

"Our Great High Priest"

Part 2

Hebrews 4:14-8:5

Introduction: Last week in our study of the book of Hebrews we were looking at chapter 4:14-16. It is in these verses that the writer takes us to where we see look at Jesus Christ as our *Great High Priest*.

Notice Hebrews 4:14

In this verse the writer pulls all of his previous thoughts together and He presents Jesus Christ as our *Great High Priest*.

Notice Hebrews 2:9-10

Here the writer is speaking of the humanity of our Lord. He was made the Captain of our salvation and He was made PERFECT through sufferings. This means that as the Captain of our salvation and because of the sufferings that He went through He is now able to relate to you and I who go through times of suffering. This was especially important to the Hebrew believers who received this letter since they were in the midst of persecution for their faith.

Notice Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus became a man so that He could satisfy the wrath of God on behalf of man. So at the end of His life He stepped into the position of our *Great High Priest* and He made the ULTIMATE sacrifice of His own life as the payment for our sins. Now because He suffered as He was tested He is able to "succor" or to "AID" those who are going through suffering on this earth.

Notice Hebrews 3:1

Here in this verse we see that he is focused upon Jesus as our Apostle and High Priest. The writer then works his way through chapter 3 and 4 to show us that Jesus has for all of us a rest that is available and that rest can be entered into only by faith.

I. **His Position**

Part 2

Now notice Hebrews 4:14 again.

The words "**seeing then**" refer back to all of what we just said. Based on the Truth that Jesus was a man who made the sacrifice for our sins, He was tested and tried, He has provided a rest for us as we pass through this old world, and He has passed through the heavens into the presence of the Father the writer encourages his readers to hold fast to their faith. He is saying, "Look! The Captain of our salvation has blazed a trail and we must stay true to the path that is before us. Sure it is tough at times. Sure it is painful at times but he is able to "succor/aid" us in the midst of the journey. So let us stand firm. We must not give up but we must trust Him in the midst of whatever we face."

Now the writer will go back to the thought that our Great High Priest can relate to what we face on this path of life.

Notice Hebrews 4:15

We looked at this last week but I need to touch on it again for our study tonight. The word "tempted" here means "tested". The idea is not that Jesus was tempted with every temptation that we face. Jesus was "tested" with the same 3 areas which we face testing on a daily basis. He was tested with:

1. The lust of the flesh.
2. The lust of the eyes.
3. The pride of life.

Last week I showed you that all of this happened when He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

1. **He was tempted with the "lust of the flesh".**

Matthew 4:1-3

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

² *And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, **he was afterward an hungred.***

³ *And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

2. **He was tempted with the "lust of the eyes".**

Matthew 4:8-9

⁸ Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them:

⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

3. He was tempted with the "pride of life".

Matthew 4:5-6

⁵ Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Now last week I told you when Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted it was NOT to see if He would sin. IT WAS TO PROVE THERE WAS NO SIN IN HIM! This was to show He was sinless and pure and He therefore qualified to be the PERFECT sacrifice.

But let me get you back to the thought. Jesus felt the very pressures of this life that we feel as we pass through this old world. But I need to take this thought even further. He felt pressure far above anything which we have ever felt in our lives.

Matthew 26:36-44

³⁶ Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

³⁷ And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

³⁹ And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

⁴⁰ And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

⁴¹ Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

⁴² He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

⁴³ And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

⁴⁴ And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

That night in the Garden Jesus came under 3 spiritual attacks. Satan was trying his best to pull Jesus out of the will of the Father. Therefore He knows what it is to feel the pressure of Satan's attacks. Mark tells us something else about this attack.

Mark 14:32-34

³² And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

³³ And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

³⁴ And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

I have underlined and bolded the words "sore amazed" because I want you to know what they mean. Here is Vines definition.

"To throw into terror or amazement, to alarm thoroughly, to terrify"...

Now let me explain what this means. Jesus was terrified of the path that was before Him. The bottom line is that Jesus knows what it is to be afraid.

Now let us get back to Hebrews again.

