

## "The Exclusivity of The ONE and the Necessity of the 5"

Heb 9:9-28

August 4, 2024

### INTRO ...The Basics of Building Life

...NY Times Bestseller (voted one of the Best Books of 2023) titled: **"Build the Life You Want: The Art and Science of Getting Happier"** ... [Jacket - the authors reveal how the tools of emotional self-management can change your life—immediately. They recommend practical, research-based, practices to build the four pillars of happiness: family, friendship, work, and faith.]

**Hebrews 7-10 has some "Basics" in it ("5-Pillars"), that if we attempt to build life without grasping them, we will design a life that is destined for great, catastrophic failure!**

"What is religion then? It is a set of beliefs that explain what life is all about, who we are, and the most important things that human beings should spend their time doing. For example, some think that this material world is all there is, that we are here by accident and when we die we just rot, and therefore the important thing is to choose to do what makes you happy and not let others impose their beliefs on you." **Timothy Keller**, "The Reason for God", p. 15

—What is your "religion" trying to "fix" in your world and in your life? ...How have you defined human brokenness and need? ...How do you understand the 'design' and 'difficulty' of human existence? ...When it comes to Human Fulfillment & Happiness—Is Hebrews Pointing Out the Right "Pillars" of Importance?

**...There are some "Pillars" featured in Heb 9-10— listen for these 5 pillars of importance, as we read this passage: (a fixed conscience; eternal redemption; forgiveness; blood shed; some once-for-all action)**

## 5 Building Pillars

Heb 9:9-28

Hebrews 9-10 is going to introduce "5 Basics" that need to be factored into the Life that We Are Designing!

- **Healing/Fixing/Resetting the Conscience of Man** (Heb 9:9, 14; 10:2)
  - **Heb 9:9-10** <sup>9</sup> ... According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, <sup>10</sup> but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.
    - v. 9 ...You can be doing things in life (therapy, religion, medications) that "cannot perfect the conscience"
  - **Heb 9:14** "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."
    - "purify" = katharizo (gk) = cleansing (from which we get the word "cathartic" or "catharsis")
    - "conscience" = syneidēsis (Gk.) - a. sýnoida is first of all knowing something with someone. c. In philosophy evaluation enters in when people, reflecting on themselves (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament) **...It is one's "Self-Concept" or "self-image" or "self-esteem"**
  - **Heb 10:2** Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?
- **Eternal Redemption** (Heb 9:12)

- **Heb 9:12** *he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.*

...**When I go to "Build My Life"** (w/ the Hope of Future Happiness)—**Do I Need This?**

- **Forgiveness** (Heb 9:22)

- **Heb 9:22** *Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

**Lk 1:76-77** *And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, <sup>77</sup> to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,*

...THIS was THE MESSAGE of "the greatest man on earth" (John the Bapt.)

**Lk 24:45-47** *Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, <sup>46</sup> and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*

...THIS is the summation/application of the Greatest Life Ever Lived on earth!

- **Blood** (Heb 9:11-15; 18-22)

- **A Once-and-for-all Act/Event** (Heb 9:24-28)

...Christ did something ONCE-FOR-ALL (a Non-Repeatable Thing)—Does THAT Inform What I Am Building in My Life to Find My Happiness?

But for today—Let's Consider Something Even Bigger Than All of These ...v. 15

**Heb 9:15** *Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.*

-- There is Presented in Hebrews (and all of Scripture) an EXCLUSIVENESS of Where We Can Find These Things in Our Lives! ...ACCESS to These 5 Pillars is found for all of humanity through ONE MEANS!

## THE Christ

..."The CHRIST" = THE Anointed ONE ...This is a title of Uniqueness and this Uniqueness has Implications!

"During my nearly two decades in New York City, I've had numerous opportunities to ask people, 'What is your biggest problem with Christianity? What troubles you the most about its beliefs or how it is practiced?' One of the most frequent answers I have heard over the years can be summed up in one word: 'exclusivity'." **Timothy Keller**, "The Reason for God", p. 3

"It is one thing to say that Christianity is true for you, but to claim that Jesus rightly demands the allegiance of every human being—regardless of one's cultural background or current beliefs—seems offensive and absurd. As one bumper sticker puts it, 'My God is too big for any one religion.'" **Rebecca McLaughlin**, "Confronting Christianity", p. 48

...**The Bible consistently reveals that Jesus was Accomplishing Something UNIQUE!**

