

DON'T FORSAKE JESUS

THEN YOU HAVE NO HIGH PRIEST AND NO SACRIFICE

➤ **READ LEVITICUS 16**

➤ **READ HEBREWS 4:14-16**

SUMMARY: Approach God with confidence because we have a Great High Priest who opened the door and understands.

Look

- *“Great high priest”* – This name for Jesus is unique to the book of Hebrews
- *“Gone through the heavens”* – Jesus did this when he ascended into heaven, having offering himself as the perfect sacrifice for sins
- *“Jesus the Son of God”* – ‘Jesus’ reminds us of his humanity and ‘Son of God’ his divinity. He is far superior in his person and his work
- *“We have one who has been tempted in every way”* – This is the second time the author draws attention to Jesus being tempted as we are. Perhaps the Jewish detractors were saying, “If Christ really is God, then he can’t sympathize with us as our priests can.”
- *“Without sin”* – This is a vital truth when remembering Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf

Discuss

1. What role does faith play in our approach to God?
2. How does the fact that Jesus was tempted in the same ways we are, give us confidence to approach God’s throne boldly?
3. Mercy is “not getting what is deserved” and grace is “getting what is not deserved.” How do these definitions offer comfort when you think about a sin you have done? when you need strength in temptation?
4. We may not feel free to share everything about our lives with even our most intimate friends, but we can come to God through Jesus with every aspect of our lives. Why does God not judge us in the same way as a friend who knows intimate things about us?

➤ **READ HEBREWS 5:1-10**

SUMMARY: Christ is superior in his priesthood and has God's authority to be our High Priest

Look

- *"Ignorant and are going astray"* – A distinction made between sinning ignorantly and sinning defiantly
- *"Loud cries and tears"* – Takes us back to the Garden of Gethsemane
- *"Learned obedience...became the source"* – Jesus didn't learn obedience for the first time here, rather he learned the full cost of that obedience. Another way of saying it - when he had learned all that God had wanted him to learn then he became for those who believed the cause for salvation.
- *"Once made perfect"* – Again, more accurately *"having reached his goal."* The goal of cross, tomb and throne. *"After he was brought to his goal, he became the source of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him."* (EHV)
- *"For all who obey him"* – Scripture interprets Scripture: *"we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ"* (1 John 3:22,23).

Discuss

5. In Hebrews 5:1-4 we find a list of certain qualifications and duties of the earthly priests who ministered before the Lord's altar. What are five of these qualifications and duties?
 - a. Was a _____ selected from among other human beings (v. 1)
 - b. _____ the people before God to offer worship (v. 1)
 - c. Offered _____ and _____ for sin (v. 1)
 - d. Was able to deal _____ with the ignorant and wayward (v. 2)
 - e. Had a _____ appointment (v.4)

6. Now, in Hebrews 5:5-10, how did our heavenly High Priest fulfill the requirements to be an eternal High Priest for us?
 - a. Was _____ (v. 5,6)
 - b. Offered _____ and a _____ (v. 7)
 - c. Obeyed _____ (v.7)
 - d. Can deal _____ (v.8)
 - e. Represented _____ to God (v.9)

7. Compare the following pictures of God
 - a. The great Ruler of the universe who is somewhat distant
 - b. An indulgent grandfather-type of God
 - c. A God of power and might, yet understanding, caring, and loving
 - d. The immortal, indivisible God who is judge of the living and the dead and will surely punish all transgressors
 - i. How has this lesson helped to shape the way you view God?

8. The first passage quoted is from Psalm 2. This does not speak specifically about Jesus being authorized to be a high priest. However, the passage does support the writer's claim. How?

9. The second passage is taken from Psalm 110, one of the chief messianic psalms. Jesus was not authorized to be a priest in the line of Aaron but in another line, that of Melchizedek. When was Melchizedek's order established – before or after Aaron's?

➤ **READ HEBREWS 5:11-6:3**

SUMMARY: Don't be immature or lazy which will lead to a falling away. Instead continue to grow in knowledge and faith

Look

- "This" – About Christ being a high priest like Melchizedek
- "Slow" – it is interesting and gives insight to the force of the word when we note that this is the same Greek word that is translated "lazy" in 6:12. It stresses who is responsible for this condition.
- "The teaching about righteousness" – This is the heart of our faith. To understand this teaching thoroughly is the lifelong goal of every Christian.
- "Constant use" – What a beautiful word picture
 - o Another worthwhile quote: *"Do you see the author's pastoral heart? He is not belittling babies in the faith or disparaging fundamental truths. There will always be babies and adults in the faith, and God's Word contains both milk for the babies and solid food for the adults. But babies are not to remain babies nor is adulthood to revert back to childhood. Growth is necessary, such as can come only from "constant use" and training. A spiritual exercise program was essential, with the only piece of equipment required being the Word" (Hebrews People's Bible).*
- "Leave the elementary teachings about Christ" – The author is not discouraging Christians from going back to the basics of their faith. Rather, he is encouraging us to build on the foundation.

