

Jesus, Our Great High Priest

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hebrews is one of the greatest Christological books in the Bible. It teaches Jesus is better than the prophets... angels... Moses... Joshua. Hebrews chapter four shows Jesus is better than the O.T. priesthood.

I. His **ROLE** as high priest.

➡ 3 divinely ordained offices—PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING. Jesus is the only one who held all three: (1) He was a **prophet** when He came to earth about 2,000 years ago. (2) He is coming again to reign as **king**. (3) Today, He ministers in heaven as a **priest**.

A. His **PERSON** fulfilling the role—Our High Priest is “*Jesus the Son of God,*” not Mary or some dead saint.

- “*Jesus*” is His human name —identifies Him with us and His earthly ministry.
- “*Son of God*” affirms His deity—unites Deity and humanity, so He can bring us to God, and bring to us all God has for us.

B. His **POSITION** of the role—A priest is a mediator between God and man. Under the O.T. Levitical system a man could only approach God through the Jewish priest.

1. Jesus Christ is now at the right hand of God (Heb. 8:1). “*There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*” (1 Tim. 2:5). I don’t need a earthbound priest when I have Jesus interceding for me at God’s right hand.
2. Any religion or church that has a hierarchy of earthly priests is a false religion. In the N.T. every Christian is a “priest” who serves under our great HIGH Priest (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9).

II. His **RELATIONSHIP** as **OUR** priest.

A. He is **SENSITIVE** to our circumstance (v. 15). Our high priest is not insensitive to our problems like some earthly priests.

➡ “*Touched*” means to become one with. He “feels” our pain... grieves with our griefs... He knows how we are tempted (cf. 2:17-18). We are part of His body.

A family sat down for lunch. The dad asked his son to thank God for the food. His son refused. When his dad asked him why, the son answered, "I bet Jesus never had to eat tuna casserole." His father responded, "I believe Jesus probably did."

- Jesus didn't come to keep us from suffering—He came to suffer as we suffer.
 - He didn't come to keep us from being tempted—He came to be tempted as we are tempted.
 - He didn't come to keep us from dying—He came to die as we will die.
- B. **He is SINLESS in character.** Christ was tempted "*without sin.*" There were no scandals in the life of our High Priest. Jesus did not molest any young boys or girls or have illicit affairs with women as so many priests do today. That is the kind of priest I want! A sinless priest.
1. When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Satan could not find anything in Christ to make Him fall. Jesus said, "*...the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me*" (John 14:30). Satan could not find any weakness in Christ he could exploit. But he certainly can find weak areas in you and me to lead us to sin.
 2. For example, a submarine can fathom great depths in the ocean. But it has its limits. It can only go so deep before the water pressure becomes so great the hull breaks. Water rushes in and thus the pressure is removed and the boat sinks.
 - That is the way with us—The pressures of temptation get so strong we give in and buckle under the strain—then the pressure is gone and we sink in sin.
 - The pressure of temptation Jesus endured was infinite. But Jesus never gave in to the pressure of temptation.
 - Jesus knows the pressures we endure. He understands all we go through and is there to help us.

III. His RANK as HIGH priest.

➡ Aaron was a "high priest,"—Jesus Christ is the "GREAT High Priest."

➡ Jesus is not merely the "greatest." To be the greatest means others are competing with Christ for the top spot. Jesus is more than the greatest—He is the "onlyest"—In a class all by Himself!

A. His ENVIRONMENT —"*...passed into the heavens* [plural]..." How could He pass into the heavens? He made it and He owns it!

1. Jesus ministers where no other priest can ever minister. O.T. priests served in an earthly tabernacle. But Jesus ascended beyond the stratosphere and the planetary solar systems to the third heaven.
2. I have a priest in heaven who intercedes for me today (Heb. 7:23-28). How much better to have a High Priest who ministers in a heavenly tabernacle than in an earthly one!

B. His ENTHRONEMENT. He is enthroned on "*the throne of grace.*" Not just a throne with some grace sprinkled on it, but a throne made of grace!

1. It is not a throne of judgment (he has taken away my judgments!). Not a throne of *granite*, but a throne of grace. Not a throne of *marble*, but a throne of mercy.
2. **Mercy** means God does not give us what we deserve—Hell. **Grace** means God gives us what we do not deserve—Heaven.
 - He gives me mercy for my WICKEDNESS. I need mercy... and lots of it. (I used to think I was a good Christian when I was younger. As I've grown older, I realize I'm not as good a Christian as I once thought I was.)
 - He gives me grace for my WEAKNESS. It is a "*throne of GRACE...*" His grace is sufficient for my every need!
 - He gives me help for my WALK. Help is available... and I need all the help I can get. There is no trial is too great, no temptation is too strong, but Jesus will give us the grace to help us through it.

IV. Our RESPONSE to Christ's priesthood (v. 16).

- A. Our **PROMPTING to come**—“*Let us therefore come...*” You don’t need an appointment! We have no good excuse not to pray.
- B. Our **POSTURE in coming**—“*Come boldly.*” The word “*boldly*” is from the Greek word *parrhēsia* (par-rhay-see’-ah), meaning freedom of speech.
- You don’t have to kick the door in. It’s open! My office door is always open to my family! We are invited to come to the throne of grace freely, confidently, and without fear.
- C. Our **PERSEVERANCE to hold fast**— *Seeing then... Let us hold fast our profession.*” The fact of Christ being our High Priest should encourage us to be steadfast in the faith.
- It does **not** say, “Let us hold fast our salvation.” No, it says, “*Let us hold fast our profession.*” This is not about your salvation. It is about your testimony and witness before others.
 - Some say, “I can’t live the Christian life.” That’s right—You cannot live the Christian life in your strength. But God never asked you to live the Christian life. He will live it through you (Gal. 2:20).

SUMMATION: With such a High Priest as Jesus... and a throne of mercy you may freely access... and a promise He will give you grace to help you in your time of need, why delay in coming to Him?

Have you been to that “*throne of grace*” lately? Do you need mercy for your sin? Do you need grace to help in some a problem in your life.

We can come to our Great High Priest **at any time—In any circumstance,** and find the mercy and grace to help.

WHEN? Whenever you need it!