**1Tim 2:5-6** <sup>5</sup> *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.*

**Rom 1:1-5** <sup>1</sup> *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God — <sup>2</sup> the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures <sup>3</sup> regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup> and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. <sup>5</sup> Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake.*

v. 2 ...a Breadcrumb trail ...Billboards on Life's Hwy!!—

**Acts 4:12** *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

In one sense Christianity should carry a strong appeal to those living in an increasingly global and pluralistic society. The good news of Jesus Christ cuts across all racial, ethnic, and cultural boundaries and promises love, forgiveness, tolerance, and understanding. ...Jesus treated men and women, rich and poor, educated and illiterate with equal respect and dignity and affirmed the intrinsic value of all human beings. ...I repeat, Christianity should appeal to modern pluralists who yearn to see a world united by love, tolerance, and philanthropy. ...Christianity, though it preaches the eternal, God-given worth of the human person, is not an inclusivist religion, at least not the way that modern people would like it to be. Yes, like the Statue of Liberty it opens its arms and its doors to the tired and the poor, the huddled masses, the wretched refuse of our fallen and despairing world, but it opens neither its arms nor its doors to those who deny or pervert its key doctrines... or would demote the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the status of one option among many. ...the fact remains that the personal claims of Christ and the doctrinal claims of the church are necessarily exclusivist in nature." **Louis Markos**, "Apologists for the Twenty-first Century", p. 175

"If Christ is, as he claimed, the truth and the life (Jn 14:6), then apart from him there can be neither truth nor life... If the Bible (the revealed Word of God) is correct in assessing man's problem as original sin, then Christ (the incarnate Word of God) is the only adequate solution. God did not send his Son to earth to die a painful death to provide us with an 'option'; he did it because the incarnation (Christmas), the atonement (Good Friday), and the Resurrection (Easter) offered the only possible remedy to the problem of original sin." **Louis Markos**, "Apologists for the Twenty-first Century", p. 179

**Acts 10:34-48** *Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism<sup>35</sup> but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.<sup>36</sup> **You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.**<sup>37</sup> **You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—<sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.***

<sup>39</sup> *"We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross,<sup>40</sup> but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.<sup>41</sup> He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.<sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.<sup>43</sup> **All the prophets testify about him** that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."*

<sup>44</sup> *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.<sup>45</sup> The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles.<sup>46</sup> For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.*

*Then Peter said,<sup>47</sup> "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."<sup>48</sup> So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

- v. 36-38 ... **"YOU KNOW"**
  - **"The World Famous Message" of THE CHRIST** (v. 36)
  - **"The UNIQUE Resume" of THE CHRIST** (v. 37-38)
  - **"All the PROPHETS Testify about Him"** (v. 43)—"He is THE ONE" (v. 42)

**...God expects man to pay attention to this and to receive their proclamation!**

**Consider the "Prophets" of man and their messages:**

- **Muhammad!** ...Muhammad offers something "religious"—but NOT "The 5"

- **Karl Marx ...Thomas Jefferson ...The Democratic & Republican Parties** ...These offer a "Societal Upgrade" ('the pursuit of Happiness!') !!—But NOT "The 5"
- The Beatles ...Taylor Swift ...The VUE ...the FIVE ...Freud, Jung ...Dr. Phil, Oprah
- **Mark Zuckerberg and the million prophets of Social Media!**

**...These "Prophets" Don't Point to "THE CHRIST"; they don't feature Man's Fallen Alienation from The Creator as THE PROBLEM; they don't seek FORGIVENESS; they don't discuss the shedding of BLOOD; there isn't ONE (once-for-all) THING that is ultimate for Everyone!! ...and Worse Than That—ALL These "Prophets" Teach Man HOW TO THINK in such a way that He's NOT Looking for "The 5"!!**

"In 2016, the Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year was 'post-truth': 'relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.' ...In 2017, the #MeToo movement hit. Thousands of women stepped out of silence to reveal the abuse and harassment they had endured at the wandering hands of powerful men. Oprah Winfrey made an impassioned speech at the Golden Globe Awards commending the women who had spoken out: 'What I know for sure,' she declared, 'is that speaking your truth is the most powerful tool we all have.' ...The truth of a sexual assault is undoubtedly personal: it is in an important sense 'your truth.' But if that truth is not also objective, it is a lie. The women who have spoken out are ultimately commended not for telling their truth but for telling the truth." **Rebecca McLaughlin**, "Confronting Christianity", p. 51

**...This is the "voice" of a modern "prophet" whose confident presentation lays the groundwork for HOW we think—on its way to shaping WHAT we think!!**

- ...There Exists an EPIC MESSAGE from God ...It tells us about Our Real Problem and Our Real Need and THE ONE Real Solution!
- ...Our Access Comes by Following the Breadcrumb Trail of the Prophets ...and Listening to the "WITNESSES" who have Encountered the Risen Christ!