

## **The Hebrews Initiative:**

**Jesus Only Jesus**

**Hebrews 7:23-28**

**October 18, 2015**

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**Text Introduction:** We are in a series that we are calling the Hebrews Initiative. It is an important journey. Though not exactly the same, our circumstances are similar to that of the original recipients of Hebrews. As such, it has been my prayer that this study will provide significant encouragement for us to persevere in this post-Christian and at times anti-Christian world in which we find ourselves living.

**Text:** <sup>23</sup> Now many have become Levitical priests, since they are prevented by death from remaining in office. <sup>24</sup> But because He remains forever, He holds His priesthood permanently. <sup>25</sup> Therefore, He is always able to save those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede for them. <sup>26</sup> For this is the kind of high priest we need: holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He doesn't need to offer sacrifices every day, as high priests do—first for their own sins, then for those of the people. He did this once for all when He offered Himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak, but the promise of the oath, which came after the law, appoints a Son, who has been perfected forever.

**Introduction:** We have reached about the half-way point in our journey that we are calling the Hebrews Initiative. As such, we have reached the half-way point in this letter called Hebrews. The argument by now has been supremely made. Jesus is better. In fact, in verse 22, right prior to our text of examination today, we get these words: "So Jesus has also become the guarantee of a better covenant." Everything about Jesus is better.

But, the argument is more than just better. The argument is not that Jesus is just a better way, the argument is that Jesus is the only way. So, follow with me the logic of this passage today that seeks to summarize really the great truths that we have uncovered so far.

### **The Argument**

The basis of the argument continues at this point to be a comparison between the high priest in the Levitical system of the Old Covenant and Jesus as the great High Priest in the New Covenant.

There are two main ways that there is a comparison or as it might be better said, "no comparison."

**Permanence**—Priests were not forever for a simple reason. They died—all of them. Jesus is a permanent priest for one simple reason. He lives forever.

**Perfection**—Verse 26 contains five words attributed to Jesus that all stand in contrast to the Levitical priests with which they were familiar. The characteristics lead to a conclusion. Jesus could offer a once-and-for-all sacrifice.

### **The Assessment**

Reviewing the argument leads to a conclusion or an assessment.

**8** Now the main point of what is being said is this: We have this kind of high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

The Exhaustive Claim of Jesus—This leads to the exhaustive claim of Jesus. We see it in verse 25. “Therefore He is always able to save those who come to God through Him.” The KJV uses a word here that I like—“uttermost.” He is able to save to the “uttermost.” He is able to save all people. He is able to save for all times. He is able to save in a complete way.

But, this is not automatic. Those who are saved must “come to God through Him.”

The Exclusive Claim of Jesus—I cannot help but think of Jesus’ words as recorded in John 14:6, when answering the disciple named Thomas said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Here is the question of many unbelievers: Isn’t it offensive to claim Jesus is the only way to God?

- Christianity is not the only religion that claims exclusivity. Even those religions and philosophies who say there is some truth in all beliefs is making their own statement of exclusivity. They are saying that you are only right if you believe that there is no right.
- All truth is by definition exclusive. This is what makes something true. If  $1+1=2$ ,  $1+1$  cannot also equal 3. If I say that I-10 East will take you to Baton Rouge, I cannot also say that I-10 West will take you to Baton Rouge. Truth is always going to make an exclusive statement or else the statement would not be made as though it was true.

By simple logical assessment, if we believe that the claims of Christ are true, claims in opposition to Christ cannot also be true!

### **The Application**

Believe it—If we are believers in Jesus Christ, if we are believing in Him for our eternal life, then we must ask ourselves a question.

Isn’t it hypocritical to trust in Christ and not believe He is the only way to God?

Failure to acknowledge that Jesus is the **only** way, the truth, and the life...

1. Dilutes the power of the cross. If there is another way, then Christ did not have to die.
2. Destroys the need for evangelism.
3. Dissolves any need for commitment.

Live it—Let us endeavor to live as though we believe that Jesus is the only way. It is as C.S. Lewis so famously said, “Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

Share it—If we believe this message about Jesus it must be shared. We do not ask how much do we give, we ask how much do we keep. We do not ask who do we tell, we ask who haven't we told.

We do not turn back ever! That message is captured in this anonymous piece.

I am a part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. The die has been cast. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of Jesus. Therefore, I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still. My past is redeemed, my present is empowered and my future is secure. I'm done with low living, sight waking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions, mundane talking, cheap giving and dwarfed goals. I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, praise or popularity. I don't have to win, be first, be right, recognized, regarded or rewarded. I now live by faith, lean on His presence, love with patience, live by prayer and labor with power. My goal is God's glory, my face is set, my pace is fast, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my guide is reliable and my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up, shut up, let up or slow up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up and spoken up for the cause of Christ. I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till all know and work till He stops me. Christ has qualified me to become a part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. I am His and He is mine.