IT DOESN’T GET ANY BETTER

**DATE: 5/27/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 13:10-25**

**INTRODUCTION**

We have all used, or heard the phrase …

*“It doesn’t get any better than this”*

So as we bring the Book of Hebrews to a close

I’d like to ditto that

I hope this Book has been as much a blessing to you as it has been to me

The Book of Hebrews is a Book of something Better

And that Something Better is the Lord Jesus Christ

Paul has showed us how Jesus is …

-- Better than the Angels

-- Better than Moses

-- Better than Joshua

-- Better than Aaron

-- That we have a Better Covenant

-- A Better Tabernacle

-- A Better Sacrifice

-- A Better Atonement

-- A Better Privilege

-- A Better Company

And here in Chapter 13 …

-- A Better Way

Jesus is not only the Better Way

He is the Only Way

**John 14:6 –** ***“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”***

So as Paul brings this Letter to a close he emphasizes the truth that what we have as New Testament believers is far better that that of the old covenant

He contrasts the old with the new and shows one last time that the new is not only Better, but Superior

Let’s read **vs. 10-25** together and then pray

I’d like to think on this thought …

***“It Doesn’t Get any Better”***

**Read vs. 10-25**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. A BETTER “SYSTEM” – v.10**

The Jews argued that Christians had no altar, no temple, no sacrifice, and no priest

Paul refuted the Jew's claim that Christians had no altar

He explicitly proclaimed -

**A. v. 10a - *“We have an altar,”***

The believer's altar is the Cross of Calvary

The Cross is the altar upon which God sacrificed His Son for the sins of the world

What Jesus did in His sacrifice at Calvary paved the way for ***“whosoever will”*** … to be saved

Paul further said …

**B. v. 10b – *“whereof they have no right to eat which***

***serve the tabernacle”***

The Jews under the Old Covenant were allowed to eat of the Peace Offering they made to God

**Leviticus 7:15-18**

New Testament believers, however, feed & drink spiritually on Jesus Christ who is our Peace Offering

Jesus expounded this fact in His sermon on the Bread of Life

**John 6:51-58**

And the Living Water

**John 4**

Spiritual sustenance comes from Christ

The Jews who insisted on remaining under the law had ***“no right to eat”*** of Christ

Since their heart was still with the Old Covenant

But the Saved have …

**A BETTER “SYSTEM”**

**II. A BETTER “SACRIFICE” – vs.11 -14**

**Hebrews 10:4 – *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”***

The blood sacrifices were a *substitute*

They *represented* what was to come, the real deal

**A. The ‘Principle’ - v.11, 12**

**1.** The ‘Fact’ of Calvary

**v. 11 - *“For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for***

***…sin, are burned without the camp”***

God commanded Israel to offer up sacrifices

There were many types of these Offerings

The Peace Offering and the Sin Offering were just some of them

While the Peace offering could be eaten by both the Priest and the offerer

That was not the case with the Sin offering

**Leviticus 6:30 *– “And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the***

***congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire”***

The blood of the Sin Offering was consecrated solely to God for the purpose of atonement and then the carcass was burned without the camp

**Leviticus 4:21 *– “And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is a sin offering for the congregation”***

The Sin Offering was made on the Day of Atonement and was a reminder of the seriousness of sin and the severity of the God's Judgment on sin

There was nothing pretty about the Old Testament sacrificial system

The High Priest was given specific instructions about the death and offering of the sacrifice and taking the blood into the Most Holy place of the Tabernacle

**Leviticus 16:11-14**

The Type of the Sin Offering was perfectly fulfilled in Christ

**Hebrews 9:22-26 …**

The ‘Fact’ of Calvary

**2.** The ‘Fruit’ of Calvary

**v. 12 - *“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate”***

Our Lord perfectly fulfilled the Old Testament types in His sacrifice for the sins of the world

He suffered *“****without the gate”***

(a reference to Jerusalem and the Temple)

**v.11** says *“****without the camp”***

(a reference to the Wilderness and the Tabernacle)

Jesus was crucified outside of the City of Jerusalem, just outside the city gate

(I was there; I can attest that Golgotha is just outside the gate)

Christ's death fulfilled the Old Testament type

**Leviticus 16:27-30**

**Hebrews 9:12-14 …**

**B. The ‘Place’ - v.13**

***“Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach”***

Think about it!

