**Greater Than All - wk 8 – More Better**

**Ever had good food, and your momma fixes the same thing? It’s better.**

**Mission trip meals – better – there is love attached to it. This is what the writer of Hebrews is getting at. You’ve had a taste – this is better!**

* **The primary arch - don’t give up but grow up - move forward in your faith! They wanted to go back… the writer is, “Why!?!”**

**We need to understand the mindset of the Hebrews. (Temple’s value)**

**Jewish people followed the law of Moses strictly and took great pride in the temple (show temple) A wonder of the world - gloriously built, a beacon of light - nothing compared in their eyes. It was the place God met man – the priest would go to God for the people - act as mediator.**

**Their life revolved around it.**

**Some Jewish people were coming to Christ. But they began to feel like Jesus was not enough. They wanted the splendor, the ceremonies, the spectacle, the flash & feelings. The felt like they were missing out. Thinking of going back to Judaism.**

**We need the temple and priests! Hebrews is the response!**

**Perhaps you have felt that way – Is Jesus really enough?**

**Let’s look over their shoulder and see what we can glean.**

**This week the writer follows up – Jesus is Better than The Old Way!**

**Hebrews 8:1 Now the main point of what we are saying is this: (this is the main point of what I’ve been saying!) We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.**

**THE POINT IS THIS – Jesus is Better!**

* **Jesus is the better high priest - the last and the forever priest!**

**8:1 …We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven -**

**We don’t need those priests anymore! Doesn’t’ get any better**

**\*Jesus is the right hand of God! The very power & authority of God**

**Anthropomorphism of the Father. Seated- the work is finished.**

**8:2 …and who serves (ministers) in the sanctuary, (the Holy Place)**

* **Jesus is the true better minister in the Holy Place!**

**Before the father in the Holy Place – the very presence of God.**

**…the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.**

* **Jesus is the true better tabernacle!**

**In the wilderness the tabernacle is moved around – The temple was built by human hands. With diff areas: Outer Court // inner court // holy place / most holy place (holy of holies) (pic - More Next wk)**

**5 Tabernacles mentioned in scripture! Heavenly Holy Place / The Tent / Tabernacle / Temple / Christ / Saints**

**Jesus the very power and authority of God and the true superior priest - of the true tabernacle.**

**8:3 Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, (they went into the temple and made sacrificial offerings before God) and so it was necessary for this one also (Jesus) to have something to offer. (Jesus offered his life willingly – this the cross)**

**The Old way – dedicated with the blood of animals on people.**

**Made with repetition daily, monthly, yearly**

**The New way – dedicated with the blood of Jesus to people.**

**Made once for all time! (Heb 2,7,10, 1 Peter 3:18)**

**4 If he (Jesus) were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law.**

**He was not a Levite and not a priest while on this earth - and if he was still alive, meant no cross - old way still functioning. His death and resurrection – bring the new way.**

**5 They (the priests) serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. (Copy, not original, an image, not always clear, blurry - but you get the idea – shadow - seeing things in the dark. Figures but not details.) This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: (in the wilderness) “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” (Quoting Ex 25 – given on Mt Sinai after leaving Egypt)**

* **Jesus is the original and better way!**

**The old way was just a copy and shadow of the original – Jesus.**

**Mt Sinai (God Almighty University) 1.5 years. God gave them worship instructions and a revealing of God’s character and expectations.**

**Ex 25:40 - Moses’ tabernacle built on earth was made according to a pattern that existed in heaven. A copy of the original in heaven.**

**Those earthy priests served in a temple built by human hands fashioned after a heavily model. Jesus ministers in the original**

**\*Instruction God gave in OT, gave direction- Jesus was the destination!**

**Road trips- signs 100m/ 50m / 20m/ 10m/ 5m/ you have arrived! The Bible is a type of google maps – to the destination.**

**The trip from Mt Sinai point to Mount Zion – you have arrived!**

**8:6 But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs *(more excellent*) as the *(new)* covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.**

**What is a covenant? A testament agreement between 2 parties. In this case God and Man. (Video Bible Project: The Covenants)**

* **Jesus is the better covenant!**

**6 ..the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the *(new)* covenant**

**This new covenant is based on believing and receiving instead of by earning and deserving. Based on faith and His grace, not our works!**

**Jesus just before his arrest – had a Passover meal – he stood up took the bread and fruit of the vine (Luke 22) This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.” (Poured out)**

**6 …the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one…**

* **Jesus is the better mediator**

**Mediator (Gk) Mesites = “one who stands in the middle between two people and brings them together.”**

**Moses (the Law), the priests, the sacrifices were the mediator of the old deal. Jesus is the mediator of the better new deal!**

**Jesus mediated between mankind and the king eternal, immortal, the invisible and only God.**

**Jesus co-signed with his blood as a guarantee (Heb 7:22)**

**Hebrews 13:2 – the blood of the everlasting covenant!**

**6 …the new covenant is established on better promises.**

* **Jesus is the better promise!**

**Promises of eternal hope, salvation, peace, and communion with God! The promise of grace and mercy to those who believe! Everlasting promises!**

