



Message Transcript

Christ's Superior Priesthood

Jeff Schwarzentraub

Where do you go to get the spiritual help that you need? Have you ever asked that question? Sometimes we think, well, I really don't need spiritual help. And then things come along like there's a death in the family and maybe we haven't been to church for a while and we're like, who's going to officiate that and where are we going to go? Or perhaps it's an exciting time in our life and we get engaged and we think who's going to officiate our wedding, or maybe just more reality on a day by day basis of I'm dealing with some struggles, I'm dealing with things and what does God think about all this and who is it that I can talk to? At some point in our life, we all struggle with where we go to find spiritual help. For the Jews in the first century, they were accustomed to going to their priest, specifically the ones in their local synagogue.

And they understood very well the nature of who God was and the nature of their sin. And they realized that they needed to go to a priest so that they could have their sin atoned for and their sin forgiven. And so when they ran into trouble and they sinned, they realized they had to go get some pigeons or a different animal and go present it to the priest and they would have to sacrifice that animal. And the sacrifice of that animal would cover over the guilt of their sin. And this went on time and time again. But for many of these Jews in the first century, they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Messiah. Jesus Christ became their Lord and savior. And now what we have in this group of people is these former Jews have now become Christians and they're thinking this is really difficult to be a Christian.

I mean, how do I do this? Because now I'm experiencing persecution I didn't experience before and I'd like to turn back. But you know what, I can't go back to the

synagogue, it's as if they've revoked my library card. They told me because I'm following Christ I can't come back and now I have need, because I need my sin forgiven and I don't know where to go to get in community, and this is just getting too hard. Is there anything you can do to help? And the author of Hebrews wants to say, "Oh yeah, there's something that you need to know. There's something you need to know about Jesus Christ, who is the superior high priest. And he's so superior you don't need to look for another one on this earth because Jesus Christ is the ruler and priest over all."

As we've been studying the book of Hebrews, we've been taking a look at how Jesus is the greatest. He's greater than the angels, he's greater than Moses, he's the great high priest. We've taken a look at how he's greater than anyone who has ever lived because he is the most high God. Amen. And right here, as he's writing to these Jews who are asking the question, Hey, where do I get the spiritual help I need? He's going to answer in chapter seven and following talking about how Jesus is the greatest high priest of all time. And so I'm going to encourage you to open your Bibles up to Hebrews chapter seven. We're going to read through the first 19 verses and then take a look at some of the attributes and characteristics that make Jesus Christ the greatest high priest and how that applies to you. Hear the word of the Lord.

He says, "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the Kings and blessed him to whom also Abraham apportioned a 10th part of all the spoils was first of all by the translation

of his name king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like the son of God. He remains a priest perpetually. Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch gave a 10th of his choices spoils. And those indeed of the sons of Levi who received the priest's office have commandment in the law to collect a 10th from the people, that is from their brethren although these are descended from Abraham.

But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a 10th from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. But without any dispute, the lesser is blessed by the greater. In this case, mortal men receive tithes, but in that case, one receives them of whom it is witness that he lives on. And so to speak through Abraham, even Levi who received tithes paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. Now, if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood for on the basis for it, the people received the law, what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek and not being designated according to the order of Aaron. For when the priesthood has changed of necessity, there takes place a change of law also for the one concerning whom these things are spoken, belongs to another tribe from which no one has officiated at the altar.

For it is evident that our Lord was a descendant from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. And this is clearer still, if another priest arises to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become such not on the

basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life for it is attested of him, you are a priest forever. According to the order of Melchizedek. For on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness for the law made nothing perfect. And on the other hand, there is a bringing in of a better hope through which we draw near to God." Now, I don't know about you, but as I've studied this passage for weeks, and as some of you are hearing it today, you may be thinking to yourself who cares? What's the big deal of this Melchizedek thing and high priesthoods and all of that.

I mean, get to the point. What does this mean for me? And that's what we're going to take a look at today. Why Christ priesthood is superior and what it means that he is a superior high priest. Now you'll notice at the end of chapter six we read that, this hope we have as an anchor of the soul. Hope, both sure and steadfast in one, which enters within the veil where Jesus is entered as a forerunner for us having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Now, as we've been studying the book of Hebrews, you'll remember that as he begins to talk about this order of Melchizedek, he stops in chapter five and verse 10 to pause, to talk about apostates. He talks about the fact that you need to understand the most important concept that's being proclaimed through this book and throughout the entire Bible is that Jesus Christ came to lay down his life on a cross for all of your sin.

And that Jesus Christ is God in flesh. And it's not about getting religion, it's about having a personal relationship with the Lordship of Christ. It's about turning from your sin and turning to Christ. And he goes on to warn us after talking about the order of

Melchizedek, Hey, don't come close to just knowing facts about Jesus. Don't just know that it's true without responding to Jesus. Respond to him as your own personal Lord and savior. Know that he died for you, know that he took all of your sins away. Turn from your sins and turned to Christ and find healing today because how unfortunate it would be for those who are at the precipice of giving their life to Christ and then falling away, never, ever having the opportunity again, of trusting their Lord. That's why he says today if you hear his voice, don't harden your hearts, give your life to Christ.