Without the Camp / Gate!

That was the place where …

-- Criminals were condemned and executed

**Leviticus 24:14 –** ***“Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him”***

-- Lepers were banished and forced to reside

**Leviticus 13:46 – *“All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be”***

-- The filth of the city was removed

**Deuteronomy 23:12-14 – *“Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth***

***… abroad:” “And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be, when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee:” “For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee”***

That was the place where Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God suffered and died for you and me!

Let’s go, ***“bearing His reproach”*** (shame)

Paul is telling these Jewish believers that true salvation is outside of the old covenant

And those that find it; most bear His Reproach

Criticism, censure, reprimand, blame, accusation, reproof, scolding, rebuke, villainized

Those who come to Christ will bear reproach and suffer for their stand

**II Timothy 3:12 *– “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”***

**C. The ‘Prospect’ - v.14**

***“For here (in this life) have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come”***

The Jews had Jerusalem, but we have the New Jerusalem

**Phil. 3:20 – *“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:”***

The word ***“conversation”*** means *citizenship* or *community*

This world is not our home

We are citizens of a coming city

Our citizenship is in heaven

As Jesus was coming to the end of His earthly ministry

He promised his disciples in **John 14:2, 3 -**

***“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”***

Man was not involved in drawing up the blueprints for this city

No human workers are employed in its construction

The New Jerusalem is the city …

*“…****whose builder and maker is God”*****– Heb.11:10**

Jesus is there now preparing the city of God for His people

**A BETTER “SYSTEM”**

**A BETTER “SACRIFICE”**

**III. A BETTER “SERVICE”**

Our Service is rendered in our Worship & our Work

**A. Spiritual ‘Worship: Praising’ God – v.15**

***“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name”***

Because we have an altar (the cross), and we have a High Priest (Jesus Christ)

We are to offer sacrifices as well

We don't offer the bloody offerings of the old covenant,

But ***“the sacrifice of praise to God continually…the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name”***

Surely, our lips should sound forth the praises of God

**Psalm 29:2 – *“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness”***

**Psalm 96:4 *–“For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised…”***

**Psalm 150:2 – *“Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness”***

**Psalm 150:6 – *“Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD”***

There is no greater nor more important activity for man to be involved in than the worship of God

Worship is the outward expression of an inward affection

**Psalm 7:17 – *“I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high”***

**Spiritual ‘Worship: Praising’ God**

**B. Spiritual ‘Works: Pleasing’ God – v.16**

***“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased”***

Not only do we serve in word, (Worship)

But also in deed (Works)

New Testament Christianity doesn't sit by idly and let the world go to Hell

It may take sacrifice, but such is the reality of serving Christ

There must also be good works which benefit others

Helping others should be a way of life for the child of God

**I John 3:18 – *“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”***

**A BETTER “SYSTEM”**

**A BETTER “SACRIFICE”**

**A BETTER “SERVICE”**

And finally …

**IV. A BETTER “SHEPHERD” – vs. 18-21**

Paul transitions to his closing in **vs. 18 & 19**

(We’ve already looked at **v.17** in an earlier message)

***“Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly” “But I beseech you the rather to do this (pray), that I may be restored to you the sooner”***

Paul then begins his Benediction with …

(Benediction - *a prayer asking for God's blessing, usually at the end of a service)*

**A. The Glory of His ‘Peace’ - v.20a**

He begins his closing with …

***“Now the God of peace...”***

Our God is the God of peace

Peace is something that nearly everyone wants, but few have

However, the child of God can experience true peace

**Quote:** Robert Gromacki said: *“This peace is a legacy of Christ, totally foreign to the experience of the world. It is that inner calmness of emotions and thoughts which rests on the assurance that God is too good to be unkind and too wise to make mistakes”*

