

Heb 4:14-16

Good morning and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to Hebrews 4?

A couple of weeks ago we left off in our study in v13, as we talked about God's rest, the rest that only God can provide. And you'll recall the Hebrews didn't enter that rest because of unbelief.

And then you'll recall in v11 it says, **Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.**

Then we ended in v13 how all things are open, naked before our God.

And this is important to know because everyone of us is involved in a constant wrestling match. We have our God in heaven who's holy. And we internally wrestle sometimes-does God really love us with all of our frailty, all of our problems?

Getting up in the morning and looking in the mirror as I age is discouraging enough, but then to understand what lives inside of what I look at every day in the mirror is more depressing.

Romans 7 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice

My problem is that even though I'm saved, the sinner inside of me is still there. There's that traitor that lives within. There's a constant fight. **Romans 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.**

As Christians we have the new birth within us that moves us on to things that are better, that let us walk by faith. But we have to labor to enter into that rest. We have to trust in the things He's saying to us every day so that we can then enter into that rest.

Now this morning, we're gonna study 3 verses. After that we're gonna put our foot down on the gas and tackle a chapter or more at a time, but this morning really establishes the next several chapters of Hebrews regarding Jesus as our High priest.

We're gonna study v14-16, Let's read these 3 verses, and then we'll pray

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. The title of this mornings message is Access Granted
LETS PRAY

Why spend a whole Sunday just on 3 verses? Well the next 6 chapters of Hebrews all points to Jesus being our high priest.

And these verses set the table to present Christ as the great high priest. And some of that can seem like heavy theological stuff. But there's immense applicability for each of us to take hold of.

In all of chapter 4, you'll notice there are 3 exhortations towards the end of the chapter-each say 'let us'.

If you look in verse 11, it says let us labor therefore to enter into rest.

In verse 14 there's a let us- let us hold fast our confession. That's the second exhortation.

The 3rd exhortation is verse 16 let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. So here's 3 things that we're challenged with, that we need to lay hold of, that we need to do in our Christian life.

Now if you're new to this study, since the beginning of the book of Hebrews we've seen how Jesus is superior to angels. Jesus is superior to Moses. He's superior to Joshua. And our text this morning and the coming weeks is how Jesus is not only greater than every high priest, Jesus Himself is our great high priest.

For the Jew, the whole institution of the priesthood was central to their spiritual life. And remember the original audience of this book was facing the temptation to go back to the temple where the blood was being shed, where the incense was rising, where the priests were officiating.

Now remember God invented the priesthood for the Jews back in the law of Moses. It was all God's idea.

The priesthood was accurate, but it wasn't complete. It was a shadow. It was a picture of greater things to come. But to the Jew, the high priest was the epicenter of their faith. This is why the words high priest are used 16 times in Hebrews.

So now for a number of chapters, the author's going to tell us this priesthood of Christ is superior to any Jewish priesthood. Since we're only studying these 3 verses we're gonna dissect them b/c there's so much here for us.

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest pause here. We have a great high priest today as we sit here. He's yours. He is your great high priest. This truth is something we possess as believers.

who has passed through the heavens, Remember the bible sometimes talks about the multiple heavens. The first heaven is referred to as the atmosphere, the clouds. The 2nd heaven is the celestial arena, the stars and universe. The 3rd heaven is where God dwells.

It's saying here that our great high priest entered through all of those.

Jesus the Son of God, The OT high Priest, you remember the first one was Aaron, **SHOW PIC** the high priest only once a year would go into the Holy of Holies where the presence of God was.

They would have the blood of a lamb on the Day of Atonement. And after the high priest had sacrificed for himself, he would take that blood and pour it out on the mercy seat, for the propitiation for the sins of the whole nation. **CLOSE PIC**

And you'll remember that the high priest would go in with a rope tied around his ankle in case he dropped dead in the presence of God. That way they could drag him out from behind the veil. And he only went in once a year. That was all the access that he had.

But Jesus, the Son of God, is our great High priest.

Lets read all of verse 14

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Thinking of all those things, v 14 reminds us, we need to hold fast our confession.

What this is inferring is they were not holding fast, they were letting it slip. See at one time they had confessed Jesus as Messiah, they had believed the crucifixion, the resurrection, there was great emotion in all of that.

But a number of years have gone by now. Many of the Hebrew Christians are thinking, 'man, I turned away from my family, my religion, the religious system, the priest. I've been thrown out of my house, facing persecution because I trust this carpenter from

Galilee.' It would be so tempting to go back to the old way of Judaism.

Pressure from family, pressure from persecution, pressure from familiarity was causing them to slowly drift, to let go

And this happens today doesn't it?

Anyone who is a devoted follower of Christ today is in the minority aren't they? And that's really no surprise, Jesus told us **Matthew 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because[fn] narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**

The culture we live in is antagonistic to what we believe, and it's going to get worse.

I know the Lord is moving in mighty ways across our nation right now, and for that I rejoice. But I also know, when the pendulum swings the other way, things are going to get very difficult for followers of Christ.

That's why this exhortation is for us today and in the future, we need to hold fast our confession of Jesus..

Don't let it slip. Don't let go of it. What you say you believe about Jesus, the truth of who He is and what He's done, continue to hold fast to that.

Don't let that slip, because the reality is right now, in the presence of God, your high priest, my high priest, He is there, for us.

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Now remember what happened when Christ died. **Mark 15 37**
And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.
38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

SHOW PIC The veil was 60 feet high, it's 4 inches thick. It's torn. You can imagine how loud that was.

