

## Christ: The Merciful and Faithful High Priest

Hebrews 2: 14-18

Our text this morning comes from a moving and encouraging passage of Scripture. The Hebrew writer has sought to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing He was higher than even the angels themselves. He rejoiced in the fact that Christ wasn't ashamed to call believers brethren. He well understood the priestly responsibilities our Lord fulfilled.

The priestly duties of Christ may not be thought of as often in our modern society, but we must remember to whom the writer is speaking. He wrote to Hebrew believers who were raised in Jewish culture and tradition. There was an ever present temptation to remain committed to the old traditions and the law. Those to whom the letter was originally written would identify with the priestly duties of Christ.

Although we were not raised in a time when sacrifices were offered by the high priest within the temple, we too must understand the priestly work of Christ. I rejoice that we have a great High Priest to whom we can go and depend on. Let's take a few moments to consider the [attributes](#) our Lord possesses as we think on: [Christ – The Merciful and Faithful High Priest](#).

**I. The Liberation in Christ (14-16)** – As we look at these verses we are reminded of the fallen state of mankind. Our only hope was to be set free from the penalty of death that sin had caused. Jesus is our liberator!

**A. His Humility (14a)** – There can be no doubt that we are born in a body of flesh, [partakers of flesh and blood](#). We all share a common human nature. There is nothing any of us can do about the bodies we live in. No matter how precious and innocent a baby may be, it is still born in flesh and blood, with a desire to sin. The fallen nature of man is passed on to all who are born.

- God knew before creation that man would sin and need to be freed from the bondage of sin. Jesus was to be our Liberator. He took part of the same flesh we possess. He wasn't born in sin as we are, but He came to earth, born of a virgin, to become flesh. Jesus willingly became a man to set us free from the bondage of sin.
- Consider the significance of what He did. He who stood in power at creation; He who dwelt in the glories of heaven among the holy angels, became flesh so that we might be forgiven! The Creator humbled Himself to come and dwell among His creation. As Mary held her new born Son, the creature caressed the Creator. Jesus condescended to earth, becoming a man so that you and I might be saved. [Phil.2:7 – But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:](#) He became flesh for us!

**B. His Sanctity** (14b) – [that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil](#); Jesus wasn't born in a body of flesh to simply understand the struggles of man. He endured all that we could and more, but that was not His purpose for coming. Jesus came to die.

- Because of sin, there had to be a perfect sacrifice, one that could completely and forever atone for sin. Jesus came to become that sacrifice; He came to die for the sins of the world. Jesus came to liberate us from the bondage of sin as He died upon the cross.

- As He hung upon that cruel cross, the sins of the world were placed upon Him. He, who knew no sin, became sin so that we might be forgiven! Jesus alone was able to secure our redemption. He alone could live that holy, sinless life to purchase our redemption. [1 Pet.3:18 – For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit](#): Aren't you glad for a loving Savior?

**C. His Authority** (14b) – It was at the cross that Jesus fully defeated Satan and the power of death. We know that death is the result of sin. When sin is finished it brings forth death. Apart from the resurrection of Christ our Lord we would have no hope of eternal life. As Jesus came forth out of the tomb, he rose victorious over death, hell, and the grave. The burden of sin was defeated at Calvary. He alone had the power to overcome the power of sin.

- This was no small victory. Jesus forever conquered the devil, defeating him as He gave His life and rose again. Satan may have won the battle in the Garden of Eden, but Jesus secured victory when He triumphed in life! He utterly destroyed the devil. This has the idea of "*bringing to nothing, to make inoperative.*" Jesus brought liberation to the captives! [Col.2:15 – And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.](#)

**D. His Liberty** (15) – [And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.](#) Men are born in fear of death. As Jesus secured victory over death, He liberated us from the fear and dread of death. We have been set free from the penalty of death. Born in sin, I was worthy of death and judgment. I lived apart from God and condemned. But praise the Lord, Jesus has removed the judgment of death from me! I now stand justified before a holy God. The fear of death that sin will bring has been removed.

- I have no way of knowing what my future holds, but I am secure in Christ my Lord. When I draw my last breath in this mortal body, it is then that I will begin to live! I no longer worry about where I am headed. I have been set free from the bondage of sin. I am no longer an outcast and enemy. I have been born into the family of God with the promise of eternal life! Jesus did that for me when He died for my sin and the sins of this world.

