



Preface

In the previous weeks...

- Week 1-4 (a): Jesus Christ is God's ultimate revelation to the world, the promised Son of God who is superior over all created things and all Old Testament figures. He is our High Priest who shared in our humanity and became the pioneer of our salvation through His faithful obedience to suffer and die for our sins.
- Week 1-4 (b): Through Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, "God's rest" or salvation is available for those who pay attention to God's revelation, firmly place their hope and confidence in Jesus, pursue a relationship with God and living in obedience to His Word.
- Week 5: We are warned against complacency and exhorted to continually deepen our understanding of God and demonstrate spiritual maturity through living a life of service.

This week...

- Jesus Christ is the basis of our salvation pertaining to His role as the eternal High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, superior over the Levitical priestly system. He ministers and reigns forever, securing our salvation, so we no longer have to 'work' for our salvation.

Observation

1. Read Genesis 14:17-20 for additional background. Based on Heb. 7:4-10 and Heb. 7:15-17, how was Melchizedek's priesthood superior to the Levitical priesthood?

Leaders' note: Five aspects: 1) v.4-6a, Melchizedek collected a tenth from Abraham (Levi's ancestor), 2) v.6b-7, Melchizedek blessed Abraham, 3) v.8, Melchizedek's priesthood remains forever ("declared to be living"), 4) v.9-10, when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was yet to be born, 5) v.15-17, priesthood on the basis of the power of an indestructible life as opposed to ancestry.

2. Why was the Levitical law (7:11-19) changed/set aside?

3. Based on Heb. 7:20-28, compare & contrast Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood.

Leaders' note: 1) v.20-22, Jesus' priesthood is guaranteed by the oath of God and remains forever, 2) v.23-25, Jesus lives forever and is not prevented by death; enables him to save his people completely, and live to intercede for his people, 3) v.26-28, Jesus offered himself to sacrifice for the sins of his people once for all, unlike the Levites who needed to offer sacrifices daily for his own sins first before others'.

4. How was Jesus' priesthood described in Heb. 8:1-6?

Interpretation

1. What is the significance of the different priestly roles (i.e. intercession, offering sacrifices, and mediator) pertaining to salvation for believers?

*Leaders' note: 1) **7:23-25** Intercession: provides an **ongoing representation** before God, 2) **7:26-28** Offering sacrifices: He **offered Himself** and **became the perfect sacrifice** to atone for our sins, 3) **8:1-6** Mediator of the **new covenant**: allowing us to come to God.*

2. What was the purpose of the Mosaic law (Heb. 7:18-22, 7:28) and how did it point to Jesus?

*Leaders' note: The Mosaic laws were given by God to reveal **God's holiness, and the people's sinfulness, and establish a pattern of priesthood and sacrifice**. Hence, it shows us **our need for a savior**. Jesus is the better hope provided for us who **reigns forever, through whom we can draw near to God**.*

3. The original audience of Hebrews was persecuted and tempted to go back into following Jewish rituals. What basic truth about salvation was the author trying to emphasize?

*Leaders' note: The author wanted to encourage the original audience to **not fall back into legalism**. Several key concepts include: 1) Jesus' priesthood provides an **assurance of salvation**, in which salvation is achieved **by grace through faith and not works (rituals) nor ancestry**, 2) it points towards an **eternal hope** because of His **permanent priesthood**, and 3) Jesus' priesthood provides **direct access to God**.*

Application

1. Jesus is our high priest who reconciled us with God. How does this truth impact our confidence in bringing our needs before God?

2. What are our challenges in drawing near to God?

3. In what ways are we still living under the old covenant (i.e. appeasing God by works)?

4. How can the promises of the new covenant strengthen us during challenging times or moments of doubt in our faith journey?

Optional Prayer Exercise: Silence (and Solitude)

Silence is a spiritual practice to pause, quiet down, and draw near to the presence of God. In the Scripture, Jesus prioritized His time alone, abiding in God the Father. Oftentimes, we associate spending time with God through reading the Bible or doing the “Christian” things *for* God, but God wants us to delight in Him, coming to Him as we are. This week, try practicing a time of silence while trusting that Jesus is continually interceding for us.

1. Begin your time of silence with prayers, asking God to quiet down our minds.
2. Spend 15 minutes in silence. Do nothing, not even reading or praying. Embrace the quietness.
3. Acknowledge feelings or thoughts that arise, but refocus our thoughts on God.
4. Share your experience with your group, and close your time with a prayer of gratitude.