

“Do You Hear God’s Message?”

By Pastor Greg
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Hebrews 10:19-23

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Back when the telegraph was the was the fastest method of long-distance communication, a young man applied for a job as a Morse Code operator. The office was filled with noise and clatter, including the sound of the telegraph in the background. A sign on the receptionist's counter instructed job applicants to fill out a form and wait until they were summoned to enter the inner office.

The young man filled out his form and sat down with the seven other applicants in the waiting area. After a few minutes, the young man stood up and walked right in to the inner office. Naturally the other applicants perked up, wondering what was going on. No one had summoned them yet.

Within a few minutes, however, the employer escorted the young man out of the office and informed the other applicants that the job has just been filled. Of course, the other applicants began to grumble. "We never even got a chance to be interviewed. That's not fair!" The employer said, "I'm sorry, but all the time you've been sitting here, the telegraph has been ticking out the following message in Morse Code: 'If you understand this message, then come right in. The job is yours.' None of you heard it or understood it. This young man did. The job is his."

I find the boldness of this man quite interesting. He heard and understood the message while others had not.

The writer of Hebrews argues **“And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. ²⁰ By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place.**

¹ (Hebrews 10:19-20)

If you’ll recall, the Temple in Jerusalem was divided into different sections. And in the innermost part of the Temple there was a curtain separating ordinary people from the place where God’s presence dwelt. The Old Testament tells of

¹Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

people thinking they could just waltz right in, only to be struck down by God. It was the High Priest alone who could enter this Holy of Holies, and only after a week-long cleansing ritual. So this division between people and God permeated the Jewish society. A normal person just didn't walk into the presence of God without first making themselves right. A person had to be clean, properly dressed, and lay all bad things aside before they even thought about approaching Him. You just didn't come before God without first cleaning up your act.

According to Matthew, this veil that separated people from God was torn in two the moment Jesus died, which carries with it a great theological significance – through the death of Jesus, all who embrace Him as Savior may enter into the presence of God without fear. Jesus cleans us up, dresses us in robes of righteousness, and pays the penalty for all those sinful habits we've not yet laid aside. He is the one who permits us to approach God **before** we first clean up our act.

Through the death of Jesus on the cross, a new covenant exists between God and humans. And as a symbol, God had the veil in the Temple torn in two. **“For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered Himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. ¹⁵That is why He is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.”** ² (Hebrews 9:14-15)

It is not necessary for blood to be spilled anymore for the forgiveness of sins. It's already been done. But why do so many of us not believe this? Why do we continually feel that there are sacrifices we must make in order for God to find us acceptable? Do we truly believe that there is nothing we can do to make God love us more or less? So great and so powerful was the blood of Jesus that it was not necessary for Him to be crucified all over again that day in November, 1970 when I was baptized. Nor was it necessary for when you gave your life to Christ.

²Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Heb 9:14-15). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

Sometimes I think many of us struggle with this concept; that God's love for us does not increase because we've been on our best behavior. We'd like it to be that way, though. We'd like to think that all these years of obedience have earned us something in the eyes of God. But what we are missing is the other side to that truth; that His love for us does not diminish when we do misbehave; when we have disobeyed. And if we follow that thinking to its obvious conclusion, Jesus would take back His blood and the veil would be sewn back together every time we would disobey. And then when we ask for forgiveness, the veil would be re-torn and Christ's blood re-shed. This kind of thinking is what causes so many of us to live our life in fear; this whole on again-off again relationship with Jesus. We would have no boldness; no confidence; no assurance that Christ has indeed called us.

Granted, a life of obedience and service pleases God but it does not change the depth of His love. And for me, knowing that His love will always be there and that it is not conditional, brings me a sense of assurance; a confidence that strengthens me as I work and serve Him. I can do things for God without being burdened by that fear of failing.

Maybe you've been holding back in your life because of that fear; a fear that wonders what God might think when you mess up. Out of fear of diminishing His love for you, you stay seated on the bench watching the work of the church pass you by. And perhaps you wonder at the boldness of others. I tell you today that the only difference between those who are workers and those who are spectators is that the workers have heard that God will love them even when they fail; even when they disobey. That's the message God is tapping out in your heart. "You have been set free from the penalty of sin. Now go and work boldly for Me".