



Sunday, March 17, 2013

The High Priest

Speaker: Joe Boot **Scripture:** Hebrews 5:1-5; Leviticus 9

Sermon Notes:

1. As we mature in the Christian faith, we become more aware of our sin and our need of Christ's atonement.
2. Our old man continues to make war on the new one.
3. The atonement is not a propositional doctrine that we simply affirm and move on. Rather, it is a reality that characterizes every aspect of the Christian life.
4. In a world locked up by guilt, real and imagined, Christ's blood atonement is difficult to accept and yet urgently needed.
5. We have transferred the notion of Christ as sin bearer, placing collective guilt upon groups of people termed 'oppressors.'
6. However, it is only in the priesthood and atonement of Christ that we find an antidote to the guilt we face.
7. There is no aspect of our beings, mind, thoughts, actions and motives which is not tainted by sin.
8. The gospel makes no sense apart from the doctrine that human beings are fallen and face God's just judgment.
9. We are generally aware of our guilt and of the justice of God which requires the death penalty against our sin.
10. The sacrificial system provided substitutes for the sinner in the form of clean, unblemished animals which pointed to Christ.
11. The specific, detailed priestly work in Leviticus was both serious and costly. Atonement always requires a price (2 Sam. 24:24).
12. In the contemporary church, mockery of the sacrificial system is common. But sin is an ugly fact and there is no approach to God without atonement.
13. There is no aspect of our lives which does not belong to God. God claims total jurisdiction and He must reign in our lives.
14. The Levitical priest would make atonement for his own sins, then the sins of the people.
15. The efficacy of the atonement did not depend on the quality of the performance, but it all pointed by faith to Christ's sacrifice.
16. Christ, truly incarnate as a man, has compassion upon us.
17. He is patient with us because He is the Lord.
18. We are aware of our sin as the law of God is preached. As we are aware of our sin, we are faced with our need of Christ.
19. There is no understanding of grace if we do not know the Law of God. If sin is not exposed, man will not know his guilt and need of atonement. Apart from embracing Christ's atonement in the gospel, there is no salvation and no freedom.
20. Jesus both expounded the Law of God, and obeyed it perfectly.
21. Jesus was anointed the royal Saviour-King (Ps. 2; Matt. 3:17; Lk. 9:35). Without the atonement there is no kingdom of God.
22. The priesthood of Aaron is obsolete; to return to the old priesthood would be apostasy, because Jesus removed the separation, providing access to God as our perfect High Priest.
23. Spirituality is irrelevant if Christ's reign is only in our souls; but Christ's atonement sets loose the bonds of sin everywhere.
24. Our culture's concepts of atonement are both masochistic and sadistic: either we try to bear guilt ourselves or we place guilt upon other groups of people and punish them. By lawlessly punishing the 'guilty' party, guilt is only increased.
25. There is no class of people that is immune to sin.
26. People know they are guilty; they will either lay their guilt on Christ or someone else (cf. Ps. 51:3-5).
27. We cannot evaluate sin humanistic-ly by comparison to other men; we are all individually guilty before God.
28. False atonement leads to misery and lawless vengeance; true atonement in Christ brings freedom, restoration, and peace.

Application Questions:

1. What was the significance of the sacrificial system? What lessons does it offer to us?
2. What are some of the challenges in explaining the categories of the gospel to a man-centered culture?
3. How can failing to declare God's law and justice actually keep people out of the kingdom of God?
4. How is the atonement central to the kingdom of God?
5. What false concepts of atonement are common in our culture?