If you're here today, the greatest news I can ever tell you is that Jesus Christ is God's one and only son who died on a cross for your sins, and he rose from the dead so that in him and in him alone, you can have life with God. That's what he's talking about. And he tells us at the end of chapter six, that when Jesus Christ died, the veil of the temple separating the holy of holys from the rest of the temple was torn from top to bottom and indicating that the very place where the presence of God dwelled, where the high priests could only go once a year was now open because Jesus is the great high priest who has entered through that veil and is now anchored in heaven. Meaning Jesus Christ is already seated in heaven, which means he holds all the promises of heaven for those of us that are going there.

And one day, guess what? He'll be there to welcome all of us who trust in him. He's our anchor, he's our hope. He's sure, he's true. Now we get into this understanding of okay, let's talk about his priesthood because for a Jew who was used to going to the temple, who knew the routine to get their sins forgiven now was not invited back. They couldn't go to the synagogue, they couldn't go to the place to have

their sins forgiven. What in the world do we do? And the author of Hebrew is telling us don't you dare worry because Jesus Christ is greater than any high priest you could ever go to. Amen. And he begins to tell us some reasons why. We're going to take a look at four of them today. And the first is this, that Christ superior priesthood is marked by his astounding credentials.

It's marked by his astounding credentials. Now, take a look at this in Hebrew chapter seven verse one, "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem priest of the most high God who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of Kings and blessed him." Now, for most of you may not know where this story comes from. It comes from Genesis chapter 14, starting in verse 17. It's only four verses long, and I'll summarize it for you and then we'll just read that little section so you can know what this is about. Because without Hebrew seven and without the book of Hebrews talking about the order of Melchizedek, we would probably never even give this another thought because the story is so short. But what you'll remember is there were wars that were going on at the time and there was a king.

This King's name was Cheddar Leoma. How about that for a name? If you're looking for a biblical name for your son, that's a contender, right? King Cheddar Leoma was his name. And he battled with some other Kings. And what he did was he came and took Sodom and some other cities. And what happened was because Lot was living in Sodom, he got carted away. Lot was Abraham's nephew and Abraham said, we can't let this happen. So Abraham got some of his mighty men together and he got

them together and he went and defeated king Cheddar Leoma and all the other Kings. And as he's returning from the battle with the spoils from the war, this is this little story that's nestled here. Listen to this in Genesis 14. It says, "Then after his return from the defeat of cheddar Leer and the Kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh, that is the Kings valley.

And Melchizedek, king of Salem brought out bread and wine. Now he was a priest of God, most high. He blessed him and said, bless it be Abraham of God most high, possessor of heaven and earth and blessed be God most high who has delivered your enemies into your hand. He gave him a 10th of all." That's the story. So there's this king Melchizedek who goes out to meet Abraham when he comes back. He comes out carrying bread and wine. And as he comes out carrying bread and wine, he then blesses him and Abraham gives him a 10th of his choice. Spoils. That's the entire story. And this author of Hebrews wants to make a huge deal of this story. He wants to let all of the first century Jewish converts know this is a major thing that took place in biblical history, so pay attention.

And we're going to see the astounding credentials of this Melchizedek. Notice in verse two after he blessed him, it says, "To whom also Abraham apportioned a 10th part of the spoils was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace." So whoever this Melchizedek is, here's what I want you to picture. When this Melchizedek came out, what did he bring? He brought bread and he brought wine. Does that remind you of anything? His name Melchizedek translated means king of righteousness. Does that remind you of

anybody? He's also the king of Salem, which is where we get Shalom, which is peace. So he is also the king of peace. So whoever this king is, has come out to meet Abraham.

He comes out to him holding bread and wine. He's known as the king of righteousness. He's known as the king of peace and he comes out to bless Abraham. Let's see what else we know about him. Notice verse three. What else do we know about Melchizedek? Well, he was without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. Remind you of anybody? But made like the son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. That means forever. So whoever this Melchizedek is, we don't know when he was born, we don't know when he died, we don't know anything about his parents. Some people read this and many scholars will say, "What that means is we have no biblical revelation of who he is. We don't know where he came from or where he went." It's really hard for me to say that because there's just too many other details given here. There's just too much said here for who else could he possibly be?

I mean, if he's a Canaanite king, how is he the priest of the most high God? If he's a Canaanite king, why would Abraham tithe 10% to this Canaanite king who serves as God? Why would this Canaanite king be considered greater than Abraham when Abraham is the greatest of all Israel's history, because all the nations of the earth are going to be blessed through him? Who is this king of righteousness? Who is this king of peace? And it's interesting because some people say, well, because look, if you look at verse three, he was made like the son of God. So if he was made, so he

can't be the Christ. But that could also be translated he resembled the son of God.

That could also be translated he was like the son of God. That could also be translated he was likened unto the son of God.

