

We Have an Altar!

Intro & review:

1 – What is the Altar?

- A. An altar was a place of sacrifice. It was a place of divine and human interaction (2 Chr 4; Gen 12:8, 22:8; Exo 21:13-14).

- B. The Christian altar refers to the completed work of Christ. Our altar is the cross (Heb 10:12, 14; Titus 3:5).

2 – How do we Benefit from the Altar?

- A. What the cross reveals about the justice and mercy of God and what God accomplished on our behalf—this is the source of our spiritual nourishment (Jn 6:53).

- B. We feed on the cross by participating in the finished work of Christ by faith (Jn 6:58).

- C. Negative contrast: Those who continue to seek to approach God through the obsolete ceremonies of the Old Covenant are cut off from Christ (Gal 5:2).

3 – Why is the Altar the Source of Grace?

- A. Hebrews supports his assertion that “we have an altar” by alluding to the Day of Atonement ritual in Lev 16.

- B. Similarity: The treatment of the sacrificial animals on the Day of Atonement points to the work of Christ. Jesus suffered a shameful death “outside” the camp” (Mt 27:32f, 21:39; Jn 19:20; Gal 3:10-13; 2 Cor 5:21).

- C. Difference: The death of Jesus atoned for sin and resulted in the sanctification of His people (Heb 10:10, 14).

Concluding thoughts: