

## - NEW COVENANT POWER -

### Christ's Glorious Covenant Treasuring Christ Fellowship Camp 2007 Session 6

**Goal:** Encourage resting in the provisions of the New Covenant mediated by Christ as the means of freeing the conscience and empowering Christian living.

**Subject:** Mediation and Conscience under the Old and New Covenants.

8By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing 9(which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, 10but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation. 11But 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) 12he 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. 13For 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, 14how 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. 15Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9: 8-15

24For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. Hebrews 9: 24-28

1For 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. 2Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness [literally: 'having still conscience'] of sins? 3But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Hebrews 10:1-4

11And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. Hebrews 10: 11-14

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22let 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. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:19-23

See also Hebrews 11:1-3, 12:1-3, 18-24

#### **Introduction. History – Walter Marshall's Battle and Conclusion:**

"You also should learn the true difference between the two covenants, the old and the new, or the law and the gospel: that the former shuts us up under the guilt and power of sin, and the wrath of God and His curse, by its rigorous terms: 'Do all the commandments, and live; and, cursed are you if you do not do them, and fail in the least point'; the latter opens the gates of righteousness and life to all believers ( i.e. the new covenant) by its gracious terms: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live,' that is, all your sins shall be forgiven, and holiness and glory shall be given to you freely by His merit and Spirit."

## **1. Mediator Needed! Old Covenant demonstrates the need for a Mediator. Israel looks to Moses.**

One of the first things the Old Covenant Jews needed to see was their need for a mediator. And this is one purpose of the Old Covenant – reveal sin so as to leave those under it with an awareness that the solution to their sin must be found outside themselves.

8 All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." Exodus 19: 7-8

18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off 19 and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." Exodus 20: 18, 19.

You come to Mt Sinai, into the presence of God - awesome and holy - you die. That's the Old Covenant setting and lesson.

Exodus 20: 18-21 – we see the people now see their need for a mediator and send Moses. "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die."

The Lord testifies to these events and reveals to Moses "They Got It!":- 28 "And the LORD heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. Deut 5: 25, 28 – re-giving of the law. See also Deut 18:15-19

The Old Covenant stood to stir the conscience to an awareness of guilt before a holy God. Hebrews 10:1-4

## **2. Moses is not a sufficient mediator and the Old Covenant didn't resolve the problem of a defiled conscience left unclean. Jesus promised!**

Deut 18: 15-19 – God testified that they 'Got it!' and promises to send Jesus – Israel are then fearful before Sinai - they confessed they need a mediator. God says it must be one greater than Moses! God through Moses points them to Christ.

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— 16 just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' 17 And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Note: Acts 3: 22ff. & Acts 7:36ff make reference to this passage speaking of Jesus as the profit like Moses that God raised up.

Moses will judge all who rely on him: John 5: 45-47

### **Old Covenant, mediated by Moses, didn't resolve the problem of a defiled conscience left unclean.**

Understanding conscience – Rom 2:14-16, - Inner judge. Must accuse or excuse. And if it accuses it must see justice to be satisfied. And into the court room of conscience we can either place the Law (our performance) or Christ. Our dead imperfect works will never fully still the condemning voice of conscience. Conscience cries -> "Death to the guilty one!"

There are a number of ways people seek to deal with the problem of conscience – without Jesus Christ people must either minimise their sin, or minimise the holiness/justice of God, or suppress the truth - Romans 2.

Old Covenant to can't solve:

1. Guilt (Actual Guilt). Letter kills - 2 Cor 3:6, Old Covenant = ministry that brought death 2 Cor 3:7, Old Covenant cannot perfect the conscience Hebrews 9:8
2. Felt Guilt (Sense of Condemnation) - consciousness of sin (from the conscience) remains – Heb 10:2, Old Covenant brings slavery - Gal 3: 24, 25, 30; 4:1

### 3. Enter the New Covenant Mediator: Christ is a sufficient mediator – is united with both parties he mediators for and fulfills the conditions by His blood – sufficient to perfect the conscience.

