

# **The Letter To The Hebrews**

## **How To Gain A Clear Conscience**

### **Hebrews 9:1-14**

#### **Introduction**

We all have a conscience which reminds us that we are guilty before God.  
There is nothing we can do to quiet it — because we really are guilty before God.  
But God has made a way for our guilt to be lifted from us, and His love to pour upon us —  
Through what Jesus Christ has done on the Cross.  
To help us understand this the author of Hebrews contrasts the Old Covenant sacrificial system  
with what Jesus did —

#### **How did the sacrificial system work in the Old Covenant? (9:1-7)**

The priests would regularly go into the Holy Place;  
But only the high priest could go into the Most Holy place, and only once a year.

#### **What did the Old Covenant sacrifices accomplish? (9:8-10)**

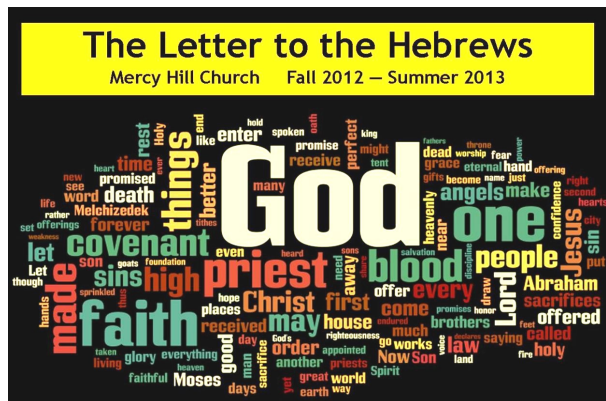
They teach that access into God's presence has not yet been opened (8)  
They were not able to perfect anyone's conscience — no one was forgiven by them (9)  
They were temporary regulations for the body — did not affect you spiritually.  
But didn't Old Testament saints experience forgiveness?  
Yes. But not through the sacrifices (Read Psa 32 and Psa 51).  
So how could they be forgiven — and how can we be forgiven?

#### **How can people be forgiven for the guilt of sin? (9:11-14)**

After Jesus died and rose He appeared before God the Father in heaven (11)  
No Old Testament priest had ever done that.  
Jesus appeared before God the Father with His own blood as payment for our sins (12)  
The blood from animals only brought purification of the flesh — just external and ceremonial (13).  
But Jesus' blood can purify our conscience from dead works (sins). (14).  
He can lift our guilt from us and pour God's forgiving love on us.

#### **So how can we experience this?**

Humble yourself before God, seeing that you need  
undeserved mercy.  
Confess your sin to God as something that  
dishonors His infinite goodness.  
Ask God to forgive you through Jesus Christ.  
Look to Christ by faith until you feel your guilt lift  
and His forgiveness come.



## **HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY’S TEACHING**

*(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday’s teaching, so we can work together on responding to God’s Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)*

What are some ways (apart from faith in Christ) that you have tried to ease your feelings of guilt before God? What happened?

Does it make sense that Old Testament saints did experience God’s forgiveness, but not through the animal sacrifices? Why or why not?

What are some reasons people doubt that Jesus’ death can really forgive all their sins? Do any of these ever give you any doubt? How would the author of Hebrews answer these doubts?

On a scale of 1 (rarely) to 10 (often) how often do you experience God’s forgiving love being poured on you?

What could you do to experience this more? What difference do you think that would make?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