**II. The Intercession of Christ (17-18)** – I rejoice for the liberation that Christ brought to sinful men, but I'm glad that that wasn't all He did for us. We are given the opportunity of salvation, including access to the very throne of God through Christ our Intercessor. We have One who makes intercession for all who belong to Him. Let's look at what we have in Christ our Intercessor.

**A. His Compassion (17a)** – **It behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren.** What love and compassion we find in this verse. The word **behooved** has the idea of "*being constrained and moved in order to sympathize on one's behalf.*" Jesus desired to feel what we feel. He wanted to know the sufferings we face. He willingly became flesh, and in doing so, He chose to suffer the trials, the difficulties, and the hurts that we do.

- Others maybe can't sympathize with you. The angels in heaven don't know how you feel, but Jesus does. He has been there. He has endured the agonies of life just as we do. He knows what it is to suffer need. He knows what it is to thirst, to be despised, ridiculed, and rejected of men. He knows what it is to suffer pain and the agony of affliction and death. Jesus suffered all of that so He might minister unto us. He bore the pain and suffering of this life for you and me! Who has ever loved you like Jesus does?

**B. His Position (17b)** – **that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God.** We need to consider the OT economy for a moment. God ordained a high priest to stand as the mediator between God and men. He alone went behind the veil. He alone had access to the presence of God, and he was the one responsible to bring the sacrifice before God to provide atonement. The high priest was man's representative to the Lord.

- When Jesus ascended back to the Father, He assumed the role of High Priest. Jesus now stands as our Representative to God. We are not dependent on another to make our intercessions known. We can go directly to the throne of grace through Christ our Intercessor.

- He isn't just a High Priest; He is a **merciful** and **faithful** High Priest. Man may not be able to fully sympathize with your need, but Jesus can. I may not be able to identify with all that you are facing, but Jesus can.

- He is also faithful. There will be times when man will let you down. There are times when others are forgetful or too busy to attend to your needs, but Jesus is ever faithful to His own! We need not fear that He will not care for our need or that He will not be there when we call. **Heb.7:25** – **Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.** My Lord is ever making intercession for me!

**C. His Reconciliation (17c)** – As our great High Priest, Jesus stands [to make reconciliation for the sins of the people](#). This phrase is often translated as being our propitiation. It means “*to sacrifice, to make a covering, a satisfaction, a payment, or an appeasement for sin.*” It was the task of the high priest to offer the blood sacrifice for sin. Jesus stands as the High Priest who offers the sacrifice, as well as being the sacrifice Himself. It was His precious blood that secured our redemption.

- His royal blood was accepted as the **covering** for sin. God no longer sees my sin, only the covering of Jesus’ blood.
- His blood stands as the **satisfaction** for my sin. The penalty of sin has been satisfied in Christ’s blood.
- His blood stands as the **payment** for the penalty of sin. My sin was paid for at Calvary. I need not worry about securing any further payment for sin.
- His blood also stands as an **appeasement** for the wrath that I faced because of sin. I have no fear of the judgment of God for sin because I’ve been cleansed in His blood. I stand justified in the eyes of God. Jesus fully satisfied the righteous demands of God and reconciled us unto Him. [1 John 4:10 – Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.](#)

**D. His Attention (18)** – [For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.](#) We know that Jesus suffered beyond comprehension as He faced the cruelties of the cross. The Lamb of God came to earth born in a lowly manger. He lived a life with little wealth or possessions. He was rejected of His own people. He knew what it was to be alone in a crowd. He knew what it was to be belittled and challenged because of His association with the Father.

- Jesus knows the cares of life better than anyone who ever lived. Because of that [He is able to succor them that are tempted.](#) This is cause for rejoicing. The word [succor](#) means “*to run to the cry of a child; to bring help when it is needed.*” We serve a Lord who is mindful of us. He hears the cries of His children. When we speak His name or cry out for help, Jesus is right there! You will never face a trial or valley that Jesus won’t walk with you. He is as near as calling upon His name! [Heb.4:15-16 – For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.](#)

**Conclusion:** I rejoice for the Liberator and Intercessor I have in Jesus. He did for me what I never could and He continues to meet my every need. Do you know Him today? If not, come to Him!