Christ is our Mediator – “. . . the covenant he mediates is better . . .” Heb 8:6, also Heb 9:15. Why better? – All that God demands of us is given freely to us in Jesus Christ – guarantor, perfect priest, permanent priest, always lives to make priestly intercession,

- As our covenant guarantor - Heb 7:22 Christ takes in upon himself to fulfill the terms of the covenant.

- As our priestly intercessor – “always live to intercede” – the one time sacrifice is always applicable and effective for us. Heb 7:26.

He takes care of guilt (actual guilt) and gives a means of dealing with felt guilt:

**Actual Guilt:** 12he 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 . . . Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. 15Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, Hebrews 9: 12, 14b, 15. See also Hebrews 9: 24-28

**Felt Guilt:** We deal with felt guilt by displaying Christ crucified on our behalf to our conscience. The conscience is then satisfied justice has been served with will back away - quieted. We go through the gate of ‘full assurance’ not works, feelings, etc. We can go through the gate of ‘full assurance’ because our Christ is a faithful mediator, priestly intercessor, guarantor – will safely present us to God.

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22let 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. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:19-23

15For 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. 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 4:15-16

#### Overview: The flow of Hebrews 8 to 12

- Hebrews 8 – Christ the perfect Priest and mediator of the New Covenant brings 1. Belonging, 2. New Heart, 3. Eternal Intimacy with God, 4. Eternal mercy and forgiveness.
- Hebrews 9 – Christ is the mediator, the reality that was pictured. He brings an end to earthly priesthood as his one time sacrifice of his own blood is perfect and sufficient.
- Hebrews 10- Christ’s sacrifice and office opens the door of full assurance because he who promised is faithful. Warning to those who deliberately sin yet profess faith (i.e. those with no sign of a New Heart or Love for God). Encouragement to endure for, “we are not those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls”.
- The context of this faith leading up to Hebrews 11 is in the mediatory work of Christ on our behalf – trust Jesus, he’ll always present you perfect and bring you through to the end.
- Hebrews 11 – Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Examples of faith from the Old Testament.
- Hebrews 12 – Laying aside every weight and sin is connected to fixing our eyes on Christ, and all he is to us in the New Covenant, founder (starter) and perfecter (completer) of our faith who endured for the joy that was set before him.

Conclusion: 1Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. Hebrews 12: 1-3

#### 4. New Covenant Power to live the Christian life is by faith (trust) - realised through:

- Maintaining an awareness of the need for our mediator. (Don't minimise sin or the gospel – we need a mediator and God provides one.)
- Recognising that Christ has taken it upon himself to keep the covenant terms on our behalf and God's behalf. Under the New Covenant Christ is a faithful mediator, priestly intercessor, guarantor.
- Daily trusting Christ as our mediator to deliver the gospel promises, to keep the covenant for us.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1). Therefore, to live by faith, is to continually be influenced towards holiness by embracing the gospel promises of His sweet abiding presence, continual abundant love, guaranteed eternal comfort, and everlasting joyous fellowship with Christ, all given to us freely

Therefore, **the manner** of achieving true holiness is, from first to last, **by faith**. A resting, trusting, God-ward, Christ-treasuring, Spirit-fueled faith expressed throughout scripture in terms such as "Christ lives in me . . . I live by faith" (Gal 2:20, Heb 10:38), "walking by faith" (2 Cor 5:7); "faith working by love" (Gal 5:6), "overcoming the world by faith" (1 John 5:4); "quenching the fiery darts . . . by the shield of faith", "walking, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith" Col 2:6,7), "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 13:13), "being strong in the Lord, and the power of His might" (Eph 6:10). When we abide in Christ and fruit flows (John 15).

- Displaying Christ to our consciences to ease the burden of guilt.  
Note Hebrews 10: 19-23 – we go through the door of full assurance.