The torn veil signified that there is now nothing that hinders us from accessing God almighty. We have a High priest who has torn the veil, He's bridged the gap. We have free, uninhibited access to God almighty! **CLOSE PIC**

SHOW PIC But what happens is this. People try to be veil menders. They try to sew that veil back up, because as long as the veil is open, you don't need a priest. They try to sew that veil up, so you need a priesthood again so they have some authority or they have some role. **CLOSE PIC**

Please know this-any priesthood today in any religion, in any form is just counterfeit. Any man or woman on this planet that tells you you need to come to them to get to God, whether they're a priest or a nun or a pastor, whatever it is, if they're saying you need to come to them you know immediately they're a fake. It's phony.

It is an affront to the Son of God who shed His blood to tear the veil.

There is one priest. The veil was torn so that everyone of us can go. And there is at the right hand of Almighty God, our great High Priest.

Jesus Himself has made atonement, He's both the priest and the lamb. He stands there to receive us. It says this

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. The ancient Greek word translated sympathize literally means “to suffer along with.”

To the ancient Greeks, the primary attribute of their gods was apatheia, the essential inability to feel anything at all. Jesus isn't like that. He knows and He feels what we go through.

And notice Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, but without sin. Anyone here have weaknesses and temptations?

SHOW SLIDE Charles Spurgeon said ‘the fact that you wrestle shouldn't defeat you. It's the very evidence of the new birth.’ He said ‘dead men don't wrestle, only live men wrestle.’ **CLOSE SLIDE**

It tells us in **Galatians 5 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**

It's a remarkable description. It doesn't say the spirit first, the flesh first. Somebody cuts me out in traffic, do you think the first thing that comes to the surface is the spirit?

The flesh and the spirit are contrary, which is a military word. They're entrenched. They're dug in against each other. There's no third choice. The contest in our lives is so dramatic between the new birth and the old nature, there's no third choice.

And look V15 tells us when we struggle, Jesus is there.

But here's what happens. We blow it. We mess up. We give into temptation or we act in our flesh, and our tendency is to then think God is mad at us so instead of running to Him, we're ashamed. **SHOW PIC**. It's like a dog, right? A dog gets caught and they give some lame attempt to hide. **CLOSE PIC**. Don't we sometimes try to do the same?

But our great high priest Jesus can sympathize with every struggle we face. Which means, instead of running away from Him when we blow it...

16 Let us therefore come Pause here. Because of this, because of who Jesus is, because Jesus is our great high priest let us therefore come. In the greek it's progressive imperative, we should continue to come

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, Everybody understood a throne. There was Caesar's throne, there were thrones of power. The Jews understood the throne of God.

This is the throne of grace, which is an incredible truth that the throne that rules the entire universe, that has the final say on our lives, whether we go to heaven or hell. The throne of God is a throne of grace

And our great high priest, who's passed through the heavens, who stands at the right hand of the Father where he makes intercession for us, when we come to Him, feels deeply our own imperfection and our struggle. He was tested and tried in every way we are yet without sin.

So then he says, Let us therefore be coming boldly.

It means speaking freely. That's the boldness of it. In our vernacular we would say pouring out your heart. It's the way a husband talks to a wife or wife to a husband, or a child to a parent.

The idea is let us come, speaking freely. There's a complete openness. Why? Because the person on the other side of this conversation cares so deeply about my life.

Story of Bre and I walking...

And the scriptures are pleading with us to come to God that way. All of us in this room today can come to our great High priest that way, because where you're approaching is, first of all, it's a throne of grace.

The priest that is officiating there has bore all of your sin and been tested in every way as you are, and He feels for you. And because of that, when you come to Him, you can pour out the way you would with your closest friend in this world.

There's a boldness, a freedom about that for you and I to come to and say, Lord, I'm blowing it. I don't feel like fighting another day. Lord, I'm gonna throw in the towel. I'm gonna hit the bar on the way home. I'm gonna hit somebody on the way home. I can't take it, Lord.

See but so often the lie we believe is we think if we pour out our heart to God that He's gonna go, 'Do you ever stop whining?' We think God's thinking, 'I've given you my word, I've given you my blood, I give you my Holy Spirit, and all you do is come here and gripe.'

That's not what it says and that's not what He does!
Lets read all of v16

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. It says we can come freely speaking because He feels our brokenness and our struggle. And he's the great high priest, he's above

Aaron, he's gone through all of the layers into the real holy of Holies where Jesus stands to minister on our behalf.

And it says when we come to the throne, 2 things happen. **we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need**

There's a difference between mercy and grace. We obtain mercy when we get to this throne, which means we don't get what we ought to get.

See when we come to the throne of God, the gavel should come down and we should go up in a puff of smoke, but it doesn't.

It says we come to His throne, we obtain mercy. We don't get what we deserve to get. And because we don't get what we deserve to get, we find grace.

Grace is when we are given what we shouldn't be given. Grace is getting what you don't deserve.

You're imprisoned for murder. They're walking you down the hallway to take you to the electric chair. The whole process gets stopped. Somebody walks up with a suit and a tie and says your sentence has just been commuted by the governor. That's mercy. You're not getting what you should get. Just take me back to my cell.

No, no, there's more. The governor has not only commuted your sentence, here's the adoption papers. You're his son. Here's a Versace suit, you know, here's a Rolex watch or some Italian

loafers. The chauffeurs outside with a limousine. Here's the papers that make you inherit the mansion. It's all yours. That's Grace. Mercy is not getting what you should get. Grace is getting what you don't deserve

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The door is open. Access is granted.

Communion

1 Cor 11 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat;[fn] this is My body which is broken[fn] for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1 Cor 11 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