I mean, there's nothing in the text that would say it's not a theophany or Christophany, meaning a visit of the pre incarnate. Jesus Christ. I don't know who else fits this description. Now I'm not going to die on a hill and we're not going to take a vote as to who you think Melchizedek is and divide the church over it, but I am going to say, when I think of someone coming out to bless Abraham who brings bread and wine, who's coming out to give him a blessing, who Abraham tithes to. And this one doesn't have a father. This one doesn't have a mother. This one has no beginning, this one has no end. And this one is always a priest. He's the king of righteousness who brings the king of peace. I don't know who else this could possibly be, but the pre incarnate Jesus Christ.

Can you imagine what that would be like for Abraham who's under covenant, who's going to bring in the nation that through all the other nations of the world, he's going to be blessed. And when he comes back from battle, who's there to meet him but the king of righteousness and the king of peace with bread and wine, which is foreshadowing, what his priesthood is going to be all about as he gives his body and blood one day on a cross. And he says, he remains a priest perpetually. That means forever. That means he's eternal priests in Israel's day served usually from the ages of 25 to 50. When they turned 50, they were done serving as a priest. Or guess what? When they died, they stopped serving as a priest. Do you know why? It's hard to serve

as a priest when you're dead.

But this priest was different because he knows no end, he knows no bounds. He's always been a priest to which I would ask if this is not Jesus, where's the perpetual priesthood of Melchizedek? How come we never hear about it again? How come we never see it again? Personally, think this is a visitation of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the pre incarnate Christ to Abraham as he's coming back from battle. He has incredible credentials. That's who our savior is. They're astounding credentials. I mean, even think about the gospel for a second. John 3:16 says, for God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have, what? Eternal life. From who? The eternal priest, the one who gave his life on a cross so that we could have life in his name. And if we do take the text literal, then this is no mere human without mother or father.

And some of you may say, well, Jesus had a mother and father. He had a earthly father, Joseph, even though he was conceived by the holy spirit, he had an earthly mother, Mary. But prior to that, I mean, he's God of all God, he's always existed. He didn't need a mother and father to come into existence. He's the only begotten son of God. He's without father or mother, he doesn't have genealogy. He's always existed, he always will exist. And if we take this at face value, then the Lord Jesus Christ came to bless Abraham as the king of righteousness. Do we see anywhere else in scripture where Jesus is the king of righteousness? In case you don't know that's exactly how he's coming back. In Revelation chapter 19 and verse 11, we read about him and who

this Jesus is. It says this of him.

"And I saw heaven open to behold a white horse and he who sat on it is called faithful and true. And in righteousness, he judges in wages war." Christ came to bless Abraham as the king of righteousness. Also, he came to bless him as the king of peace. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us, a son is born and to us, his son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name should be called the wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father and the prince of peace." It's Christ. And if he really came, he not only came to bless Abraham as the king of righteousness and the king of peace, but as the mediator between God and man forever. 1st Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ." It means this Jesus Christ has always been the king of righteousness.

Jesus Christ has always been the king of priest, the king of peace. Jesus Christ has always been our great high priest. There's never a time that he didn't exist. And we have this story nestled back in Genesis chapter 14 so that every Jewish convert in the New Testament could be shown in their Hebrew scriptures, do you realize that your great high priest has always been greater? He's always existed and you didn't even know about it. And here it is right in the word of God that's what he was saying. Jesus Christ priesthood is superior because it's marked by astounding credentials, his name, his reputation, and who he is as the eternal priest of God. Now we may not think much about credentials, but if you study through the Old Testament and you have time to read, you'll realize when Israel got back from captivity in Babylon and Ezra was there, what did he do for all the priests?

He was checking all their credentials, making sure that they could service priests. And the one who couldn't show their credentials, that they came from the right line he was like, yeah, we'll just wait. It's too important because the law says, you have to come through this line. Jesus Christ came from a different line. He came from the order and line of Melchizedek, the king of righteousness, the king of peace because of his astounding credentials. Next we see this Christ priesthood is superior not only because of his astounding credentials, but because of his unmatched greatness. His unmatched greatness. There's no one who is like Christ. Notice verse four. Now observe how great this man was to Abraham, the patriarch gave a 10th of the choices spoils.

Abraham comes back. He's never met this guy before that we're aware of. No scripture says that he's met him. And when he meets him, he thinks that this guy is so great. He's going to give him a 10th of everything he has. Not just the 10th of what he has, but a 10th of his best. And oh, by the way, the law had not come to require tithing of Israel at that time. So he's just doing it out of the goodness of his heart. That's what he's doing. Who else is great enough to receive a tithe from Abraham? Who could that possibly be? Could it be Jesus Christ, unmatched greatness? Notice what he says. And those indeed of the sons of Levi who received the priest's office have the commandment in the law to collect attempt from the people, that is from their brethren. Although they are descended from Abraham. But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them, collected a 10th from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. But without any dispute, the lesser is blessed by the greater.

