

How to Draw Near to God

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Conflict

- The fight we have with God
- Continually trying to sort out the difference between us and God ... but on our terms
- He is continually offended and enraged by us
- How would you go with someone killing your son?
- Not even a trial in a sense but only sentencing – there is no question of our guilt

- Need a mediator
- What we need in this conflict is someone to broker a peace deal – Israel and Hamas
- Irreconcilable differences
- At each other
- Enemies
- Wanted to kill him
- Did kill him
- That's a problem
- Now he has a sword – created the world ... can easily slice and dice you – Hebrews 4

Revelation 19:11-15

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations ... Re 19:11–15

- Ever had the experience of talking to someone who can just tear you apart with their words?
- This is Jesus
- You do stuff that is diceable
- But not in Hebrews
- Starts in ch 2 – merciful high priest
- mediate >verb 1 try to settle a dispute between two other parties. 2 technical be a medium for (a process or effect). -DERIVATIVES mediation >noun mediator >noun. -ORIGIN Latin mediare 'place in the middle'.

A Great Mediator

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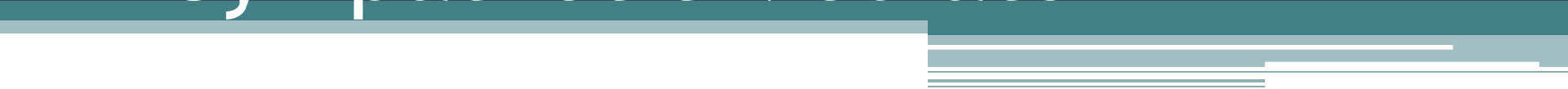
Hebrews 4:14

“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”

Jesus the Son of God speaks to his divinity and humanity. The writer brings it up to make a point.

- 83 high priests across Israel's history
- Connectors to God – but as Hebrews says they were fallen
- What do you engage with that you think will bring peace between you and God
- False mediators – when you have Christ why would you want anything else?
- For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ... 1 Ti 2:5
- Need a peace maker
- You know there are problems between you and God and you work to fix them
- Why do that when you have a perfectly good one?

A Sympathetic Mediator

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Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Compare with 2:18 - For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

- Negative and positive – you don't believe it. You are affected by the extreme most likely that you have discounted the humanity of Jesus because of the deity. This is what the writer of Hebrews speaks to.
- "If Jesus never sinned, then he doesn't know what temptation is like. He lived a sheltered life and is out of touch with how strong temptation can be." Here is what Lewis wrote in response to that objection:

C S Lewis

A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is . . . A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in . . . Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means—the only complete realist.

It Is Probably Worse

‘His whole life was one of temptation, and the very fact that he had powers and abilities which we do not possess only added to the stress. He was the fullest and most vivid personality that this world has ever known, and the very richness of His human nature exposed Him all the more fully to the assaults of temptation.’ T. H. Robinson

The Humanity of Jesus

- He was very, very human. I don't think that – I think that if he wasn't, the disciples wouldn't have had such a hard time grasping who he was, and I think that's kind of essential to who he was and in being here.
- Isaiah 53:2 that “He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.”
- Carpenter
- Luke 2:52 says that “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”
- So he grew up. He started off as a little baby – needed to be changed and fed – and then became a toddler who knew how to walk. And became a little boy who learned how to read and write. And then when he got older, his voice dropped in puberty and he grew a beard, and then he became a man. And yeah, he grew physically.
- 1 Timothy 2:5 says that there is “one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.”
- To mediate between us and God and to reconcile us to God, Jesus needed to be fully God and fully man. If he's not fully God, he can't connect us to God. And if he's not fully man, he can't represent mankind. And so Jesus was and is fully God, fully man.

Jesus Was Tempted to ...

- to lie (to save his life)
- to steal (to help his poor mother when his father died) and
- to covet (all the nice things that Zacchaeus owned) and
- to dishonor his parents (when they were more strict than others) and
- to take revenge (when he was wrongly accused) and
- to lust (when Mary wiped his feet with her hair) and
- to pout with self-pity (when his disciples fell asleep in his last hour of trial) and
- to murmur at God (when John the Baptist died at the whim of a dancing girl) and
- to gloat over his accusers (when they couldn't answer his questions)

In the Wilderness - Matt 4:1-11

- Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, " 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, " 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and " 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' " 7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' " 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.' " 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.
- Use your power to look after yourself, make it all about you, worship whatever you need to to get the power and glory you deserve

A Generous, Reigning Mediator

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Hebrews so far

- Many reasons you should hold fast to the hope
- Here we have the way that you can hold fast

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- When is our time of need? Every second ... egs
- Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.
- Now listen carefully as we close, because this is incredibly important. Every one of us needs help. We are not God. We have needs. We have weaknesses. We have confusion. We have limitations of all kinds. We need help.
- But every one of us has something else: we have sins. And therefore at the bottom of our hearts we know that we do not deserve the help we need. And so we feel trapped. I need help to live my life and to handle death and to cope with eternity—help with my family, my spouse, my children, my loneliness, my job, my health, my finances. I need help. But I don't deserve the help I need.

Each day

- Lord have mercy upon us
- From beginning to ending of the day
- Anything better than burning in hell and we have received mercy and grace

Hebrews 4 ... Personalised

Since then I have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, I will hold fast to my confession. For I do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with my weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as I am, yet without sin. I will then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that I may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14–16