Christ in the Conscience – speaks peace – we can now be drawn by grace. "Jesus solves my guilt problem". Hebrews 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works . . .". See also Hebrews 4: 14-16

"Wherefore, whenever thou who believest in Jesus, dost hear the law in its thundering and lightning fits, as if it would burn up heaven and earth, then say thou, I am freed from this law, these thunderings have nothing to do with my soul; nay, even this law, while it thus thunders and roars, it doth both allow and approve of my righteousness. . . . when this law with its thundering threatenings doth attempt to lay hold on thy conscience, shut it out with a promise of grace; cry, The inn is taken up already; the Lord Jesus is here entertained, and here is no room for the law. Indeed, if it will be content with being my informer, and so lovingly leave off to judge me, I will be content, it shall be in my sight, I will also delight therein; but otherwise, I being now made upright without it, . . . I may not, will not, cannot dare not make it my Saviour and judge, nor suffer it to set up its government in my conscience; for by so doing, I fall from grace, and Christ Jesus doth profit me nothing." John Bunyan, Law & the Christian.

- To exhibit boldness in spite of an 'evil or weak conscience' – walking right into the presence of God in spite of sin (because of our mediator). Train our weak consciences.
- Avoid 'Old Covenant' bondage of trying to present ourselves acceptable before God. It's a gift!  
Quote: Andrew Murray, The Two Covenants, p 17.

#### Conclusion

Bunyan analogy – house swept clean, Pilgrims Progress, p 98-99.

18For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest 19and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. 20For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." 21Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." 22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Hebrews 12:18-24

"For the law was given through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" – John 1:16.

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## Session 6

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#### FULL NOTES

Hebrews – key texts

9: 6-15 conscience – mediator – conscience.

9: 19-22, 25-28 – Christ vs Moses as Mediator. Rest – Christ as mediator

10: 1-4 consciousness of sin. 10:11-14.

{10: 16-18 restates the covenant (note only). }

10: 19-23 Enter by Christ – New and living way. If Christ is the curtain to the presence of God and we are united with him – we are always in the presence of God.

Hebrews 11: 1-3 faith is . . . Therefore to live by faith is . . . Gospel Sanctification.

Leads to Hebrews 12: 1-3

Hebrews 12: 18-24 – come to Mt Zion – Jesus mediator (work is done, wrath dealt with).

#### Introduction

#### Marshall's Battle

Walter Marshall in the 1600s struggled despairingly with the issue of seeking after holiness in himself and his people although he preached it hard and often. He went to a number of preachers and writers in his time but found little help. He also went to a hero of his, Richard Baxter, who didn't help although at the time he still much appreciated Baxter's writings and largely modelled his own ministry after the same pattern – this later changed.

Regarding the discussions with Marshall, Baxter later stated that he felt Marshall had misunderstood him and taken him "too legally". Still, Marshall found Baxter useless as regards sanctification.

Can you relate!? Have you ever struggled with obtaining a peace filled life of obedience and have sought help only to find legalistic dung where sweet streams should be sourced? I've sure been there!

#### Thomas Goodwin to the Rescue

Later, when Thomas Goodwin visited the congregation and heard Marshall preaching, he accused Marshall saying, "You are trying to squeeze oil out of a flint" (an expression that became popular among grace preachers describing legalists). That is, he was trying to squeeze holiness out of the efforts of the flesh. Goodwin explained that holiness is to be sought by "Gospel Means" and he also exhorted Marshall to stop "railing against his people".

The two became friends and Goodwin spent much time with Marshall explaining and discussing the 'gospel mystery of sanctification'.

Marshall took on board the instruction of Goodwin and throughout his life studied Sanctification further. It was towards the end of his life that Marshall wrote his book.

## **Marshall Identifies the Problem**

In his book he discusses, among other reasons, he is writing that some might not commit suicide as a result of the despair arising from much of the preaching of the time. The problem was not so much what was said but what was left out. Much preaching was very clear on the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, and the duty of man (and rightly so). The problem, as Marshall saw it, was the means of attaining holiness and the means of dealing with failure was not understood and preached. In Marshall's day, people were exhorted, in the words of Bryan Chapell, to live the principles of:

- "Sola-bootstrapa" (I must keep the law in my own strength & effort) and
- "Ego-nomianism" (I am able to keep the law).

