

16. The bridge Builder

March 29, 2015

I have a great deal for you this morning – two sermons for one service. So we are going to finish today's service somewhere around 3:30 to 4ish. Y'all are devout students of the Bible and I know that you don't have one bit of a problem with that, right?

Last Sunday I mentioned that tithing is still a commandment from the Lord, not a suggestion. One of our elders, Paul Ostrowski, yes, that Pollack, had a problem with my comment. Not because he was convicted by the comment, but it was unbiblical. He reminded me the two verses from 2 Corinthians 9:

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

If tithing was a commandment, people can take it grudgingly or feel obligated. I apologize for saying an unbiblical thing. I had no other intention than you guys trusting the Lord in everything including your wallet. Please forgive me.

Then, some of you who felt guilty after last Sunday's teaching are thinking, "Yippee, I don't have to give anything to God. I am off the hook." Not so fast, buckaroo. Let's go back and read v6 and 7 again.

Did you notice two things?

1) You reap what you sow.

If you give a little, you get a little blessing from the Lord by your own choice. By the way, this is not amount of money you give, rather proportion of what you give from what you earn as we learned last Sunday.

Some of you may think, "Hey, preacher, I don't give anything to God, but He still blesses me with a lot of money, good health, and everything is going my way."

Luke 12:48b For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

When you see the Lord later in heaven, He will ask you, "What did you do with all the blessings I gave? Did you use them for My glory?" Oh, I don't want to be you at that moment.

2) Give as you purpose in your heart.

If you are only thinking about "Heavenly-Return-On-Investment," you have a wrong purpose in your heart. But if you are happily investing what the Lord gave you for the glory of God and the expansion of His kingdom, you have the right mindset.

Instead of a commandment for us to trust the Lord with money, He allows us to choose what to do with it. You know, I don't know about you, I feel more responsibility in that way, wouldn't you agree? Like I said, giving 10% of my income to the Lord is a good starting point. Besides, God's blessing upon the nine-tenths, when we tithe, helps it to go farther than ten-tenths without His blessing.

Ok, that was the first sermon. Now, let's go to today's study in Hebrews 7.

There are some people who are just good at building a bridge between the two groups of hurting people. They tend to see the points of each side and lead them to mend their relationship by helping them to see the other side more than themselves.

What if one side did absolutely nothing wrong, but the big chasm started with the other side's total fault. Something radical must happen to mend that relationship. But the problem is that the one who caused the chasm doesn't have the means or ways to fix the situation, let alone mend the relationship. But what if the offended one provides the way to mend the relationship and build a bridge for the other side people to come across, wouldn't it be great? That's exactly what Jesus did for us and that's what we are going to learn this morning.

A. A DIFFERENT AND BETTER HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 7:20-25 And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath 21 (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek'"), 22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. 23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

I like the way the author of this Book wrote here to explain the two different orders of priest systems in comparison – the OT Levitical Priesthood vs. Jesus:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Levitical Priesthood gave entitlement to any male who was born in the tribe of Levi and fit for the physical and ceremonial requirements as a priest according to the OT Laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' priesthood was established with an oath from God Himself.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the OT, a guarantee was lacking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus Himself became a guarantee in the NT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry of human priests was temporary because of their death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry of Jesus' priesthood continues permanently and He always intercedes for us.

There are two definitions that we must understand before we move on:

1) **'Relent' in v21** – This is a very inadequate word for a proper translation. Some Bible versions even use 'repent' within the context of God repenting. God can not repent, because He can not sin; nor does He relent, because He knows how the entire things are going to pan out. It is the shortcoming of our English words.

Let me put this in our terms. Let's say you and I are gonna go to a store which is located on the north side while we are traveling the south side of the eastbound road. To get to the store, I have to make a U-turn at one of those medians. Does it mean that I change my mind or I repent? No, I knew that I had to make a U-turn from the beginning. Our God is an Omniscient God who knows everything from the beginning to the end, so there is no repentance or relent for Him. It is one of those words that is lost in translation.

2) **'Surety' in v22** – 'Surety' means "one who guarantees that the terms of an agreement will be carried out." Probably the best illustration we can find today is a

bondman who posts bail for someone under indictment and guarantees that the indicted person will appear in court and stand trial.

As our Chief High Priest, Jesus personally guarantees that the terms of God's New Covenant will be fulfilled completely through His grace and mercy, not with the sacrifice of animals anymore. Also He guarantees that all of God's promises will be fulfilled as well.

You see, the OT Laws show us that we can not meet God's terms through our obedience, because His standard that requires perfection. But our perfect God, Jesus could do it and He was the One who built a bridge for us to cross.

B. MORE REASONS OF JESUS' SUPERIORITY

Hebrews 7:26-28 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

The author of this Book lists three more reasons of Jesus' superiority to the Levitical priesthood. Jesus is superior because He is sinless; His own sacrifice was offered once for all; and He is the Perfect Son of God.

Only through our Lord Jesus can we reach God and know God. There is a heaven and hell of difference between "knowing God" and "knowing about God." Anyone can "know about God" by reading some of theological articles, but you can only know God through Jesus Christ as one's Savior and Lord.

Since Adam's sin, man is separated from the Lord and is under judgment because of our sins. We were separated from Him by what seems to be an unbridgeable chasm of sin. – *John 3:17-21; Romans 3:23*

For many times during His earthly ministry, Jesus tells us about eternal life and shows us a divine solution to this separation. – *John 5:24*

But men in general try to build their own bridges with religion and self-righteousness which lead to self-destruction. – *John 5:39, John 1:13*

Jesus is the bridge Builder. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one goes to the Father except through Him. He is the Perfect Lamb of God; He died for our sins so that we may have eternal life. He rose from the dead. He is our God. – *John 14:6; Romans 5:8; John 11:25*

God's love for humans is unconditional. And fortunately for us, Jesus Christ loves, preserves, and intercedes for us before the Father. But there are things we can do that will get us out of His love. Just because we are saved by the grace and mercy of God through Jesus Christ, it doesn't mean that we can live however we please. Since we are born-again Christians, we ought to live the way that pleases the Lord, not us.

We are loved by God, and He will protect His children. For example, if you went to Disneyland with your children or grandchildren, you wouldn't just forget about them.

Instead, you would keep your eye on them, because you want to protect what is dear to you.

In the same way, we are preserved, we are protected, and we are being kept by the power of God. But we need to keep ourselves in a place where He can actively show His love to us. We need to keep ourselves in the love of God.

A.W. Tozer used to remind us, "Every man must choose his world." True believers have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come; this should mean we have no interest in or appetite for the present sinful world system. Abraham chose the right world and became the father of the faithful. His nephew Lot chose the wrong world and became the father of the enemies of God's people, Moabites and Ammonites. Abraham became the friend of God, but Lot became the friend of the world and lost everything. Lot was saved, yet so as by fire and lost his reward. I hope and pray that none of us be like Lot.

The truth about the Christian – the one who is in Christ, who is adopted into God's family and made accepted in the Beloved – is that God the Father loves him or her as He loves His own Son. Let that sink in. It's an "Aha!" moment, because that is indeed an amazing thought! And a good way to start the week, don't you think?

So have a blessed day, you who have trusted in Christ. Know that you are His dearly beloved children of God.

C. APPLICATIONS

1) Our God loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for our sins. As a continuing love for us, once we become His adopted children, He makes us be more like His Son Jesus, less like ourselves. Let it happen, don't resist Him.

2) The greatest point of God's love for us is not worthiness of us, but His determination to love us, not what He can get out of us, rather what He can give to us.