

Superior Service!

Hebrews 8:1-6

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- The emphasis today in the business' world on customer service
- **The Levitical priests were into "customer service"**
 - The "services" they provided
 - Representing God to the people by teaching the Law of God.
 - Nehemiah 8:2-- *"So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law."*
 - Nehemiah 8:8-- *"who read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and them to understand the reading."*
 - Representing the people to God by offering the required sacrifices and offerings
 - **The quality of the service they provided?**
 - Many provided good customer service for Israel.
 - Others however failed to teach God's law and actually led them into idolatry. (Judges 17)
 - By the time of Christ, the Jewish religious leaders were no longer in the customer service business but rather in the self-serving business.
 - Matthew 23:2-7-- *"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'"*
 - Matthew 23:14-- *"For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation."*
 - Matthew 23:23-- *"mint, anise, and cummin" that they "neglected the weightier things of the Law, like justice and mercy and faith."*
 - Matthew 23:28-- *"Outwardly they appeared to be righteous to men, but inside" they "were full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."*
 - Corruptness of the priesthood evident at the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin. A total disregard for the Mosaic Law.
 - **Jesus Christ's first coming was for "customer service"**
 - **He came into this world as a servant to serve God and people.**
 - Philippians 2:6-7-- *"being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men."*
 - **He declared to His disciples His true mission**
 - Matthew 20:27-28-- *"whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*
 - **He provided excellent customer service by**
 - Teaching the people the Word of God
 - Humbly meeting the needs of people without fanfare or financial charge.

- Ultimately giving His life *“as a ransom for many.”*
 - Philippians 2:8-- *“being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”*
- **Because of His willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice, God exalted Jesus.**
 - Philippians 2:9-10-- *“God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*
- **But now that Jesus Christ has been exalted and is in heaven, does this mean that His “customer service” for you and I has ceased?**

Superior Service!

- Hebrews 8:1-6-- *“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.”*

A. Jesus Christ’s PROMINENT SEAT.

- Hebrews 8:1-- *“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”*
 1. *Are the opening words, “Now this is the main point of the things we are saying?” a summation of Hebrews 1-7, or is it an introduction to what the preacher will develop in chapters 8 through 10?*
 2. **Jesus Christ is seated at the “right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens”.**
 3. **The Levitical priests never sat down because there was no place to sit in the tabernacle or temple, and because their work was never done.**
 - Hebrews 10:11-- *“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.”*
 4. **After Jesus Christ finished His work of redemption, He sat down on the right hand of His Father in heaven.**
 - a. The “right hand” symbolized honor, exaltation, and power. To stand was considered an honor; to sit a supreme honor.
 - b. The “right hand” also was a place of mercy and acquittal.-- the Sanhedrin.
 - John 3:17-- *“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”*
 5. **Jesus Christ sits at His Father’s right hand where He today does his work of “customer service”**
 - a. He acts as our intercessor with the Father
 - Hebrews 5:23-- *“is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*
 - b. We are to come boldly before His “help desk” to find mercy and grace to help us in our time of need.
 - Hebrews 4:16-- *“come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

B. Jesus Christ's SUPERIOR SANCTUARY

- Hebrews 8:2-- *"a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man."*
1. **Jesus Christ did not minister in the earthly tabernacle or temple, but rather He serves in the "true" tabernacle in heaven.**
 - a. **"True" in the sense of real.** The Jewish tabernacle and temple were mere "shadows" of the real thing, the heavenly sanctuary.
 - 1) Moses followed the "pattern" that God showed him.
 - Hebrews 8:5-- *"Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."*
 - 2) Plato's belief that everything we see, hear, or touch is but a shadow or reflection of the real counterpart in another world.
 - 3) The Old Covenant with its rituals, ceremonies, altars, sacrifices, the tabernacle and the temple were but shadows and types of the realities of the New. The preacher will further develop this idea in Hebrews 9:1-15.
 2. **Jesus Christ could not, nor did He ever minister in the Holy of Holies in the earthly tabernacle or temple.**
 - Hebrews 8:4-- *"For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law."*
 3. **Jesus Christ must minister the new offerings in a new heavenly sanctuary, not built by man, but by God.**
 - Hebrews 9:11-12-- *"the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, not of this creation, Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."*

C. Jesus Christ's SUPERIOR CONTRACT built on SUPERIOR PROMISES.

- Hebrews 8:6-- *"But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises."*
1. The work of a "mediator" is to act as a "go-between" to bring two parties together in an agreement.
 2. **Moses acted as the "mediator" of the Old Covenant or contract.**
 - Deuteronomy 5:5-- *"I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain."*
 3. **Jesus Christ has "obtained a more excellent ministry" by mediating a better, superior covenant based on superior promises.**
 - a. The word "covenant" denotes a disposition, an arrangement, or ordering of things.
 - b. It details how God is to be worshipped and obeyed.
 4. **The New Covenant (Hebrews 8:7-13) is superior to the old in that it relates mainly to the heart, to the pardon of sin, to a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ rather than external rites and outward observances under the old.**
 5. **The New Covenant is superior because it is based on superior promises.**
 - a. The Old Covenant promises mainly pertained to this life.
 - b. The New Covenant promises center around the spiritual blessing that are ours in Christ Jesus.
 - c. The culmination of all the promises is that one day we will sit with Christ on His throne in heaven.
 - Revelation 3:21-- *"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."*