

LG | LeaderGuide

[Primary Text: Hebrews 9-10]

PRAY

Pause. Acknowledge that you are about to open God's word.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate His word.

WARM-UP

Prepare our minds to receive God's word.

- When reflecting on the message this past Sunday, what most resonated with you?

- Last week, we talked about the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Jesus. Can someone give us a brief summary of what we learned?

A priest is someone who mediates between God and man. In the Levitical priesthood, these were men born in the line of Aaron, part of the tribe of Levi. They offered sacrifices to God in order to atone for the sins of the people. The priesthood of Jesus, in the line of Melchizedek, is a better priesthood because Jesus has offered a once and for all sacrifice of sins. His priesthood is perfect and eternal, giving us eternal access to God through his intercession.

ILLUMINATE

Open your Bibles to the primary text. If you do not have a Bible, your leader can provide one.

- Let's read together our primary text. What major themes do you see here?

Christ has secured an eternal redemption, Christ's once and for all sacrifice, His sacrifice gives us confidence to draw near.

- Hebrews 9 discusses the blood of sacrifices. What is the symbolism/purpose of blood in sacrifices? How is the bloodshed of Jesus different from the bloodshed of bulls and goats?

Blood symbolizes purification and cleansing (v.13-14), while also serving as a reminder of sin. Without blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. The sacrifices under the Old Covenant were meant to cleanse and purify the flesh, but they could not purify the conscience. Jesus' sacrifice on the other hand, is better because it was offered through the eternal Spirit, cleansing the conscience and providing a once and for all sacrifice for sins.

- What does it mean that the Old Covenant, specifically the sacrificial system, was a shadow of the good things to come? Where did the Israelites miss the mark in understanding this?

The Old Covenant was a sign of what was to come. It paved the way and set the stage for the inauguration of the New Covenant at the death of Jesus, where sacrifices would no longer have to be made. The Israelites had a tendency to think of animal sacrifices as more than they were, often making it an idol. Because of this, the author of Hebrews is pleading with them to understand the true nature and intent of the Old Covenant; to set the stage for the eternal sacrifice, Jesus, who would put an end to all sacrifices.

- What was the danger in the Israelites continuing to offer sacrifices? How are we tempted to “offer sacrifices” today? (Hebrews 9:13-14)

To offer sacrifices after the sacrifice has been made is adding to the gospel. We are justified by grace through faith, and to offer sacrifices is to believe that there is still something we need to do in order to be in right standing with God. We may not offer the blood of bulls and goats today, but we can still get caught up in dead works that we think (maybe subconsciously) will make us right with God. We’ve been purified, so we seek to put off dead works and serve the living God.

- What are the three “let us” exhortations given in Hebrews 10:19-25 in response to Jesus’ sacrifice? Define them. Why is it important that we persevere in them?

1) **Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.** The author is urging us to draw near to God, not fall away from him! Our consciences have been cleansed and we can approach the Lord with confidence, in full assurance of faith. 2) **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope.** We should cling to the truth and hope we have in Christ. 3) **Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.** The body of Christ is meant to challenge, build up, and encourage one another. We stay committed to community because we need one another in our walks with God.

- **Read 1 Corinthians 13:12 and Revelation 21:1-4.** How is the New Covenant also a “shadow” of the things to come?

Though we have unrestricted access to the throne of God through the mediation of Jesus as our intercessor, there awaits a day in which we will see him face to face, and we will dwell with God forever. We will have no need to draw near to him or hold fast to our hope. We will always be with him and our hope will become joy, as we will have what we have hoped for.

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. What does tonight’s conversation lead you to pray for?