Marshall perceptively saw:

"You also should learn the true difference between the two covenants, the old and the new, or the law and the gospel: that the former shuts us up under the guilt and power of sin, and the wrath of God and His curse, by its rigorous terms: 'Do all the commandments, and live; and, cursed are you if you do not do them, and fail in the least point'; the latter opens the gates of righteousness and life to all believers ( i.e. the new covenant) by its gracious terms: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live,' that is, all your sins shall be forgiven, and holiness and glory shall be given to you freely by His merit and Spirit."

It is to this difference that we shall seek to gain tools to help empower the Christian life – overcome various sins.

### **1. Mediator Needed!**

#### **The Old Covenant Demonstrates the Need for a Mediator. Israel Looks to Moses.**

Mediator is a negotiator who acts for, and on behalf of, two parties. It is the mediator's job to ensure the terms of the covenant are kept by both parties.

We see this in Moses, under the Old Covenant, representing God and giving the people His law. He represented the people to God acting as a Mediator for them. One dramatic example was the golden calf incident – Moses represents the condemnation of God breaking the 'tablets of the Covenant' in a display of wrath. He represents the people in pleading to God to not destroy them.

One of the first things the Old Covenant Jews needed to see was their need for a mediator. And this is one purpose of the Old Covenant – reveal sin so as to leave those under it with an awareness that the solution to their sin must be found outside themselves.

We see the Old Covenant fulfilling this purpose in the transition from Exodus 19: 8 and Exodus 20:19

Read Exodus 19: 4-8 – explain

4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."  
7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. 8 All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do."  
Exodus 19:4-8

- "We don't need a mediator – we don't need to hide like rebels - tell us the commands and we'll do them."

Then Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. The Lord heard and in response said he'd come down on Mt Sinai to speak.

Vs 12, we read, "you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death.' - A dangerous, scary mountain, awesome and fearful presence of God. Only Moses, their mediator, could go up.

Vs 16 – 21, we read, 16On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. 17Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. 18Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. 19And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. 20The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. 21And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to look and many of them perish."

You come to Mt Sinai, into the presence of God - awesome and holy - you die. That's the Old Covenant setting and lesson.

Then through chapter 20 – giving of the 'Tables of the Covenant' – the Ten Commandments

Then we read Exodus and 20: 18-21 – we see the people now see their need for a mediator and send Moses.

18Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off 19and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." 20 Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." 21The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

The people had learned. God is holy, they are rebels, they need a mediator. Overcoming the problem of approaching this Holy God, who presents himself to sinners as a consuming fire, one that must not be approached lest they die, isn't simply a matter of saying to Him, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do"!

Their consciences were awakened to their guilt before a holy God and need for a mediator.

The Lord testifies to these events and reveals to Moses "They Got It!"

25Now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, we shall die' . . . 28"And the LORD heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. Deut 5: 25, 28 – re-giving of the law. See also Deut 18:15-19 and point 3 below.

Let me exhort you to learn the Old Covenant lesson:

NOT coming into God presence saying, "All the Lord has said we will do", with a sense of ability to do it.

RATHER adding, "Lord as a sinner I can not enter your presence. Before you I will be consumed – I need a mediator".

**Goal:** The Old Covenant stood to stir the conscience to an awareness of guilt before a holy God.

1For 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. 2Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness [literally: 'having still/remaining conscience'] of sins? 3But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Hebrews 10:1-4

\* Remaining conviction – sin not resolved \*

Although the Old Covenant pictured the all sufficient one time sacrificial death of Christ, the repetitive nature of the sacrifices spoke guilt to the conscience of an ongoing problem of guilt before a holy God that is not solved by the blood of bulls and goats – no sooner had one atoning sacrifices been made for sins another sacrifice was required – and on, and on.

## **2. Moses is not a sufficient mediator and the Old Covenant didn't resolve the problem of a defiled conscience left unclean. Jesus promised by Moses!**

### **Moses insufficient as a mediator – Another will be sent!**

Deut 18: 15-19 – God testified that they 'Got it!' – fearful before Sinai - they confessed they need a mediator. God says it must be one greater than Moses! God through Moses points them to Christ.

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— 16just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' 17And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Note: Acts 3: 22ff. & Acts 7:36ff make reference to this passage speaking of Jesus as the profit like Moses that God raised up.

