

Mercy and Grace in Time of Need
Harmony M.B.C., August 19, 2012 (Morning)
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Heb 4:14-16 - Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. (15) For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. (16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Christ is the supreme High Priest for the people of God. Having spent time here on earth in a body of flesh that experienced temptations of the very kind and intensity that men everywhere face, yet overcoming each and every one of those without one sin, he is our perfect example of victory over the effects of temptation. While we soon learn that our house of clay and mind of baser stuff again and again makes wrong choices about good and evil, it was never so with our Lord. Having the very nature and spirit of the perfect Son of God, he recognized every fallacy behind the false attractiveness presented by every kind of temptation that came his way. He saw beyond the shallowness of the things that temptation offers and saw the higher calling of being an obedient Son to the Father. Having a purpose set before Him that was very clear, he forged onward through all the common temptations of man, never yielding to the many false lures of temptation, he carved out a victory for us. He set a perfect example of obedience to God with regard to temptation and offered that perfect record as a substitute behavior for all of God's elect. That perfect obedience satisfied God as all that was necessary to make peace between Himself and all His children.

We benefit from that perfect obedience of Christ, because when we come to God by Him, that perfect obedience is offered as our righteousness and because of that, we can have an open, unhindered audience with the Lord. We are allowed access to God because Christ, our righteousness, has obtained unmerited favor from God for us. That is why the scripture in our text can invite and direct us to come before the Lord in the manner that is explained. Jesus Christ is there interceding for us and we have a special doorway into the presence of God. We may go through that door and get all necessary benefit to answer our needs. Let's look at this process we are told about here and see:

I. V.15 - Christ's unique qualifications as High Priest should encourage and provoke us to come before the throne of grace

- If you went to the state capitol, to the governors office to ask for help with some big problem, and you got there you found your mom or dad, or brother or sister standing at the door smiling and saying, "I just got through having a sit-down with the governor and I asked him to help me with some legal trouble I'm having, and he got on the phone and called up my lawyer, and the other party's lawyer and he settled the issue right then. I got a fax from my lawyer and the other lawyer while I was sitting there with the governor, and those faxes showed that the problem was eliminated." How would you feel about your visit that you were getting ready to have? And what if your loved one told you, "I mentioned your problem to the governor while I was in there, and he said he had a meeting with you today,

and he knew about the problem, and knew how to give you a solution.” How would you feel about your upcoming visit? In a spiritual parallel, this is exactly what this verse is telling us.

- Christ is our next-of-kin
- He has had his meeting with the Father, and has been talking to God about us
- He knows all about our problem; he knows exactly how to sympathize with us because He has been there.
 - ▶ “Touched with the feeling of our infirmities”
 - ▶ “in all points tempted”

II. Because Christ is such a perfect High Priest, we may come boldly to the throne of grace (Therefore...etc.)

- Let’s understand that coming boldly does not suggest or mean forgetting about humility
- We can have the boldness as soon as we understand that God has opened the door wide and invited us warmly to come to the throne of grace.
- This has happened because Christ, as our High Priest, has reconciled us to God by giving the perfect and only totally acceptable sacrifice to satisfy God’s demand that sin be punished completely.

III. When we come boldly, we can get what we need to help us (“... that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”)

- Please note that the verse seems to suggest that if we do not have confidence enough to come boldly, we may not get what we need (“come boldly...that we may....”-apply the grammatical rule surrounding “can”[are able] and “may” [permission])
- The Greek word for boldly here carries the idea of “speaking right out,” or being outspoken.
- There is a reason the Holy Spirit tells us we may obtain mercy AND find grace to help in time of need
 - ▶ To help us understand, let’s compare ourselves to a starving man found almost unconscious in the desert. You can give him food, but he will die without water. In fact, he will need water before he can handle food. We are like that. When we come before God, we need the water of mercy before we can use the food of grace. What am I talking about?
 - ▶ We are sinners, saved by grace. As sinners, we need God’s mercy, because He is repelled by sin; He is offended by sin. Mercy is the word that describes God not giving us what we deserve. Mercy is the only thing residing in God which will neutralize the demand for judgment. As scripture says in James 2:13, mercy rejoices against judgment.
 - Illustrate: beekeeper equipment with those berserker bees in that bee tree I took down by the lake. Emphasize the fact that the bees worked hard to get through that face screen, but if the face screen could have responded, it would have rejoiced at its ability to keep the bees away from my face. The bees were judgment; the bonnet and screen was mercy.
 - ▶ At the throne of grace we find mercy stockpiled in God. According to the phrasing of this sentence (obtain = Gr. Lambano = To take) we may simply come boldly to that throne and take mercy which is in open supply there for everyone who comes presenting the blood of Jesus as their answer to justice and judgment.
- When we obtain mercy from God, then we have an open door to find grace.
- No one can find grace who has not first been a recipient of God’s mercy.

- ▶ As the beauty and wonder of the visible world is fed to us through our eyes, so God's mercy is the portal to his world of grace
- We need grace to function as true believers and disciples
 - ▶ The nuclear explosions on the sun are the forces that light and provide heat for our world. In the same way, grace operating in us is the force that empowers us to show forth and act out the things of God.
- Grace contains the solution to whatever problem we may have
 - ▶ Water will always be sufficient to quench a healthy thirst and unmerited favor is always sufficient for our need
- A final word is in order concerning "in time of need"
- The old song says, "I need thee every hour..." We sing it, but do we feel it?
- Have you ever thought about what a "time of need" is for you personally?
 - How about if it is when you are faced suddenly with what appears to be a crisis that can't be avoided
 - Or what about a sudden turn of events that changes your life
 - Or what about a sudden illness or accident that threatens your life
 - Or what about a time of spiritual drought and coldness within you
 - Or what about a time of powerful temptation coming upon you
 - Or what about a time of despair and depression that threatens to swallow you up
- ▶ Any of these represent a time of need. Knowing that, can you apply this scripture to your case in these times: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."