Jesus said in **John 14:27 – *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”***

Because our peace is not affected by circumstances we can have peace in every situation

Because of Christ, we can experience the …

**Phil. 4:7 – *“… peace of God, which passeth all understanding”***

Living in His presence we have the Peace of God

Being saved we are at Peace with God

**Romans 5:1 *– “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”***

**The Glory of His ‘Peace’**

**B. The Glory of His ‘Person’ - v.20b**

***“… brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus”***

No other sacrifice ever was raised from the dead

All of the sacrifices of the Old Testament were temporary

But what Christ has done, is final

Christ's sacrifice was complete and eternal

**Hebrews 10:14 – *“For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”***

**The Glory of His ‘Peace’, ‘Person’** and …

**C. The Glory of His ‘Protection’ - v.20c**

***“… that Great Shepherd of the sheep…”***

Our Lord is called the Great Shepherd of the sheep

As our Great Shepherd He is our Protector (**Ps. 23**)

**John 10:11b -** He ***“giveth His life for the sheep”***

This metaphor of the shepherd and his sheep is often used concerning the relationship between God and His people

**Psalm 95:7 –** *“****For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand”***

**Psalm 100:3 – *“We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture”***

Moses saw Israel as a flock

**Numbers 27:17 – *“Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd”***

So did Jeremiah

**Jeremiah 13:17 –** ***“But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive”***

The Prophet Zechariah as well

**Zechariah 10:3 *– “Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah …”***

Jesus spoke of ***“the lost sheep of the house of Israel”***

in **Matthew 10:6 and 15:24**

Jesus called Himself *“****the Good Shepherd”*** in **John 10:11, 14**

Peter called Him the ***“chief shepherd”*** in **I Peter 5:4**

The designation of shepherd reminds us of Christ's tenderness, compassion and care of His children

Jesus is our Great **‘Protector’**

**The Glory of His ‘Peace’, ‘Person’** and …

**D. The Glory of His ‘Power’ - v.20d**

*“…* ***through the blood of the everlasting covenant,”***

There is still Power in the Blood

The Blood of the cross of Christ is the basis by which the God of peace can remove the enmity and look favorably upon the sinner

There is no real peace apart from the Blood of the cross

**Colossians 1:20 –** *“****And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven”***

Jesus shed His blood as the sinner's Substitute

He forfeited His life as the payment for our sin

In doing so He satisfied the Righteous demands of the law by dying in our stead and made peace between man and God

**Colossians 1:14 – *“In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins:”***

**The Glory of His ‘Peace’, ‘Person’, ‘Protection’, ‘Power’**

**E. The Glory of His ‘Perfection’ - v.21**

Not only is He perfect, but we are made perfect by Him

***“Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”***

Paul calls upon the God of peace to make His people…

*“****perfect in every good work to do His will”***

The word ***“perfect”*** means *thoroughly, to be complete*

It carries the idea of being *prepared*

The idea here is that God will thoroughly prepare His people for His service

**CONCLUSION – vs.22-25**

**v. 22- *“And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words”***

The word ***“beseech”*** carries the idea of *being exhorted*

The word ***“suffer”*** means *to allow, put up with, to endure*

Much of what Paul has said in this epistle has not been easy *to put up with*

He has said some hard things

The book of Hebrews has been Candid, Confrontational, Challenging, Complex and Convicting

Now Paul is appealing to his readers to receive and consider what he has written

**v. 23 – *“Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you”***

The phrase ***“set at liberty”*** means to *release or let go*

It seems likely that Timothy had been arrested and imprisoned

Obviously he had been released and was planning to visit these Hebrew Christians

**vs. 24, 25 – *“Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints” “They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen”***

Paul greets the Pastors and the Church in general and as is common for Pauline letters, he closes with an appeal for God's grace to his readers

So with that I bring this wonderful Book to a close

Even though we are finished with this Book

I hope its principles will continue to be at work in your hearts