Jesus is needed! Moses insufficient - Moses himself didn't enter the promised land. He too is a sinner!

Jesus own commentary on Moses role as mediator was that Moses himself will judge all who rely on him. Moses will faithfully represent their guilt to God. And Moses himself, as a faithful mediator, pointed the people to the only solution to their sin, the one to come.

45Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 46For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" John 5: 45-47

### **Old Covenant, mediated by Moses didn't resolve the problem of a defiled conscience left unclean.**

Understanding conscience – Rom 2:14-16, - Inner judge. Must accuse or excuse. And if it accuses it must see justice to be satisfied.

14For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

Paul tells us in Romans 2 the conscience is our internal judge and jury accusing or excusing. And into the court room of conscience we can either place the Law (our performance) or Christ.

Duty in the Conscience – driven by fear / stir guilt (no escape). "I have a guilt problem I must resolve . . .". When we set the law in our conscience our dead imperfect works will never fully still the condemning voice of conscience.

Conscience cries -> "Death to the guilty one!"



1 Cor 8:7ff – conscience of weaker brethren being defiled and wounded participating in what it believes is wrong.

There are a number of ways people seek to deal with the problem of conscience – without Jesus Christ people must either minimise their sin, or minimise the holiness/justice of God, or suppress the truth.

- Suppress the truth of their sin – “Suppress the truth in unrighteousness” Rom 2.
  - Suppress the truth of God.
  - Trust in own good works, “All the Lord has said we will do” or “What must I do to inherit eternal life” Mark 10:17.
  - Trust in feelings towards God and people.
  - Silence the voice of conscience through belief in punished for our guilt – done my time, suffered enough for all I’ve done.
  - Trust in some association – church, family, race (I’m a Jew), etc - but God is just and won’t lay aside justice because of an association.
- Etc.

The problem of guilt is two fold:

1. Guilt (Actual Guilt).
2. Felt Guilt (Sense of Condemnation)

Insufficiency of the Old Covenant on both accounts:

1. Guilt (Actual Guilt).

6He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 2 Cor 3:6

7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 2 Cor 3:7

8By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing 9(which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,

2. Felt Guilt (Sense of Condemnation)

1For 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.

2Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness [literally: ‘having still conscience’] of sins? Hebrews 10:2

24These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. 25Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. . . . 30But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." . . . 1It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Gal 3: 24, 25, 30; 4:1

**3. Enter the New Covenant Mediator: Christ is a sufficient mediator – is united with both parties he mediators for and fulfills the conditions by His blood – sufficient to perfect the conscience.**

Christ is our Mediator –

“ . . . the covenant he mediates is better . . . ” Heb 8:6

“ . . . therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant . . . ” Heb 9:15.

Why better? – the one has come – who mediates not as a mediator representing two parties apart from them but representing both parties in perfect union with them both – and himself fulfilling the terms and demands of the Covenant.

All that God demands of us is given freely to us in Jesus Christ – our perfect mediator.

22This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

23The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, 24but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. 25Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

26For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

- As our covenant guarantor - Heb 7:22 Christ takes in upon himself to fulfill the terms of the covenant.  
- As our priestly intercessor – “always live to intercede” – the one time sacrifice is always applicable and effective for us. Heb 7:26.

He takes care of guilt (actual guilt) and gives a means of dealing with felt guilt:

12he 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. . . Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. 15Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, Hebrews 9: 12, 14b, 15

See also Hebrews 9: 24-28

Christ deals with our guilt – **actual guilt**.

We deal with **felt guilt** by displaying Christ crucified on our behalf to our conscience. The conscience now satisfied that justice has been served will back away - quieted.

We go through the gate of ‘full assurance’ not works, feelings, etc. We can go through the gate of ‘full assurance’ because our Christ is a faithful mediator, priestly intercessor, guarantor – will safely present us to God.

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22let 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. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:19-23

15For 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. 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 4:15-16

## **Review: The flow of Hebrews 8 to 12**

Hebrews 8 – Christ the perfect Priest and mediator of the New Covenant brings 1. Belonging, 2. New Heart, 3. Eternal Intimacy with God, 4. Eternal mercy and forgiveness.