**\* Others have failed you - No broken promises anymore!**

**Hebrews 8:7 For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault with the people and said: (then quotes a passage out of Jeremiah 31)**

**Side note – reading between the lines: Writer equates the words of Jeremiah to the very words of God - Authority of Scripture is something they understood.**

**Who is Jeremiah? A prophet during Babylonian exile (explain)**

**The Hebrews were convinced God was done with them. Jeremiah one of the few allowed to stay back in Jerusalem rubble. Wrote this… Jer 29:** **10 This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Relief is coming in 70 yrs) 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.**

**“I am not done with you” a promise to Israel not us. But it does tell us God’s promises are guaranteed – God cannot lie (Heb 6)**

**It is with this that Jeremiah says this in Jer 30 (quoted in Hebrews 8)**

**Hebrew 8:b “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (they had spilt in two) 9 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. (Mt Sinai covenant - temple & priesthood) For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. (God let them die in the wilderness and let them to be taken into exile – the ark is gone for good.)**

**10 For this is the *(new)* covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: (speaking of the new way) I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (The new way is an internal work w/ God) 11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”**

**Not only am I not done with you – but I am not done with my plan. This is all part of a bigger, better plan. Jesus fulfills Jer!**

**13 By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; (declared no longer valid!) and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.**

**The old way prepared for the new – it was and was always only temporary. The new way last forever!**

**The writer is telling them – Why do you want to go back? It will not be there for long! 3 yrs later the temple is destroyed. (pic) What are you wanting to go back to? That too will not last!**

**THE POINT: Old covenant was good and important, but Jesus is Better!**

**Jesus is the very power and authority of God and the true priest and the true tabernacle. Jesus is Better than what you want to go back to! The Old way – was just the preparation for our true salvation.**

**Let’s bring this home: Why is this important – for us?**

**We do the same. We look to religion to ease the pain of life.**

1. **Religion will always leave you looking for something more**

**We like to say we have a relationship with God not a religion – but yet I am convinced most still have religion. It is evident in our prayer life; it is evident in the lack of peace with God – or feeling guilty all the time.**

**They were looking to ceremonies, people, and places for salvation. We too chase the splendor, ceremonies, spectacle, flash and feelings. And it works… for a while in this life… but not for long.**

**\*Religious ceremonies (Liturgy, repetitious prayers, scarcements, candle, incense, worship music) cannot save you!**

**\*Religious people (Pastors, priests, spouse, friends) cannot save you!**

**\*Religious places (Church, Bible studies, groups) cannot save you!**

**They alone will leave you empty and looking for more. They are meant to be a tool for something better- not the destination**

**The religious Christian and the practical atheist Christian**

**They either try to add to their salvation or say they have a relationship and live like he does not exist at all.**

**Jesus is still a myth and fairy tale we pretend to believe until we know him as mediator (Heb 8:6)**

**Like loving Santa Clause, there’s no foundation. Just an imagined relationship. Seeking feelings and experiences to validate it.**

**Mediator means Jesus does the work – not us.**

* **It means we can’t get to God – we need a mediator. (but if we could…)**
* **It means we can’t stand before God – we still need a mediator. (but if…)**
* **It means we can’t make a deal with God - we still need a mediator. (if…)**
* **It means we can’t pay the price God requires- we still need a mediator (but)**
* **It means we can’t assure it for eternity – we still need a mediator.**
1. **Following Jesus is about spiritual transformation not behavioral modification.**

**In the new way (Jesus) \* 8:10 “I will put my laws (my word) into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”**

**The Old way – try harder, work harder, be better!**

**The New way – is from the inside out - heart & mind – intimacy.**

**Jesus changes the heart and mind – resulting in change in actions. “If you love me, you will obey…” It is based on relationship!**

**The Old way- rules, a fence- written on stone, limits to keep us safe**

**Jack (pic) jumped the fence, dug holes under the fence, broke out boards – a fence for his safety could not keep him in – was hit by a car. We loved him but his wild spirit caught up w/ him.**

**The New way – freedom - written on our heart. Limits on the inside.**

**Grace and forgiveness when we fail. In Christ we are filled with the HS. The Spirit of the law is now inside those who believe!**

1. **Jesus must be known firsthand**

**They counted on a priest, a parent, a leader, a family member…**

**Odd verse near the end of chap 8 - Heb 8:11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.**

**This is not discouraging teaching others and its importance. But that true faith in Jesus is by the Spirit - it is not second-hand.**

**You need to know him for yourself. Your children, family, spouse – a first-hand faith! Know the right hand of God – first-hand!**

1. **No one is beyond the reach of God.**

**8:12 “For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, (gross injustice – wickedness) and I will remember their sins no more.” (This is a figure of speech – as God is omniscient – God remembers – but He no longer holds them as debt. They are erased - forgiven)**

**Listen to that phrase – God says those who come to him through Jesus - I will remember their sin no more!**

**Beautiful! That’s for you - through Jesus!**

**The right hand of God is calling you to come! Come to…**

**The better high priest // The better minister in the Holy Place**

**The better tabernacle // The better minister // The better mediator**

**The better promise // The better covenant // Jesus is Better!**