

TEXT - Hebrews 4:14-5:10 - Jesus Gets Us

Intro

It is a joy to be able to share from God's Word this morning. My name is Tyler Kirkbride. I am co-youth director here at MRCC alongside my wife Inge. Today we are going to be looking at beautiful scripture from Hebrews 4:14-5:10, If you have a Bible I would encourage you to open to that. We will read it shortly. This passage gives us understanding of the Doctrine of Jesus priestly office. It gives encouragement that Jesus understands us as humans and has made a way for us to be saved and to be able to know and approach God in confidence.

Would you join me in prayer as we ask God to reveal himself to us through His word..

Prayer

Hook

Have you ever been in a situation where you have felt a bit misunderstood? Maybe you were in a new place and it was very different from what you were used to. I am sure we all have,

For myself I think back to my first few months living in the Netherlands. When we were there doing missionary work. Although almost everyone spoke English, I felt uncomfortable and maybe a bit misunderstood while adjusting to life in a new country for the first few months.

One of the churches we attended and served at was an English speaking church called Christ Church Heiloo. It was mostly made up of Expats from all over the world. Some had been in the Netherlands for years and others similar to me had just recently arrived.

I began to feel understood, because so many of us were experiencing the same struggles and joys we could share our experiences together. We "got" each other.

Today we are looking at how "Jesus gets us". How He came to earth as a human and experienced the same temptation we faced, yet He stayed sinless. He is able to sympathize with our weakness and through what He did as the "Great High Priest" He has made a way for us to approach God boldly.

Context

I am going to quickly set the context of what we are going to be reading.

Hebrews was written to a primarily Jewish audience who were recent converts to following Jesus. This meant giving up their previous ways of living. This came at the cost of facing persecution. They were considering going back to their Jewish ways or trying to judaize the Christian faith.

The author of Hebrews is writing this letter to encourage them to stay faithful to following Jesus through everything. The author also primarily seeks to remind the reader of Jesus' superiority over everything. He also uses an abundance of links to Old Testament passages to really help the reader understand.

The Author of Hebrews right before verse 14 is exhorting the people to rest in the reminder of the character of Jesus the great high priest. To trust in God's word as truth and to allow it to be the focus of their lives.

So with these things in mind let's read the text.

Text Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Jesus the Great High Priest

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,^[a] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

5 Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. 4 And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.

5 In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."^[b]

6 And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever,^c in the order of Melchizedek."^[c]

7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he

suffered 9 and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him 10 and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Trouble in Text

The need for a High Priest

As we read this Text from Hebrews we see the need for a great high priest and the author of Hebrews is exhorting the readers to hold firmly to their faith because the “Great High priest” has come.

It is easy for us as modern readers to feel a bit distanced and confused about the Hebrew sacrificial system, but as we learn more about it it helps us to understand the Gospel and need for Jesus even more.

To fully understand what this means we need to go back and look at the role of the “high priest” and why it was necessary.

We know that in the garden of Eden, humanity sinned and this has caused everyone to be sinful by nature, deserving of God’s wrath and judgment. Humanity faces temptation, weakness and the effects of a broken world every single day.

There was a divide between God and His people. In the Hebrew sacrificial system, the role of the High Priest was to be a mediator and intercede between God and His people. As we read in chapter 5, they were to deal gently with those who were ignorant or going astray, because they also shared the same weakness.

The tribe of Levi in Israel was set apart from the others with the job of being priests. Their roles were to perform the religious rites and rituals for Israel.

High Priest Still falls Short

The high priest's job was to make sacrifices for the people of Israel on the day of Atonement. Once a year, the high priest would enter the “holy of holies”, where the presence of God was.

But before he could enter He would have to also atone for His own sin. The high priest would atone for all the sins of the people, interceding on their behalf, then God would forgive them.

Ultimately this did bring forgiveness to the people of Israel. But there was still a separation from God . Under the old covenant the only person allowed into God's presence was the high priest, under that covenant the day of atonement was done for the forgiveness of sins but people were still locked out from the presence of God.

But the trouble about the high priests was that even though they were placed in this unique and important role, they were still sinful. He always had to atone for His own sins before He could carry out the job. If he did it wrong then he would be giving up his life.

Need someone greater

As we read into the first four verses of chapter 5, the author outlines four main principles of the office of high priest from the Old Testament. Which we will address later on.

It presents the need for a "Great High Priest". One that is without sin and that can atone for the sins of the world once and for all. One that lived amongst us and felt the weight of temptation and human weakness but stayed perfect.