What was he saying? It wasn't even in the law to give a tithe. What's a tithe? You

know what tithe means? 10%, that's a tithe. Many people think that you give a tithe so that you get back. That's not a tithe. A tithe is bringing the Lord your best upfront because you're already living in his abundance. It's a desire that springs forth from your heart because you want to give God your best. When Abraham comes back and he sees Melchizedek, he's so excited to offer to the Lord that he gives the choicest spoils the best, not because he wants to get more, but because he's been so incredibly blessed by God he wants to be, what? Generous. That's what tithing is. Tithing means that you're bringing your first fruits to the Lord. Tithing means that you're going to be generous with the things of God. Even before the law was in place, tithing existed. Now, a lot of people talk about, I don't like it when the pastor talks about tithing, I don't like it when the pastor talks about money. So let's talk about it some more.

I mean, all throughout the Old Testament we see that this is something that God wants. He doesn't want our scraps, he wants our best. He doesn't want it to be a have to, he doesn't want us to give because we're supposed to, he wants us to give because out of our hearts we're thanking God for all that we have and all that we are. It's the reason why the Bible both Old and New Testament talks so much about money. Do you know why? Because our heart gets attached to it unlike any other thing. For where your treasure is there where your heart be also. It's as if today I had a pile of \$5 million right here, and I had a pile of \$5 million of monopoly money right here. This money's legit, this money's monopoly money. And I said, "Hey, take whatever you need."

I would stand back over here because there's something in your heart that'd be like, if that was really there and I could take, I would take that. Something feels different about monopoly. That's why I talk to people that like to gamble. I just gamble for the fun of it. Then gamble with monopoly money. See if you enjoy it just as much. Because most people don't. Most people are discontent when they gamble and they're hoping they get some more. We're hoping we get a little better, right? Tithing is a way of starting with God by saying, God, you get my best and you get it first. That's what tithing is. It's giving God the first fruits of all that you have. And what Israel got in trouble for doing is even when they did it, they didn't give God their best. They either stopped tithing or when they did tithe, instead of giving of their best animals and their best grain and their best fruits, what would they do?

Well, I'm going to eat all that, I'm going to take these animals, because these are the best and God, I got a little left over. Here's your 10th. God, here's your 5%. In the book of Malachi, the last book in the Old Testament, we see why Israel has a problem. They're calling out to God, because God's not answering their prayers. They're pleading with God to help but God doesn't seem to be answering. And God tells them, here's why I'm not answering. Malachi three verse eight says, "Will a man rob God, yet you are robbing me. But you say, how have we robbed you?" What have we robbed you of? God says, "In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse for you are robbing me the whole nation of you." Then he says this, "Bring the whole tide into the storehouse so that there may be food in my name and test me now in this says the Lord of host. If I will not open for you, the windows of heaven and pour out for you a

blessing until it overflows."

What's he saying? This is the triple dog dare of the Old Testament. If you come to God and bring your best to him first, you will always have an abundance and more than enough, always. Because you know why? You cannot out give God when you give with a whole heart. What Israel had a problem doing is like, well God just makes us. Some of you when you hear that passage, here's what you think. Well, is he talking about gross or is he talking about net? Right? And if you're thinking that it's because you're not generous. You're thinking about being calculated.

How much do I really have to give to get God's blessing? That's the whole wrong way to look at it. The right way to look at it is everything I have, every relationship I have, every bit of clothing I have. If I have a house or a roof over my head, everything. If I have a car, it's all from the Lord. And when I give to him, all I'm doing is saying a big thanks for all that you've given to me. If you give me nothing back, I just thank you for that. That's what it means to tithe. Tithing's giving a 10th, it's generosity. And here's what God's promises. I dare you to try it with a whole heart because you can't out give me. I've seen it over and over in my life and in the lives of others, it's scriptural.

We see it in the New Testament, but I'll give you an old Testament passage that says the exact same thing. In Proverbs chapter 11, verse 24 and 25 it says this, "There is one who scatters and yet increases all the more. And there is one who withholds what is justly do and yet it results only in one. The generous man will be prosperous and he who waters will himself be watered." You know what God says?

I'm looking for a heart of generosity because that's my heart. My heart is I've lavished on you everything. My heart is that I loved you so much I gave my only begotten son to die in your place. My heart is to forgive all of your sins. My heart is to impute my righteousness in your life. My heart is to indwell you with my spirit. My heart is to make you a temple of the holy spirit.

My heart is to let you walk in the fullness of the gospel. My heart is to be with you always. My heart is to always be there and care for you and protect you and never fail you or forsake you. That's my heart. What should our response be? Lord, take everything. What could you possibly give to God where he would be like, don't give me that. That's way more than I ever did for you, right? Tithing is not something that's a have to, it's not you better or else. And if you're thinking calculated, he's like is Jeff saying we have to give it all to the church now and we can't give to other people? You're missing the point. The point is be generous with God. Bring it all to the Lord. Be generous. Be thankful. We tend to be calculated in dividers. Well then I'll give this here and this here and this here.

