the Son. Where the Son says I will die for them. I will pour out my blood to unleash the power of the Spirit of God into their life and to allow them to be forgiven for the sins that they've committed against God. And Christ says, I will come. I will be their sin-bearer. I will be their priest. I will be their sacrifice. I will purchase for them redemption. I will purchase eternal life. I will be crushed under the wrath of God. I will drink the cup of punishment that they deserve to drink. I will take it on Myself. And I will come under the law. And I will keep that law in their place so that they can be blameless when their sin is charged to Me and I suffer under it and My righteous law-keeping is given to them, so that they might be counted righteous in the courtroom of God.

That's what happened. And Jesus said, I will give Myself. A body You have prepared for Me. And I need to become a man. And though I am equal with God, I count it not robbery at all being counted equal with Him, but He set His glory aside and He came down and He came down as a servant and down as a man, and He poured out His life all the way to that obedience to the cross and God crushed Him there. And thereby He is a high priest now that has done a work. And we rest. And we can rest. Because this covenant says that by faith in Him - just Lord, I trust that You have kept the law for me. And You have paid what my sins deserve. And I trust that You will give me Your Spirit; You will transform me; You will give me a new heart. My trust is

all in Him and what His blood has done. And you see, I can rest on that. And that's where this is coming from. And I'll tell you this, when our author moves into v. 9, and he says you don't be taken away; you don't be carried away. You remember back in the beginning of this verse, we need to pay much closer attention to these things, lest we drift.

You know why people drift? Because other things attract them. This whole book is about the glory of Christ. You know why people walk away? They stop seeing Christ as beautiful. They stop seeing Him as precious. They see the Spurs are better; my money's better; the world's better; food is better. Yeah, I'll have my religion, but they begin to drift away from Christ. And it says don't be carried away by diverse and strange teachings. It's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace rather than foods. The food doesn't profit. Grace profits. What's grace? It means all that Christ has done, I receive as a gift. That's grace. I don't deserve it. I'm not being good enough to get to heaven. See, that's not grace. That's falling in with the food. Well, I'm trying to do the right things.

What about this food? Yeah, it comes up all over the place. Colossians: Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink. Why? Food is one of the basic elements of this world that people get hung up on and think they have to do certain things with food in order to merit some kind of look from God. It's just one of the basic things. It works out a thousand different ways and other than food. It's just things we've got to do that we think that God's going to be happy with, and somehow it's going to get us a good place. It's going to get us acceptance in the end. But it's all grace. Look, any other way - do you notice what he says? It doesn't profit them. Which means what? It doesn't save them. It doesn't profit. It doesn't bring any advantage to them at all whatsoever. None. I mean, you don't want to trade being saved by this Christ freely by grace as a gift for doing things that you think are going to make you good or clean you up. That's the basic mentality with the religions of this world. I've got to do this little thing, you know, to clean up. I kind of lived out of control last weekend, and now I go to church and it's going to set me right. No. No, the true religion of the Scriptures is we have a high priest and He doesn't change. And He made an offering once and it satisfied His Father. Oh, it satisfied Him.

We'll just end by looking at this. You look at Hebrews 2. Hebrews 2:14 "Since therefore, the children share in flesh and blood..." He's talking about the children of God. He's talking about Christians here. "Since therefore, the children share in flesh and blood..." That means we're men; we're women. We're sons and daughters of Adam. We're human. Since we're that, He Himself (Christ) likewise partook of the same things. He had to. That through death, He had to become man, so that He could die as a man, and in so doing, destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver us - all those who through fear of death and we do fear death by nature. We were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it's not angels that He helps. He helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God.

Why? To make propitiation. That's the removal of wrath. He removes the wrath for the sins of the people. Because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted. And He doesn't change. He is a help to those who are being tempted. And He is victorious. He can help. He's laid down His life. He has help for the sinner. You can be ever so vile, ever so filthy, have committed ever so grave of sin, so many of them that you can't

count and they're heaped up on your shoulders, and they're going to drop you into the lowest parts of hell, but this work that this high priest has done has made propitiation. That means total removal of wrath. It's all wiped away. That's what forgiveness is all about. All of it. All your sins. Past, present, and future are forgiven in their entirety. Propitiation has been made. But He had to become a man. But having become a man, His priesthood doesn't change forever. You think about this. He is going to wear His humanity forever. He saves those who come to God through Him to the uttermost because He as a man and as a victorious high priest being made like us in every respect - He's like that forevermore. He has taken the nature of humanity upon Him forever. That He might be a high priest forever. To make intercession for us forever. We'll we're going to press on through those verses next week.

Father, we pray that You would just help us to see the glories of Christ in all of this as we wrap up these last verses in Hebrews. May we leave it going out reminded of how this book so exalts the supremacy of Christ; the preeminence of Him Who bought us with His blood. Thank You. Amen.