Trouble in Life

Image

One of the hardest parts about moving and living somewhere new and far away from "home" is feeling homesick. Especially for me being a "homebody". There were many moments early on in our missionary journey where I was really homesick and felt like it would just be easier to go home where everything was comfortable. But doing that would have been going against what God was calling me to do.

We often want to return to our old ways of living when following Jesus gets hard. Like the Hebrews

The Jewish Christians that are being addressed here in the book of Hebrews were facing difficulty, they had given up their old ways of living and began following Jesus. I assume they were also facing a sense of "homesickness". They were also being persecuted for their new found belief in Jesus, and they were questioning whether following Jesus was really worth all they were going through. The author of Hebrews is

pleading with them to hold fast to their confession because they have this great high priest in Jesus.

So many of us face this same reality. Not necessarily the persecution but the feeling of wanting to return to our “old lives”. Our sinful nature and desires will lead us that way. Each one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God as read in Romans 3:23. Each one of us gives into the weakness of our flesh. Each one of us needs the “Great High priest”.

Paul says this about our old lives in Ephesians 4:22-24 **22** to put off your old self,[f] which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

We often turn to worldly comforts

Often when the trials and tribulations of life come, our weakness continues and we turn to the comforts of the world to try and give us satisfaction, maybe we continually turn to drinking, or pornography or scrolling endlessly on social media. The result of that never leads to peace, it leads us further away from God. We must continually be repenting of our sins and allowing God to transform us and lead us to a place of flourishing.

Grace in Text

Jesus is the Great High Priest

- Ps 110:4
- Ps 2:7

The good news is that Jesus is the Great High Priest! The next number of chapters in Hebrews focus on explaining this more, within our passage today we get an introduction to the theme of Jesus priestly identity

Chapter 4 Verse 14-16 speaks of the believers confidence. That Jesus is “a great high priest”. The author adding in the word “great” into the title suggests His superiority to the Levitical priests.

Pointing towards Psalm 110:4 which the author quotes in coming verses. It says

Where it says this ⁴
The LORD has sworn

and will not change his mind:
 “You are a priest forever,
 in the order of Melchizedek.”

the author is emphasizing how Jesus' priesthood is forever and superior. Jesus' priestly sacrifice atoned for all sins once and for all.

We are reminded that Jesus has gone right through to the most supreme place in heaven at the right hand of the Father.

In addition His identity as “Great” High Priest is further emphasized by the title “Son of God”. Really exhorting the believer to respond to this good news by continually holding firmly to their profession of faith. Knowing and Trusting He is the Son of God and Great High Priest

The exhortation continues in v15 encouraging the reader that Our High Priest is one who gets us as humans. He has entered into our world, into our weakness as a result of that Jesus can sympathize meaningfully with us.

Jesus experienced the weight and pressure of temptation that each human being has given into. But Jesus did not sin, this doesn't mean life was easy for Jesus, He fought a constant battle to overcome the temptations life holds. But yet Jesus holds the victory.

For the listeners of Hebrews this was incredibly relevant, they were feeling the temptation to run back to their old ways. To run from the persecution and homesickness they were feeling.

But Jesus can sympathize with their temptation to run from persecution. Jesus felt that same pressure as we read in the gospels Matt 26:39 before Jesus endured the cross, in a time of prayer Jesus cried out to God the father. It says this

And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You *will*.”

But Jesus declined the temptation to run and was obedient to the fathers will and endured the cross.

Thus having Jesus the High Priest gives undeniable confidence. The writer urges his readers to approach God.. There is no longer a barrier between God's presence and His people. There is now an invitation to come to “The Throne of Grace”. It shows both

God's sovereignty and His Love for His people.

So that in times of need followers of Jesus can go to God and He offers help, forgiveness, mercy and grace. We know that each one of us is in need of all of these things.

It is also important to note that the writer is wanting the reader to approach "BOLDLY". Christians should not be tentative, because of the confidence they find in the Great High Priest. God calls us to himself and desires us to come to HIM!

Jesus Appointment as High Priest

We are going to spend a few moments looking at chapter 5 verse 1-10. Between verses 1-10 there are 3 clear movements we can see. 1. Universal principles of Priesthood (5:1-4) 2. The Appointment of Christ as High Priest (5:5-6) 3. The Path to Appointment (5:7-10)

That gives us some more insight into Jesus as the High Priest to really help to drive home Jesus' priestly identity.

Verses 1-4 we see how the author is clarifying characteristics of a High Priest. To Quickly note these points they are

1. They originate from among the people.
2. They represent people in matters related to God, through offering gifts and sacrifices
3. They are able to deal gently with people
4. God is the one who appoints to the office of high priest.