Why don't you give it all here and here and here. Just test him. You cannot out give him. That's what he's saying. And is it an interesting to know that this great high priest has unmatched greatness. I mean, tithing is not required, but desired. I mean, why would Abraham tithe to a Canaanite priest and why would that priest be considered greater than Abraham? I mean, he tithed to him. He gave to him willingly. And then we see that Melchizedek in response blessed him. And it says in verse seven that we just read. But without any dispute, the lesser is blessed by the greater. Any

Jew that would read the Old Testament will tell you Abraham's the greatest Old Testament character. Maybe Moses was the greatest leader, but the entire nation looks back to Abraham as starting the entire Jewish nation. Abraham's the greatest. Here's what the scriptures say, Melchizedek's greater than him.

Melchizedek was worthy to receive his tithe. Melchizedek was interceding to God, most high on behalf of him. Who in the world could that possibly be but the Lord Jesus Christ pre incarnate? That's what was going on. And here's what we see. Melchizedek blessed him. Then notice verses eight through 10, he says, "In this case, mortal men received tithes, but in that case, one receives them of whom it has witnessed that he lives on." In the Levitical priesthood, they received tithes but all the men that were receiving tithes that were ministering on behalf of God, they all died. Whoever this was continued on and continued to live eternally. And so to speak though through Abraham, even Levi who received tithes paid tides for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek died. Now check this out. Aaron, who was Abraham's brother was the first high priest, but God set up the Levitical priesthood through Levi.

That's why we get Levitical through Levi. Levi was Abraham's great grandson. And even though Levi wasn't alive at the time that Abraham tithe to Melchizedek because it says genealogically he was in his loins, the DNA was there, he was forthcoming. It was as if the Levitical priesthood was tithing towards this high priest, to this God. Even though they weren't going to be receiving tithes, they had already given tithes. Why? Because this order of Melchizedek is greater than the Levitical priesthood. Now that would've blown any Jews mind. The Levitical priesthood that was

the law of God that set it all up and here in the scriptures along, they see there's something greater than the Levitical priesthood. There's always been something greater than the Levitical priesthood. The king of righteousness, the king of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ in a certain priestly order that is greater than even the Levitical order of priests.

What would that do to a Jew's heart? Somebody that's converted to Christ. Perhaps their family abandoned them, perhaps they said, you can no longer come to our synagogue, you're no longer welcome at our meals. And they're troubled on the inside saying, well, how's my sin going to get forgiven and who can I go to? And right there in God's word, what do they see? That they've had a great high priest all along who's greater than any of Israel's high priests have ever been, and it's the Lord Jesus Christ who is available to minister to them. How awesome is that? It's right there. And we see it in the word. It's interesting because when Jesus was living, people were giving him a hard time, especially the religious people of the day. They were always giving Jesus a hard time because Jesus was claiming that he was God.

And a lot of people have a hard time when somebody walks around claiming that they're God. The challenge was Jesus could back it up. And he specifically backed it up when he rose from the dead. But in John chapter eight verse 56, people are asking Jesus, who are you? I mean, you're not even 50 years old. I mean, you think you're greater than our father Abraham? And Jesus said this, "Your father, Abraham rejoiced to see my day. And he saw it and was glad." Now what in the world does that mean? Jesus was saying, "Who do you think you are? I mean, you think you're greater

Abraham? He's like, well, I'll tell you what. Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and he was really happy when he did." But when did he see it? I think he saw it back in Genesis 14.

I think when he saw the Lord, he was glad. I think when he was blessed by the Lord, he was glad. When he had blessing and favor poured down in his life by the Lord, he was glad. So what did the Jews respond? So the Jews said to him, "You're not even 50 years old and you've seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you before Abraham was, I am. Not only did I see him during his lifetime, but I live long before him because I'm eternal." Do you think that made the Jews happy? No, it ticked him off. Jesus was a dead man walking because he claimed that he was God. And if you study through the scriptures, Jesus is constantly talking to the religious leaders telling them, it's good that you study the scriptures. You diligently study them because you think that in them, you're going to find life yet these are the very scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

I mean everything the Old Testament reveals is the living Christ. He's saying I was there with Abraham. He saw me and was glad. You're only 50 years old. I mean, you think you're greater than him? Yeah, before he was, I am. I've always been. I've seen every generation. That's why Melchizedek is incredible. And we see this blessing. I mean, if you study the Old Testament, you'll see how big of a deal blessing is. Blessing, blessing. I mean, you'll see sons fight for the blessing. They want the blessing. They want the words. For this high priest to bless Abraham, to bless him and

tell him it's going to be fulfilled in your life was nourishing to his soul.

Jesus is our great high priest. You know what he wants to do in your life too? He wants to lavish you and bless you. He wants to speak words of favor over your life. He created you. He knows you. He loves you. He died for you. He rose from you. He intercedes for you. He ministers to his father on behalf of you all the time. He lives to make intercession for you. We're going to read about it next week. He's in love with you. And guess what? So I want a blessing like that, you have it in Christ. If you know the Lord, that's the high priest that you have that's praying for you and blessing you and favoring you. Christ had astounding credentials in his priesthood, he had unmatched greatness. And then Christ preached is superior also because of his perfection and his power, his perfection and his power.

