

## Jesus – our Great High Priest

Hebrews 4: 14-16

Life is constantly changing, a never ending series of “highs” and “lows.” At times we reach breath-taking mountaintops, where we enjoy the beauty of life and relax in the sunlight of God’s love. At other times we endure deep, lonesome valleys filled with heartache, pain, and despair. Sometimes we enjoy a tranquil sea, but often a storm comes without warning.

Change is a part of life. It is very likely some of you faced change in your lives this week. There may have been financial or physical hardships; there may have been spiritual struggles. Whatever the case, these days are sure to come, but they don’t have to be faced alone.

Hebrews has a central theme: *Jesus, the Great High Priest*. It offers a series of contrasts, in which Jesus is proven to be better than other sources or means. We have a Mediator, an Intercessor who wants to help us in life’s journey. For those who know Him, Jesus is the constant in the many changes we face in life.

Let’s take a few moments to consider the [attributes](#) this passage reveals concerning our Lord as we think on: [Jesus – Our Great High Priest](#).

**I. The Priesthood of Christ** (14) – [Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession](#). Here we discover a couple of aspects of His priesthood. Consider:

**A. His Nearness** – Hebrews was written to Christian Jews. They had been raised under the Mosaic Law, following the ceremonies observed in the Tabernacle and Temple. The high priest held a position of authority and the people looked to him for direction. They depended on him to offer the sacrifice, obtaining atonement. Many wanted to return to Judaism.

- Here we find a profound statement: [we have a great high priest](#). They had no need to look to the Temple; Jesus is our Great High Priest. You and I have a Great High Priest. He is near to us, not a God far off, but a present help in times of need! Ours isn’t mere religion; we have a matchless Redeemer. Our faith isn’t based on ceremonies and religious practices, but the Person of Jesus Christ! He is our hope; He is our faith; He is our security; He is our salvation! We have a Great High Priest who is near to us right now!

**B. His Nature** – We also find much about His nature as our High Priest. Consider:

**1. His Rank** – *Seeing then that we have a great high priest.* There were many who served within the Temple. Each had a job to do, but all priests were not the same. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies. However, even the high priest was just a man. He was limited in what he could accomplish. The sacrifice had to be made again and again.

- We have a Great High Priest who possesses all authority. He is set apart from all the rest. Jesus was the Sacrifice and the Priest, all in one! A greater than Aaron and Eli now attends the mercy seat. He is Jesus the Son of God. He is the Man who died for sin, as well as God! I'm glad I am not depending on man's ability for my forgiveness and help.

**2. His Reign** – *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.* The high priest served for life. Many of them served for a number of years, but death eventually came and the next high priest was anointed. We have a Great High Priest who is eternal. He was crucified and buried, yet He lives forever more!

- *He is passed into the heavens.* He is seated at the right hand of God. *Heb.8:1-2 – Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; [2] A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.* Jesus reigns as the Great High Priest from the Tabernacle in glory. I'm thankful for the leadership of my pastor, but I thank God for the High Priest that reigns in glory with the Father!

**II. The Preeminence of Christ (15)** – *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.* Our Great High Priest is holy, sinless, and perfect. He possesses the divine attributes of God; He is God. Now it would be impossible to discover all Christ is, but we do see two areas of perfection. Notice:

**A. His Sympathy** – We have a High Priest that is *touched with the feeling of our infirmities.* The word *touched* means “*to sympathize, feel, and suffer with.*” Jesus actually feels what we feel; He hurts when we hurt; our pain is felt in His heart.

- The high priest couldn't offer that in every situation. He had not experienced all that people encounter. I can pray for you; I can have sympathy, but I can't always feel your pain. We all face different trials and valleys. There is One that knows your pain. Jesus knows, sympathizes, and feels our pain. I may never know or understand, but Jesus does. *Heb.2:18 – For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Succor: To run to upon hearing; to give assistance.)*

**B. His Superiority** (15b) – 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. Not only does Jesus know our pain, He forever conquered it. He endured every trial and temptation known to man and yet without sin. Without a sinless life, without a perfect sacrifice, we would still be dead in sin; there would be no hope, no salvation! He forever atoned for our sin. Heb.7:25-26 – 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. <sup>[26]</sup> For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; There will never need to be another sacrifice; it is finished!

- Our flesh is weak; we often fail when tempted, but we can overcome. Jesus provided a means of escape. You can overcome by the power in Jesus Christ. 1 Cor.10:13 – There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. God didn't say He wouldn't put more on us than we could bear, but that He would make a way of escape! Far too often we live in defeat because we yield to temptation. We will only be able to escape, overcome temptation, through Christ.

**III. The Provision of Christ** (16) – Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Prior to Christ, this was an impossibility; only the high priest had access to the Holy of Holies, the place where God dwelt. There was a veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Tabernacle and Temple. At His death, Jesus removed the veil of separation between God and man. Because of that we enjoy great provision through the finished work at Calvary. Notice what Christ achieved for all believers. We see:

**A. The Access** (16a) – Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace. We know that the high priest was the only one who could enter the Holy of Holies, and that but once a year. He didn't have unlimited access to the place where God dwelt. The average Jew never experienced the Shekinah glory of God. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would bathe himself and put on the white linen garment before entering behind the veil.

- This pictures what happens to the sinner at salvation. We were cleansed in the atoning blood of Jesus, and we were robed in the righteousness of God. Every believer has access to the place where God dwells. We can come boldly to the throne of grace, not judgment. That doesn't imply coming with a proud heart, but simply without fear or dread.

**B. The Abundance** – that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Consider what is available to us through our High Priest. We obtain mercy and find grace. Thank God for mercy.

There's not a one here who deserved God's mercy. Mercy withheld what we deserved – God's judgment. I'm glad that mercy came first. We are born in sin, guilty and condemned before God. He is willing to offer mercy to those who seek Him.

- After we obtain mercy, we find grace. God says I'm not going to give you what you deserve; instead, I am going to give you what you could never deserve. Grace is a marvelous gift from God. We couldn't earn it, buy it, or deserve it. Grace secured our salvation; it provided our Sacrifice; it guides our lives, keeps us from sin, and strengthens our walk with God. Jesus said, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.** There is an abundant supply of mercy and grace for the child of God.

**C. The Ability** – **that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.** There are no limits to God's provision. We never have to fear a shortage or rejection. It is ever available to the redeemed. It is there **to help in time of need.** That literally means "*before it's too late,*" before our temptation leads to sin.

- There is abundant help for the situations we face in life. If we are to find our means of escape, living in victory over sin, we must stay continually before the throne of grace. When temptation comes, get to the throne of grace! Jesus can provide what we need to be triumphant in Him. Spend time daily in God's presence and life will be much richer. Troubles and temptations will come, but you don't have to face them alone!

**Conclusion:** Where does life find you today? Has this week brought more heartache than happiness? Do you feel overwhelmed with the burdens you carry? Jesus wants to help you today. Christian, take full advantage of the priesthood of Christ.

If you have never trusted Jesus, if He isn't your Great High Priest, He can be; He wants to be! All you have to do is come in repentance and faith, and He will save your soul. Why go on bearing that heavy load alone when Jesus will help you?