

Sermon Notes for October 2, 2016

**The Holiness Of God Sermon Series**  
**“God’s Holiness As Seen In The Tabernacle”**  
**Hebrews 9:1-10**

**Introduction**

**A. We Continue Our Sermon Series On The Holiness of God**

1. Those of us who are preaching this sermon series want each of you to understand more about the holiness of God
  - a. The greek word for holy means:
    1. separate
    2. unlike others
    3. incomparable majesty
  - b. In actuality, the holiness of God means that God is “wholly other”
    1. **THERE IS NO ONE LIKE HIM!**
    2. God “transcends” mankind
      - a. He is above us, greater than us
      - b. he is so far “other” than us
      - c. **R. C. Sproul** – “The primary meaning of holiness is transcendent majesty, otherness.”
2. We minimize God, when we make Him: “like man.”

**B. Today, We Are Going To Look At A Physical Representation of God’s Holiness**

1. As seen in the Tabernacle of God
2. A Tabernacle that God called His people to worship in
3. A Tabernacle that screamed about the holiness of God

**I. The CAUSE Of The Tabernacle.**

**A. The Fall Of Man REQUIRED It.**

1. God warned Adam and Eve in **Genesis 2:17** – “But you must **not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, for when you eat of it **you will surely die.**”
2. If God did nothing to solve man’s sin, there would be eternal punishment for man forever.
3. **WHY DIDN’T GOD SIMPLY END HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH MAN? IT’S CALLED GOD’S GRACE!**

**B. The Grace Of God REPRESENTED It.**

1. Instead, God created “a way” for an unholy man to approach a holy God.
  - a. We must realize that God required payment for man’s sin
    1. lex talionis
    2. **Genesis 9:5-6** – “**And for your life-blood I will surely demand an accounting.** I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too. **I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.”**
  - b. The Tabernacle would actually “represent” the payment that would need to eventually be paid by the sinner

2. The Tabernacle, therefore, would become a great, spiritual “object lesson”
  - a. but please realize that the Tabernacle was not only an instrument whereby man could maintain his relationship with God
  - b. but more importantly, the Tabernacle would represent the true solution for man’s sin – Jesus Christ Himself
    1. there is perhaps nothing in the Old Testament that represents and illustrates Jesus Christ, the Messiah, than the Tabernacle
    2. **Dr. A.B. Simpson – Christ In The Tabernacle** - “The Tabernacle is the **grandest of all the Old Testament types of Christ**. It was all one great object lesson of spiritual truth. In its wonderful furniture, priesthood, and worship, we see, with a **vividness that we find nowhere else, the glory and grace of Jesus, and the privilege of His redeemed people.**”
    3. let us look carefully at this beautiful, physical picture of God’s grace; a representation of the person and work of Jesus Christ
      - a. I will first describe the Tabernacle physically
      - b. and, then I will describe the Tabernacle spiritually

## II. The CONTENT Of The Tabernacle.

### A. The OUTER WALL.

1. the outside wall surrounding the Tabernacle was **white**.
2. the outside wall surrounding the Tabernacle was **8 ½ feet tall**; therefore, the **entrance** to the Tabernacle was **small**

### B. The COURTYARD.

1. The **Altar**.
  - a. the Altar this was a square piece of **brass and wood** with **four horns**, one on each corner of the altar - here the animals were tied, one leg tied to each horn
  - b. here the throats of the animals would be slit to allow the blood to flow and the animal to die
  - c. before the animals were killed, the **Priest would lay his hands on the sacrifice**, symbolizing the transference of the sins of the sinner to the animal
2. The **Laver**.
  - a. the Laver this was an article made from the **mirrors of the Israelite women** who had come out of Egypt
  - b. the mirrors were fashioned into a huge bowl, polished and filled with water
  - c. there were two parts to the laver:
    1. a part of the bowl to **wash the hands**
    2. a part of the bowl to **wash the feet**
  - d. the **Priest would wash his hands** there after slaughtering the animal before he entered the Holy Place