No one but Christ is perfect and no one is omnipotent other than Christ. And notice what he says in verse 11, especially these Jews who think of so highly of the priesthood. He says, "Now, if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood, from the basis of it the people received the law, what further need was there for another priest to arise? According to the order of Melchizedek and not be designated, according to the order of Aaron?" He's like, why switch the priesthood, if the priesthods doing such a good job? Why do you need a priest according to the order of Melchizedek if the law brought priesthood that's doing its job? Why would we ever need to change? If the priesthood was designed to cover, to cleanse us from all sin, we wouldn't need another high priest. But what we learn is in the Old Testament that all of the animal sacrifice and all of the death that took place and all of the shedding of blood only took place to

cover our sin. It didn't cleanse us from the inside out.

And if the Old Testament priesthood was so good, why do you need to change it? Well, why are you looking for some cleansing? I mean, think about this for a second. If you grew up in Israel during the days of Levitical priesthood and you sinned, you know what you do? You start looking for the animal that was required to shed its blood to cover that sin. And then you would take it to a priest and the priest would have to slaughter that animal and then pour the blood out and go through all sorts of rituals just to make sure that was covered. Just so you would know oh, whew. But it didn't take the sin away, it just covered it for a period of time. I haven't given a lot of thought to this, but in the last few weeks I have, as I've been studying this. We're aware of how many animals were probably slaughtered.

I mean, hundreds and thousands and hundreds of thousands, millions of animals slaughtered over all those years. I mean, can you imagine what the temple would look like? Can you imagine what it smelled like? I mean, we don't picture what it was. We picture, okay the animal died. We put its blood here. You ever been to a slaughter house before? I mean, how serious does God take sin? How much blood and buckets of blood and gallons of blood and super tankers of blood had to be spilled just to cover the sin. But Jesus is different. He's a great high priest who once and for all covered all sin and not only covered it, but cleanses our sin. He takes away the sin of the world. He removes all guilt and doubt and suspicion. That's who our God is. He's unlike any other priest, he's perfect. Why I have to switch the priesthood of Aaron?

He's asking these Jews, if the priesthood is so good and you want to be part of

it, then why did it have to change? He says in verse 12, "For when the priesthood has changed of necessity, there takes place a change of law also for the one concerning whom these things are spoken to another tribe from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was a descendant of Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests." Here's what he's saying. If the order of Melchizedek is true and there's a change in priests and there's a change to how someone becomes a priest, and guess what? There has to be an annulment to the law. The law that you grew up with has to change because the only way you can become a priest is if you're of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi, Jesus was of the tribe Judah. He came down that lineage.

So how is it that Jesus could be a high priest if he didn't come from the priestly line? We see his kingly line in Matthew and Luke as we trace the genealogy of Jesus, he met the kingly line, but how come he doesn't meet the priestly line? Well, according to the order of Melchizedek, he does and he always has. But in order for him to become priest, it means there has to be an annulment to the law for Jesus to be the priest. Which means this, the law that got established has to be changed. The law that got established is no longer binding. The law that got established is no longer helpful. Why? Because Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of all of that law. Now, can you imagine how Jews would've felt about this?

The law is everything. The law is perfect. There's nothing wrong with the law. It's good. And let me tell you this. The law is good. The Bible tells us that the law is good.

We taught the book of first Timothy not too long ago. And 1st Timothy chapter one in verse eight it says, "But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully." Realizing the fact that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their mothers and fathers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

He says the law is good. Do you know why the law is good? Because the law points out everything in your life that shows that God is perfect and you're not. And there's nothing wrong with that. The law's not for righteous people. The law's for unrighteous people. Well, who's unrighteous? Raise your hand if you think you might qualify. Bible says there's no one good, no, not one. There is none righteous. So what's the law due. The law is laid over the top of us so that we can see that God's perfect and we're not. You shall have no other God's before me. That means you shall worship the Lord and serve him only. That means there's nothing in your heart that you preference. That means there's nothing in your heart that draws your attention. That always every minute of every day in your life, from the time that you take your first breath until you die, you only preference the Lord. Anybody miss that one?

What about honoring your father and your mother, anybody ever fall a little short on that one? What about not burying false witness against your neighbor? What about not gossiping about somebody? What about those of you say, well, I'm not a gossip, but I listen to people because I'm a safe place. You're a gossip too. What about

slander? I mean, if we all fallen short, I mean, we haven't even got to immorality yet. I mean, anybody knows it's hit puberty, you've fallen there, right? And some of us less physically and some of us less emotionally, and we wish we had what we don't have. I mean, the law lays out over the top of us to shut our mouth so we will not think that we deserve God's goodness because we're righteous. That's the purpose of the law. It's good. It shows you that God is holy, righteous and good. It just can't do anything for you.

That's what Paul says. He says the same thing in Romans chapter seven and verse 12. Romans chapter seven verse 12 says it like this, "So then the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." There is nothing wrong with the law. The law is perfect. Jesus said, "I will not come and add to it or subtract from it. The law will always stand." But here's the problem with the law. Romans eight says, "For what the law could not do weak as it was through the flesh, God did. Sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh so that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit."