So here in Hebrews 4:15 the writer tells his readers that Jesus their High Priest is able to relate to them in the midst of the pressures they face on the path the Father has appointed them to walk. They were feeling the pressure of the persecution and they were being tested with the:

1. **Lust of the flesh** - This was seen in the fact that they desired to return to Judaism as a way to escape the suffering. The flesh wanted to seek the easy road.
2. **Lust of the eyes** - There were things which they desired but were unable to get them because of their faith in Christ. They had been ostracized from the Jewish community due to their faith in Jesus. There were many things now that were out of reach. Such things as friendships, acceptance, positional standing and these were all important to the Jewish people.
3. **Pride of life** - They were now viewed as the outcasts. They were looked down upon because of their faith in Christ.

Jesus knew exactly what they were going through. Now let me show you the offer extended to them as believers.

Notice Hebrews 4:16

The writer now stands on all that Jesus accomplished, all that He experienced and on His sinless perfection and he points his readers to the open door into the Throne Room.

Based on this the writer invites His readers to come **BOLDLY** to the Throne of grace. The word "boldly" means "to come confidently". It is not that we come to God in arrogance and it is not that we come carelessly into His presence. But it means that based on the finished work of our Lord and His experience while He walked the earth we are able to step into the Throne Room whenever there is a need. Now let us first look at this in the proper context. In the Old Testament under the Old Covenant the ordinary person could not come into the presence of God. It was only the Priest one day a year that had the privilege of entering God's presence.

But Jesus is not an ordinary man He is the Great High Priest. When He died He opened the way for man to come into the presence of God. Let me show you what happened when Jesus died.

Matthew 27:50-51

⁵⁰ *Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.*

⁵¹ *And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;*

In the Temple there was a veil that hung between the holy place and the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies was the mercy seat where God met with the high priest. The veil represented sin and that was seen in the fact that it was used as a barrier between God and man. This veil was believed to be as thick as the palm of your hand. When Jesus died on the cross this veil was torn FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM. It was not from the bottom to the top. It was FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM. This is very significant because it tells us that God tore the veil down the middle. It is a picture of how the death of Jesus Christ satisfied the demands of the Father on our behalf and now sin has been paid for and the Way to God has now been opened. God has provided a Way for man to come to Him.

There was no high priest under the Old Covenant who could do this but the Great High Priest has done it. Now that these Hebrews were saved they had access to the Throne Room at any time.

Notice Hebrews 4:16 again.

We need to notice that the Throne is called the Throne of Grace. Grace is unmerited favor. In other words it is getting that which we do not deserve. To have access into the Throne Room is something that we surely do not deserve.

Now let us notice what is available at the Throne of Grace.

Notice Hebrews 4:16 again.

There are 2 unlimited supplies at the Throne.

1. **Mercy** - Mercy is not the same as grace. Mercy is NOT getting what we do deserve.
2. **Grace** - Grace is getting what we do not deserve.

Both of these are offered to the believer when he or she is at a time of need. Let me first apply this to the Hebrew believers in the situation they were facing.

They had no doubt made mistakes in their walk. They were human so they had sinned but at the Throne of Grace there was mercy for them. The moment they sinned they could rush into the Throne Room for cleansing as they confessed the sin. Also as they faced the path of persecution which God had appointed to them and they struggled with their weaknesses they could come confidently into the Throne Room and there they would find help for the spiritual battle they were facing. Everything they needed was provided by their Great High Priest. They could also rest in the fact that Jesus had lived under the very pressure they were facing. He knew their fear; He knew how the Devil would tempt them with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. He knew what it was to feel the torment of the spiritual attacks of Satan. He knew all of this and therefore He knew exactly what it was that they needed. They could come confidently to the Throne and He would give to them that which they needed to continue to press forward.

Application:

The very same is true for you and me. When we feel pressure He knows what we are feeling. When we are afraid he knows what it is like. When we are under a spiritual attack our Lord knows what it is like. Therefore, He waits for us to come confidently into the Throne Room to receive what we need both when we fail (mercy) and when we are facing the tests on the path which God has appointed us to walk (grace).

Conclusion:

I will leave you with the Words of our Lord from the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7:7-11

⁷ *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*

⁸ *For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

⁹ *Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?*

¹⁰ *Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?*

¹¹ *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

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