### C. The HOLY PLACE.

1. The **Golden Candlestick**.
  - a. this glorious piece of furniture was a type of candelabrum or branched candlestick, with seven branches made of **pure gold**, weighing some 100 lbs.
  - b. on the end of each branch was a bowl filled with **pressed olive oil** and a wick
  - c. this candlestick **provided light to the rest of the articles in the Holy Place**
  - d. each **morning and evening** the Priests **would trim the wicks** of the candles so that they would not smoke
2. The **Table of Shewbread**.
  - a. the Table of Shewbread was a small Table with **twelve pieces** of unleavened bread placed on a the Table
  - b. the Table had a **gold border** around the top of it
  - c. the bread on the table was **sprinkled with sweet-tasting frankincense**
3. The **Altar of Incense**.
  - a. the last article in the Holy Place was the Altar of Incense, **placed right up against the veil** that hung between the Holy Place and Holy of Holies.
  - b. **a sweet smelling incense was crushed and burned** so that there was a continual sweet smelling fragrance going into the Holy of Holies
  - c. the altar of incense was the **exact height of the Ark of the Covenant**
4. The **Veil**.
  - a. **between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies** was a thick veil that separated the two rooms
  - b. this veil was there to actually **prevent** the Priests from entering the most Holy of Holies, except on the Day of Atonement where the High Priest could enter

### D. The HOLY OF HOLIES.

1. The **Ark of the Covenant**.
  - a. the Ark of the Covenant was a square box of gold that was seated in the Holy of Holies
    1. **one day a year**, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would come and place blood on the Mercy Seat of the Ark to atone for the sins of all of Israel.
    2. this was the **most serious piece of furniture in the Tabernacle**, that was reserved for the most serious day of the year
  - b. on top of the Ark of the Covenant were **two gold angels or cherubim**, that faced the center of the Mercy Seat
2. The **contents of the Ark of the Covenant**.
  - a. **The Ten Commandments** – after Moses broke the first tablets given to him by God on Mount Sinai, God gave Moses a second set of tablets which were eventually placed in the Ark

**b. Aaron's rod that budded**

1. During the time of the exodus from Egypt, the Israelites grumbled against Moses and the High Priest Aaron, questioning his authority
2. In response, God required that the head of each of the 12 tribes bring a rod to be placed in the Tabernacle. Only one of the rods would bring forth buds to prove who was God's anointed. The next day, Aaron's rod not only budded but had blossomed and brought forth fruit!
3. this proved that Aaron was God's anointed High Priest

**c. a jar of manna**

1. During the exodus, God would rain down a type of food to keep the Israelites alive – it was called manna
2. A jar of manna would be placed inside the Ark

**III. The GRACE Of The Tabernacle.**

**A. The OUTER WALL.**

1. The white of the outside wall made a statement about the **holiness and purity** of God.
2. The height of the wall of **8 ½ feet was too tall for the average Israelite** (who stood about 5 feet tall.)
  - a. this was a clear statement to the world that no one could “simply look” over the wall of the Tabernacle and into the things of God
  - b. instead, a person would have to walk around to the entrance of the Tabernacle and enter there
  - c. this illustrates the fact that the unbeliever cannot understand the things of God unless he comes through the narrow entrance; that is Jesus **I Corinthians 2:14a** – “The man without the Spirit **does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God**, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”
3. The narrow entrance represented “**the way**” that man **must** come to know God; **AND THAT IS ONLY THROUGH JESUS**
  - a. **Matthew 7:13-14** - “**Enter through the narrow gate.** For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But **small is the gate** and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”
  - b. **John 14:6** - Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**”

**B. The COURTYARD.**

1. The **Altar.**
  - a. the first article that the worshipper would see once he entered the narrow gate would be the altar
  - b. here the animals would be strapped to the four horns and sacrificed
    1. the four horns faced the four corners of the world revealing that the gospel is for everyone, everywhere

2. the bloodiness of the altar represents the cross of Jesus Christ
3. you cannot enter the Kingdom of God at all until you receive the work of Christ or the cross on your behalf

2. The **Laver**.

- a. the second piece of furniture in the Tabernacle was the Laver
- b. the Laver was filled with water which represents a person's cleansing after being saved
  1. one of the parts of the laver **cleansed the hands – hands that are used in service to Christ**
  2. the other part of the laver **cleansed the feet – confessing the sins of those who go to serve**
- c. the Laver also represents the cleansing that is needed if a person desires to go into the presence of God; the Holy Place

C. The **HOLY PLACE**.

1. The **Golden Candlestick**.

- a. This first article of furniture that was seen as one entered the Holy Place was the Golden Candlestick
- b. the fact that the candlestick was made of **pure gold** represents the **deity of Christ**
  1. this article of furniture speaks of the total worship of Jesus
  2. that He is the light of the world
- c. the bowls of **pressed olive oil represented:**
  1. that Jesus was pressed in the **Garden of Gethsemane**, which is next to the Mount of Olives
  2. the oil represents the Holy Spirit because no one will be able to understand the deep things of God **without being filled with the Holy Spirit**
- d. the Priests were called to **trim the wicks** of the bowls to keep them from smoking each morning and evening
  1. even as those who are filled with the Spirit, we must **confess our sins morning and evening**
  2. otherwise we will “smoke” and “smell”

2. The **Table of Shewbread**.

- a. the next piece of furniture that was seen in the Holy Place was the Table of Shewbread
- b. the bread on the Table, **represented the Word of God**
  1. this bread was unleavened, so the Word of God is seen as perfect – given to us by God
  2. notice:
    - a. after entering the Holy Place, we come to the golden candlestick, **the filling of the Holy Spirit**
    - b. please, notice that the Holy Spirit illumines the Table of Shewbread, or the Word of God, so that we can understand it
    - c. a person will never understand the Word of God unless God's Spirit “sheds His light” on it

- c. finally, **frankincense** was put on bread on the Table of Shewbread, giving it a sweet taste
  - 1. **Jeremiah 15:16** – “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.”
  - 2. **Theodore Epp** – “The bread in the Tabernacle was replaced regularly, which indicates to us the need of coming to the Word of God each day for a **fresh portion**. We are not to rely on what we have gained from the Word in previous days, just like we do not rely physically on what we have eaten in previous days. **A person may have had a wonderful devotional time yesterday, but that does not suffice for today. We need to keep coming to the Word of God to learn more of Christ and to assimilate the knowledge freshly each day.**”
- 3. **The Altar of Incense.**
  - a. the last article in the Holy Place was the Altar of Incense, located right **next to the veil** that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies
    - 1. interestingly enough, the Altar of Incense was placed right next to the veil
    - 2. it was therefore a very important article of furniture
    - 3. the Altar of Incense represents **prayer in the life of the believer**
  - b. the Altar was to **burn incense all day and all night**
    - 1. so that the fragrance would waft through the veil into the Holy of Holies
    - 2. thus, prayer is to be that “sweet-smelling sacrifice” that goes directly to the “nostrils of God” – to Him it is a sweet-smelling aroma
    - 3. notice how the Altar of Incense is seen in heaven: **Revelation 8:3-4** – “Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, **with the prayers of all the saints**, on the golden altar before the throne. **The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel’s hand.**”
  - c. finally, please notice that **THE ALTAR OF INCENSE WAS THE SAME HEIGHT AS THE ARK OF THE COVENANT**
    - 1. **THIS SHOWS US THAT PRAYER IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.**
    - 2. **Theodore Epp** – “The highest office of the believer is **intercessory prayer. This is more acceptable than service since God is pleased more by our worship than by our service.** Service is only acceptable in relationship to our prayers and intercessions. **Although service is important, the spiritual battle is won in the time of prayer rather than in the time of service.**”

#### 4. The Veil.

- a. before the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he had to go through the veil.
- b. except for the Day of Atonement, the **Veil prevented the Priest** from entering the Holy of Holies
  1. until Jesus died, no one but the High Priest was welcome to enter God's presence, and only on the Day of Atonement
  2. when the veil was torn from top to bottom, after the death of Jesus, **FROM THIS TIME FORTH, NOTHING** would prevent the believer from entering God's presence
  3. **James M. Boice** – “The veil was torn in two at three o'clock in the afternoon, **which was the time of the beginning of the evening sacrifice.** The Priests would have been in the Temple, engaged in their duties, when the veil was torn. They would have certainly seen it, no doubt standing amazed before the now-exposed innermost recess of the Temple. **The Priests would have known that the age in which they had served was over and a new age of God's dealings with his people had begun.**”
  4. slide