What was he saying? He was saying the law's good commitment is good. It's holy there's. It shows us that God's holy and you're not. That's great, but it can't do anything for you. I mean, here's what the law's like. The best illustration I've ever heard is it's like a mirror. Some of you spend time looking in one in the morning. Some of you have spouses that tell you should spend more time looking at one in the morning, right? Some of you fix your face, some of you do your hair, some of you do different things.

You check out how you look to see. All the mirror does is reflect back to you what is actual. It can't do anything for you. It just shows you things. The older you get, the more flaws that it shows you. That's what the law does. The longer you live, the more flaws it shows you, but it can't fix you, can't do anything for you.

So what did God do? God sent his only begotten son who could do for us what the law could never do. Jesus Christ fulfilled the law. He is the fulfillment of the law. And when he shed his blood on a cross and died, he fulfilled the righteous requirements of God. So that when we repent of our sin and trust Christ and have Christ on the inside, Christ in us, the hope of glory, the fulfillment of the law is then fulfilled in us and what we could never do to get right to God, God already made right through his son. You know the good news of that? So many people come to church to try to figure out how do I get right with God? What do you want me to stop doing? What do I have start doing? Do I have to tithe? Do I have to do...

Here's what you need to do. You need to turn from your sin and trust Jesus. If you do that, it's completely done. You have life in his name. He'll indwell you and make you his forever and ever, Amen. Isn't that good news? That's what this Texas talking about. That's what this text talking to these Jewish converts who are thinking about turning back saying no, no, no. Don't go to another earthly high priest. You have the greatest high priest. He's perfect. And guess what? He's powerful. Verse 15 says, and this is clear still. If another priest arises, according to the likeness of Melchizedek who has become such, not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. Well, what's an indestructible life. Here's an

indestructible life. When you can conquer death by yourself, that's an indestructible life.

There is one and one only who has conquered death and that's the Lord Jesus Christ. He has an indestructible life. So Jesus is not being declared a high priest because he came from the right priestly line. Jesus comes from the order of Melchizedek because of his indestructible life. Because he rose from the dead, he qualifies as the eternal high priest. That's who he is. And God is saying, you don't need another high priest, you don't need another mediator, you don't need to go through anybody else. You can go right through my son Jesus Christ. Notice what he says. He's the fulfillment of this power. He's going to quote Psalm chapter 110 and verse four, "For it is attested of him you are a priest forever. According to the order of Melchizedek." I mean, in the Old Testament, besides Genesis chapter 14, Psalm 110 verse four is the only other place we see Melchizedek show up.

It's in a messianic Psalm where David is writing. It says, "the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make the enemies the foot stool of your feet. And then he promises that this Messiah is going to come according to the order of Melchizedek." All throughout the Old Testament, we see that this order has already been established from long before the Levitical line was even set up and that a change had to be made for Christ to fulfill it. And the only way it could be fulfilled is through his resurrection from the dead. Through Christ's resurrection from the dead, he qualifies as the eternal priest. And there is no other. There is one mediator between God and man, and that's the man Jesus Christ. God in the New Testament now has servants of pastors and

teachers, evangelists, apostles, and prophets that serve him to equip the saints to do work of ministry. There's people that minister on behalf of God to teach the word of God, to help people grow in the word of God. But friends, I want to tell you this on the authority of God, that when you've repented and trusted Christ, you have direct access to God and you don't need to go through anybody else ever. Is that good news or what?

Now, when I think about that, I begin to think about, well, when do I need God? And I think I need him a lot. I need him all the time. There's times where praying for our marriage. There's times where I'm praying for my family. There's times where I'm praying for our church. There's times where I'm praying for our ministry or our staff or our elders or my neighbors, or just circumstances or health or finances. I find that the older I get, everything's on the table at all times. And it's great to have people that will surround me and pray for me and I believe that God hears the prayers of his people, but there's something about knowing that I can go to the one who's already interceding for me and go directly to him, to the father through him, and he hears all my prayers and he hears my Christ for help and he loves me with an unconditional love.

It's his perfection, it's his power. Jesus Christ perfected the law. He fulfilled the law. The scripture says that he did. And notice this final element that the author wants to highlight here about Christ's superior priesthood. It comes through Christ's provision of his presence. There's a provision of Christ's presence. Notice what he says in verse 18. He says, "For on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness for the law made nothing perfect. And on

the other hand, there is a bringing in of a better hope through which we draw near to God." He's saying this, on one hand... Here's the problem with the law. On the one hand, the law is weak and it's useless. Now, if you were to say that to any Jew in the first century, they'd be very upset with you.

The law is everything. The law was established by God. God gave the law. Now we've already talked about how the law is holy, righteous and good, but it's weak. It's useless. It can't do anything for you. Now I meet people sometimes I'll say stuff like this, listen, I keep all the 10 commandments. I always have. Like what the rich young ruler said, I'm an American too and I keep all the 10 commandments. None of you have kept any of the 10 commandments. None of you is righteous. I'm not righteous. What the law was good at doing is pointing out our unrighteousness and God's holiness. But then what God did in sending his own son who didn't spare his son, but gave us him willingly. Will he not freely give us all things. He gave us life in his name. He gave us the eternal life of his son.

