

I. Review

- A. In our last session we looked at how the writer proves that “entering the rest of God” and “entering or having inheritance in the promised land” are synonymous terms with inheriting salvation and are obtained through faith alone. He warns the reader that the command to have faith and believe in the work of God on your behalf to bring you to the fullness of salvation will be tested and He will discern who is working apart from faith to obtain it.
- B. A warning is given that the propensity of the fallen human heart is to justify themselves before God through their own self righteous works and to disbelieve that God would truly bring us to the fullness of salvation through grace alone. Looking at the world of religion through the ages we see that Christianity stands very much alone in the belief of salvation through faith alone by grace alone. Even within Christianity the church struggles to maintain this doctrine in their hearts and in their messaging.
 - 1. Our last session ended with a clear warning to uphold the faith or doctrine that we will inherit salvation through faith alone, and that God will search out the genuineness of our faith. We are warned that we will give account of how we kept the faith throughout our lives.

II. Verse By Verse (Heb. 4:14-5:11)

- A. **(Heb. 4:14-16)** - Now we come to a very well known passage in the book of Hebrews. Most of the quotes of this passage are in the context of coming to the Lord in confidence to be forgiven of unrighteous actions or thoughts. However, this passage is not written in the context of forgiveness of unrighteous or immoral actions or thoughts but rather the propensity to drift into unbelief and legalism when it comes to inheriting salvation. Seeing Jesus rightly in His identity and work as the merciful and faithful High Priest of the new covenant is the primary doctrine given that keeps us steady in our confession of faith in Jesus unto salvation. (Mk. 9:23-24)
 - 1. Great High Priest - The word “great” here is used to cause us to continue to see the surpassing betterness of new covenant realities versus the old. His greatness as the high priest causes us to hold steady in our confession of how and why we inherit great salvation.

- a. Greater Minister - The mediator and high priest of the old covenant is a man offering intercession on his own behalf and on behalf of the people to God in hopes of acceptance. The mediator and high priest of the new covenant is God the Son who is offering intercession on our behalf to the Godhead in surety of acceptance. He continually offers His intercession for us day and night in the very throneroom of God. (Lev. 16:6,11; Heb. 7:26-27, 8:1-2)
 - b. Greater Sacrifice - The offering of the high priest of the old covenant is an unblemished animal offered forcibly by the will of man on behalf of only a specific people group once per year. The offering of the high priest of the new covenant is a perfect sinless man offered freely by the will of God on behalf of all men for all time. (Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:23-27; 9:13-14)
 - c. Greater Temple - The high priest of Torah can only enter the lesser holy of holies because it's an earthly temple made by humans to represent the throne room of God. He can only enter once per year and offer a sacrifice for sin committed. The high priest of the new covenant serves in the glorious temple in heaven made by God Himself. He continually offers His intercession for us day and night in the very throneroom of God. (Is. 6:1-4; Heb. 9:11-15, 23-28; Rev. 8:3-5, 11:19, 15:5-8)
 - d. Greater Ministry - The high priest of the old covenant cannot keep you from sinning or help you in your temptation. He can not give you grace to overcome sin, but rather only endlessly offer atonement for sins that will endlessly continue. The great high priest of the new covenant offers endless presence, compassion, and power to overcome any temptation that you will ever face. He gives true power to transform your heart to love righteousness and hate wickedness until sin is purged from your being so completely that your heart takes on His image. (Jhn. 17:22-26; Rom. 8:28-31; 1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 1:4, 4:24)
2. Let us hold fast our confession - In order to have access to and receive from the great high priest, we must hold fast to our confession of faith concerning who He is and what He has done. When we no longer hold that confession then we disqualify ourselves from receiving His life giving high priestly ministry. (Gal. 2:20, 1 Thes. 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:6, 19, 5:15, 6:10, 21)

3. Sympathize with our weakness - The greek word translated “sympathize” literally means to “suffer along with” that is to be afflicted with the same feeling as another. Every prayer and work that Jesus does as our great High Priest is saturated with a heart of compassion for what we are feeling and going through because He has truly been there himself and both knows and feels what we are going through. The idea of “weakness” here is speaking of our human frame or flesh and to avoid feeling weakness, pain, suffering, discomfort, and the temptation to escape it through disobedience. (Ex. 23:9; Is. 53:4)

“Sometimes we think that because Jesus is God, He could never know temptation the way we do. In part, this is true: It is true that Jesus never faced temptation in an inner sense the way we do because there was never a sinful nature pulling Him to sin from the inside. But He knew the strength and fury of external temptation in a way and to a degree that we can never know. Jesus faced temptation much more severely than we ever have or ever will. The Sinless One knows temptation in ways we don’t, because only the one who never gives into temptation knows the full strength of temptation. He knows what we go through and He has faced worse.” (David Guzik)

“Yet He endured triumphantly every form of testing that man could endure, without any weakening of His faith in God or any relaxation of His obedience to Him. Such endurance involves more, not less, than ordinary human suffering.” (F.F. Bruce)

4. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace - This statement is not made in light of just the fact that He sympathizes with our weakness but rather on the entire topic of His surpassing greatness as our merciful and faithful high priest. “We can come boldly” does not mean we come arrogantly or haphazardly. Boldly means we come constantly, confidently, persistently, and without reservation or the need for fancy religious language or works of holiness. (Rom. 8:15-17; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 10:19-23, 13:6)
5. Obtain mercy and grace to help - We come to ask for help and we are guaranteed to obtain it both compassionately and supernaturally by His Spirit. **It is of note that this process is relational and progressional.** God is not our magic genie who stoically waves His wand and makes it all go away. He is our friend, counselor, and healer who walks through the fire with us in deep intimacy so that we come out leaning upon Him in unity and love at the end of our days. (2 Cor. 12:8-10; Phil. 4:6-7; Millennial Reign Principals)