#### D. The HOLY OF HOLIES.

##### 1. The Ark of the Covenant.

- a. as the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies, he came to the most critical piece of furniture in the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant
- b. the Ark was the **place for the Mercy Seat.**
  1. EACH YEAR, the High Priest, on the Day of Atonement, would bring blood to place it on the Mercy Seat to atone for the sins of Israel.
  2. Notice that there were no chairs in the Tabernacle because the work of the Priests was never done.
  3. the book of Hebrews tells us, however, that at the death of
- c. Jesus, **JESUS HIMSELF WOULD SIT DOWN ON THE MERCY SEAT IN HEAVEN!**

**Hebrews 10:11-12** – “Day after day every Priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this Priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, **He sat down at the right hand of God.**”

- a. this clearly tells us that the days of sacrifice are over!
- b. this says that Jesus has been the final sacrifice and has paid the final price
- c. **IT IS FINISHED!**
  1. as believers, we can rest in His finished work
  2. so, believer, don't doubt His finished work on your behalf

- d. the two angels, the cherubim, were placed on the Mercy Seat to do nothing but praise the work of Christ and His shed blood
  - 1. THAT IS THE PURPOSE of the cherubim in heaven – who are in fact, currently praising the finished work of Jesus who is seated on the Mercy Seat
  - 2. we may have actually seen a glimpse of this after the resurrection of Jesus –
    - John 20:10-12** – “Then the disciples went back to their homes, but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and **saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.**”
- 2. The **contents of the Ark of the Covenant.**
  - a. Jesus is seen as a **Prophet** –
    - 1. in the Ark of the Covenant which contained The Ten Commandments
    - 2. the **perfect will of God**
    - 3. the fact that the Mercy Seat covered The Ten Commandments showed that Christ’s death fulfilled the Law’s requirements
      - a. therefore, Jesus totally and completely fulfilled the Law “for you”
      - b. therefore, you can rest in the full, finished work of Christ on your behalf – **HE HAS KEPT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR YOU PERFECTLY.**
  - b. Jesus is seen as a **Priest**
    - 1. Aaron’s rod is there – showing that Jesus **is** the Great High Priest
    - 2. and that **no one should ever question that**
    - 3. this Great High Priest is always, available for you.
  - c. Jesus is seen as a **King**
    - 1. the manna provided by the **king for His people**
    - 2. He will take care of our physical needs

### Conclusion:

#### 1. DON’T MISS THE MOST OBVIOUS LESSON ABOUT JESUS AND THE TABERNACLE.

- a. **John 1:14** – “The Word became flesh and **made His dwelling (tabernacled)** among us. We have **seen His glory**, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
  - 1. the word for “made his dwelling” is the greek word for “tabernacle”
  - 2. in other words: this Tabernacle that was prescribed by God in the Old Testament was **personalized in the person and work of Jesus Christ!**
- b. **JESUS WAS AND IS THE TABERNACLE!**
- c. Jesus fulfilled every aspect of the Tabernacle
- d. And, because Jesus is in you, you have fulfilled the Tabernacle as well!

2. Let me walk you through this wonderful Tabernacle of grace as you prepare for communion
  - a. we come to a **small, narrow opening that is Jesus Christ** and we enter through that narrow opening to meet Jesus
  - b. we **stand before the cross of Christ** where He died and we receive that finished work on our behalf
  - c. you **come to the laver and wash your hands of your sins** and continue, cleansed, into the Holy Place, into the presence of God
  - d. you then come to the **golden candlestick**
    1. you ask to be **filled with the power of the Holy Spirit**, knowing that you cannot understand spiritual life without His Spirit
    2. but also knowing that you cannot “take your spirituality for granted, but that you must regularly **confess your sins**; you “trim the wick” to keep it from smoking
  - e. the filling of the Holy Spirit drives you to the **Table of Shewbread**, the perfect and sweet Word of God
    1. there you are **fed, nourished and filled**
    2. there you “**see**” **the mind of God**
  - f. which, in turn, drives you to the **altar of incense**; to prayer
    1. **prayer - always and at any time**
    2. in which **you become a blessing to God and His church**
  - g. and then you enter **THROUGH** the **torn veil** into God’s very presence, into the Holy of Holies you realize, once again, that you are
    1. there, secure in the fact that Jesus **IS** presently seated on the Mercy Seat - protecting your salvation
    2. clearly saying to you that **He is your:**
      - a. **Prophet**
      - b. **Priest**
      - c. and **King**
  - h. as you leave the Tabernacle, you realize that everything that you have seen is “of His grace,” especially the cross as you exit to return to the world.