- *“Baptisms”* – interesting that it is plural. Possibilities are: he is speaking about infant and adult baptisms; he is speaking about Jewish baptism of proselytes, John the Baptizer’s baptism, and the baptism commanded by Jesus; he is speaking about the difference between ceremonial washing and baptism; he is speaking about the baptism of each individual

Discuss

10. Why was the writer somewhat frustrated with his readers?
11. What is the difference between milk and solid food?
12. What is meant by “the constant use” of “solid food”? On the basis of the answer, define spiritual maturity?
13. In Hebrews 5:13-14 the writer seems to be saying that many have remained as children in the protective shelter of the past because they do not put to use what they have learned. What poor habits are implied as contributing to this condition? What other habits can you name?
14. Does age yield wisdom? What does, in fact, give wisdom and maturity?
15. Some Christians think the content of their pastor’s sermons and Bible studies is too hard to understand. Others think their pastor gives them too much milk. What should a pastor keep in mind as he prepares sermons and Bible study content?

➤ **READ HEBREWS 6:4-12**

SUMMARY: Beware, you can fall from faith...but you're not there. Don't get there!

Look

- *"Impossible"* – What is impossible?
- *"Fall away"* – only time this Greek word is used in the New Testament. It is not referring to a weakness of faith (i.e. Peter, you and me), but rather to a deliberate and conscious denial of what is known to be true. "Here are believers stepping deliberately back into unbelief's darkness and willfully discarding the heavenly gift of Christ" (Hebrews People's Bible).
- *"Crucifying the Son of God all over again"* – The religious leaders of Jesus' day rejected him and crucified him. They put him on display and mocked him. Those who reject Christ after having come to know him as their Savior are repeating the same act of rejecting Jesus as those who actually nailed him to the cross.
- *"Make your hope sure"* – The author is not saying we are saved by what we do. Rather, he is stating that we build up our hope as we remain diligent in the things of God
- *"Faith and patience"* – Patience is the quality of putting up with what people do, of being undismayed in difficulty. Connect patience with faith and you have a steadiness that makes it through in spite of all dangers.

Discuss

16. In verses 4-6, the writer addresses a serious and sobering truth. Notice that he doesn't say his readers are doing this now, but implies that if they continue to slide, this will be their end. What is the writer describing here?

17. Compare the words in verses 7 and 8 with Jesus' words in John 15:6. Why should we be concerned if we see a lack of good works in ourselves or even in others?

John 15:6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

18. Explain: Verses 4-8 are a commentary on these words of Paul: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

19. In 9-12, how does the writer skillfully mix his warning with an encouragement?

Endure

20. How does this section tell us Jesus is superior?
21. In light of question 20, what happens if we forsake Jesus?
22. Are we thinking of deserting? Considering some of the previous things we have looked at in this book, why might this be a more “tricky” question to answer than at first glance?

Your works, not mine, O Christ, Speak gladness to this heart. They tell me all is done; They bid my fear depart.

Refrain: To whom but you, who can alone For sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?

Your blood, not mine, O Christ, Can heal my sinful soul; Your wounds, not mine, contain The balm that makes me whole. ***Refrain***

Your cross, not mine, O Christ, Has borne the dreadful load Of sins that none could bear But the incarnate God. ***Refrain***

Your death, not mine, O Christ, Has paid the ransom due; Ten thousand deaths like mine Would have been all too few. ***Refrain***

Your righteousness, O Christ, Alone can cover me; No other righteousness Can set a sinner free. ***Refrain***

Responsive Closing Prayer

L: Dear Father, you sent your Son to become our Brother in the flesh and so that he could serve as our perfect High Priest in every way.

G: Now he understands our anxieties, stresses, weaknesses, and temptations.

L: Because he did not sin,

G: he served as the perfect sacrifice for us.

L: We pray to you through Jesus, our High Priest, knowing that through him we also have been made priests before your throne.

G: We know we can come to you with all our sin – all our guilt – and be assured of forgiveness.

L: We thank you for this great privilege through the name of Jesus.

G: Amen.