So what the law was weak and useless to do, he provided in his son, Jesus Christ, who is able to give us everything that we need. He's the perfect high priest. He gave us a provision while the law was weakened useless because the law couldn't do anything for us. It's that mirror. Just shows us our sin. Hey, you're sinner again today. Hey, you screwed that up again today. Hey, God's perfect and he's frustrated with your sin again today. That's what the law does. What Christ does is say, "I can do something about that. You turn to me and I can all of your sin. I can take it as far as the east is from the west. I can plunge it in the deepest sea. I can forget it, never ever

bring it up again." Excited about that? That's what the Lord gives.

And notice this on the one hand, the law, the law can't help us but on the other hand, there is a bringing in of a better hope through which we draw near to God. What's that? That's God's presence. Whether you realize it or not, your heart's greatest desire is God's presence in your life. You may not realize that. You may think it's a sporting event or making more money or having a successful job or something else, having a great marriage, having great kids, none of which in and of themselves are bad, but your greatest desire, your greatest yearning, your longing in your heart is the presence of God. For those of us who have walked with the Lord, we have those times, we have those moments. Sometimes it's by ourselves. Sometimes it's corporately. Sometimes we can be driving our car down the street. Sometimes we're getting ready in the morning. All of a sudden the Lord's presence comes on us and there's nothing like the presence of the Lord. We sense him, we know him, we feel him. We experience him and we wish just, we wish, wish I could have that feeling forever. Friends one day you will.

But until then, we're looking for a touch of the Lord. His presence. What this writer is telling us is that when the curtain tore from top to bottom separating the holy of holies from the temple, it was as if Jesus Christ was opening the door to his presence all the time. His presence wasn't just available once a year to the great high priest, his presence was available to all his people at all times, anytime that you need him. He says, "Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things you do not know," right? "Come to me all of you who are weary and heavy laden, I'll

give you rest." Every time we gather the spirit of God is present among us because when God's people come together and are seeking his face, we can experience him corporately. We can experience him in different ways.

And I can tell you that you didn't come today just to learn about the order of Melchizedek. That's not why you're here. You're here to know that there's a great high priest that loved you so much, that he laid down his life on a cross for you. That died for all your sins, that rose from the dead that says, come to me, turn from your sin and come to me. And if I'm in you and I indwell you can come to me about anything at any time and my presence is available to you. Ephesians 3:12 says we should come with boldness and confidence. We shouldn't worry about our sin. We should draw near to God and he will draw near to us. I mean, when I think about this text and I think about Christ's superiority as high priest, I'm so grateful to God.

Not only that Jesus paid all my sins, but that he still wants to minister on his father's behalf to me, he still wants to mediate on his father's behalf for me, he still lives to make intercession for me. That when I woke up this morning, that Jesus was already praying for me. That when I go to bed tonight, he's still praying for me. And the good news is for all of you that belong to him, he's doing the same for you. He loves you. He knows every circumstance in your life. He cares about you. He has astounding credentials and unmatched greatness and perfection and power. And his provision is his presence. I mean, in Matthew chapter 28, after he gave the great commission, what does he say at the very end? I will be with you always to the end of the age.

Hebrews 13:5, we'll get to it, he says, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." Sometimes we feel like we can forsake the Lord, but I got good news for you, He'll never forsake you. He'll never leave you. He's still interceding for you. He loves you. He formed plans for your life. He's ministering to the seeds of greatness that he put on the inside because he wants to see those things fulfilled in your life. He loves you with an unconditional love. He wants to give you a touch of his grace. One of the reasons that we've changed a little bit of the order of our service going forward is that I believe with my whole heart, that worship is not a warmup for good preaching, although it can be, but that good preaching gets us ready to worship our creator. And that what God wants from us is our worship and our desire.

And I know that after service sometimes there's usually 7, 8, 9 people, pastor, will you pray for me? Will you pray for my daughter who's sick? Hey, will you pray for me in this situation? Will you pray for God's provision in my life? And I love doing that. But we're creating our services here and in Westminster so that during the worship at the end of service, we'll have pastors up here, we'll have elders up here, we would love to pray those things for you. This is the time to do that. Don't worry if you have to crawl across seven people and come up here. Here's what God wants. You heard his voice. You prayed, you respond accordingly, come seek his face. Let's worship him. Let's let all the other things in this world just for a few minutes fade away as we sing to him, as we pray to him as we minister to one another and as we trust God to do a work in our heart.

He didn't bring you here just to hear a message that he's good and you walk

away. He brought you here because he wants to minister to you today. Amen? Amen.

Would you stand with me as we close. Father in heaven, as we sing to you, as we pray to you as we go after you, as we minister to one another Lord, let us sing with our whole heart. Lord, let us bring you our best worship and praise. Lord, may you be honored and glorified in the way that we minister to you into one another. And Lord, we thank you for your one sacrifice once and for all that paid for all our sin and gave us all your righteousness so that we could have your peace. God, we give you all the praise in the mighty and matches name of Jesus, amen and amen. Can we give God some praise this morning? Amen.