Verses 5-6 then switch gears from these universal high priest principles related to the old covenant priesthood to now seeing how Jesus Christ was appointed as High Priest.

Jesus was appointed by God for this position. Incredibly Jesus doesn't take the role out of a desire for self glorification, but to bring God the father glory.

These verses the author ties back again to Psalm 110:4 which we read and Psalm 2:7 . Which says I will proclaim the LORD's decree:

He said to me, "You are my son;
today I have become your father

Both these Psalms declare God the father's pronouncement of Jesus as God's Son and the Great High Priest. Proclaiming Jesus is the Son of God, Priest and King

Jesus Path to Appointment

At the end of our passage we get some insight into Jesus' journey to appointment. Jesus' appointment to high priest required suffering, obedience and endurance. Giving an example of how to live

In his life on earth Jesus continually submitted to the Father's will through everything, He learned obedience and from what He suffered He was made perfect.

This perfection gives good news, He became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey Him. The great high priest offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin!

Verse 10 concludes with the writer reassuring that as a result of the Sons' suffering, he has been appointed by God to fulfill the position of "Great High priest" according to the order of Melchizedek.

We don't have time to dive into the implications of that, but it is what is focused on by the writer in the coming verses! So I encourage you study more of that in your devotional time this week.

Grace In Life

- Having people who understood me helped to gain confidence
- We can approach God with confidence because of the grace we have received - For Help - HE gets us, Jesus is a personal saviour, He wants a relationship with His children.
- Come to Jesus with our sin - He is the source of our salvation
- Hold Fast to our confession -

The first few months on the mission field were difficult. I was missing the comforts of Home. Although meeting many people in similar shoes to me. I was still struggling to find my place .

But as we began our mission term, we knew there was also another couple coming from Saskatchewan that would be arriving in February. As they arrived, I hit it off with Jason. He was now in the same position that I was, learning a brand new place and new

language. But finally I had someone other than Inge that knew the taste of Tim Hortons, or that I could talk about the Toronto maple Leafs with.

Jason and I got each other. We were able to connect because of a common understanding of each other and how we grew up. We helped each other struggle through learning a new language, and that gave me more confidence and helped me to really enjoy the last part of our trip. I think without having someone who “Got me” It probably would have been more difficult.

Come to Jesus

For us today we see from our Hebrews passage we worship a God who “gets us”. Who gives us confidence, help and encouragement. The One is the source of Salvation.

Jesus is a personal, tangible, compassionate savior. He is not distant, up in the clouds god, but one who walks with us every single day. One that faced the difficulties life brings, one that experienced heartbreak, pain and persecution. He gets us. He loves us.

Each one of us is in need of saving. We can not save ourselves. If left to our own devices we continue in our sinful ways, we stay stuck in addiction, laziness and anger etc.

Maybe for some of you, life has been hard and you find yourself wondering if it is worth living for Jesus. You feel a desire like the Hebrews to retreat back to your old life.

I want to encourage you today, that it is worth living for Jesus. He is the Great High Priest that has paid the price for your sin. In Jesus we find peace, joy, endurance, love, forgiveness, freedom and satisfaction. These things can only be found through Him.

This requires us to come before God in repentance laying down our lives and desires and being obedient to Gods commands. Asking God to reveal himself to us, to forgive us and to be the Lord of our lives. Allowing Him to transform us by His Spirit so that we can flourish here on earth.

As the passage says we are to come BOLDLY before God’s throne to find grace, mercy and Help. For us as Christians this is an invitation to approach with confidence, knowing that God is faithful, just, loving and compassionate. **So may we not be cautious with approaching God but run into His arms. Because Jesus Gets US**

Hold Fast to Our Confession

As we close I want us to be reminded of the exhortation from the author of Hebrews that says “ Let us Hold firmly to the faith we profess”.

Although we may not be facing the same persecution the Hebrews were facing, we face a world that is skeptical and critical of Christian message. The result of that is many Christians soften the gospel to make it fit with “today's” standards.

So it is important for us to Hold Fast to Our Confession the truths of who God is.. That means we need to get to know God through reading His word, and allowing Him to show us more of Himself. As we approach the throne of God He will continue to give us confidence to live a life of flourishing for the kingdom of God.

So as we go this morning. May we rest in the truth that Jesus Gets Us, that He paid the price as the great high priest for all of our sin once and for all. As a result we can continually approach God to find mercy, peace, grace, help and rest!

Amen

Pray with me.

Parting blessing

Stand to receive our parting blessing

Here these words from Jude 1:24-25

“To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”

Jude 1:24-25 NIV