Hebrews 9 – Christ is the mediator, the reality that was pictured. He brings an end to earthly priesthood as his one time sacrifice of his own blood is perfect and sufficient.

Hebrews 10- Christ's sacrifice and office opens the door of full assurance because he who promised is faithful. Warning to those who deliberately sin yet profess faith (i.e. those with no sign of a New Heart or Love for God). Encouragement to endure for, "we are not those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls".

The context of this faith leading up to Hebrews 11 is in the mediatory work of Christ on our behalf – trust Jesus, he'll always present you perfect and bring you through to the end.

Hebrews 11 – Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Examples of faith from the Old Testament.

Hebrews 12 – Laying aside every weight and sin is connected to fixing our eyes on Christ, and all he is to us in the New Covenant, founder (starter) and perfecter (completer) of our faith who endured for the joy that was set before him.

Conclusion: 1Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. Heb 12:1-3

#### 4. New Covenant Power to live the Christian life is by faith (trust) - realised through:

- Maintaining an awareness of the need for our mediator. (Don't minimise sin or the gospel – we need a mediator and God provides one. ).
- Recognising that Christ has taken it upon himself to keep the covenant terms on our behalf and God's behalf. Under the New Covenant Christ is a faithful mediator, priestly intercessor, guarantor.
- Daily trusting Christ as our mediator to deliver the gospel promises, to keep the covenant for us.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1). Therefore, to live by faith, is to continually be influenced towards holiness by embracing the gospel promises of His sweet abiding presence, continual abundant love, guaranteed eternal comfort, and everlasting joyous fellowship with Christ, all given to us freely

Therefore, **the manner** of achieving true holiness is, from first to last, **by faith**. A resting, trusting, God-ward, Christ-treasuring, Spirit-fueled faith expressed throughout scripture in terms such as "Christ lives in me . . . I live by faith" (Gal 2:20, Heb 10:38), "walking by faith" (2 Cor 5:7); "faith working by love"(Gal 5:6), "overcoming the world by faith" (1 John 5:4); "quenching the fiery darts . . . by the shield of faith", "walking, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith" Col 2:6,7), "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 13:13), "being strong in the Lord, and the power of His might" (Eph 6:10).

- Displaying Christ to our consciences to ease the burden of guilt.

Note Hebrews 10: 19-23 – we go through the door of full assurance.

Christ in the Conscience – speaks peace – we can now be drawn by grace. "Jesus solves my guilt problem". Hebrews 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works . . .".

15For 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. 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 4:15-16

“Wherefore, whenever thou who believest in Jesus, dost hear the law in its thundering and lightning fits, as if it would burn up heaven and earth, then say thou, I am freed from this law, these thunderings have nothing to do with my soul; nay, even this law, while it thus thunders and roars, it doth both allow and approve of my righteousness. . . . when this law with its thundering threatenings doth attempt to lay hold on thy conscience, shut it out with a promise of grace; cry, The inn is taken up already; the Lord Jesus is here entertained, and here is no room for the law. Indeed, if it will be content with being my informer, and so lovingly leave off to judge me, I will be content, it shall be in my sight, I will also delight therein; but otherwise, I being now made upright without it, . . . I may not, will not, cannot dare not make it my Saviour and judge, nor suffer it to set up its government in my conscience; for by so doing, I fall from grace, and Christ Jesus doth profit me nothing.” (Bunyan, Law & the Christian).

- To exhibit boldness in spite of an ‘evil or weak conscience’ – walking right into the presence of God in spite of sin (because of our mediator). Train our weak consciences.
- Avoid ‘Old Covenant’ bondage of trying to present ourselves acceptable before God. It’s a gift!  
End – quote Murray p 17.

## Conclusion

Bunyan analogy – house swept clean, Pilgrims Progress, p 98-99.

18For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest  
19and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be  
spoken to them. 20For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the  
mountain, it shall be stoned." 21Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear."  
22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to  
innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven,  
and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24and to Jesus, the mediator of  
a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.  
Hebrews 12:18-24

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“For the law was given through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” – John 1:16.