

Jesus became our High Priest to bring us into God's presence, or to the throne of grace. Our goal as a church is to bring you to the throne of grace! We want you to be a person who is finding grace, and receiving mercy, and help from God. We want you to know how to go to God, talk to him, listen to him, receive from him all you need for life! We want you to be a person who is finding, in God, all sufficiency for everything! We don't want you to be frantic, unhappy, frustrated, running on empty and full of unmet needs. We want you to find and experience the all the grace, all the mercy and all the help that God offers you from his Throne. We all have needs but we are not to live continually in "unmet needs".

Everything in this passage leads to the final goal: "that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need". The NIV says, "to help us in our time of need." This help is available through Jesus, our High Priest! And he encourages us to have the boldness to come to the throne of God and get this help! "Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need".

This is a wonderful promise because...We need help! We are confronted with outward needs, and inward needs, daily!! We face **OUTWARD** needs, in circumstances or relationships, or shortages, unresolved problems. We have daily **INWARD** needs; we have needs in our soul, in our mind our affections, our attitudes and emotions. Sometimes I really don't like what is going on inside me. I don't like how I feel, how I am thinking. I **NEED** help! We **NEED HELP!** "I need Thee, O I need Thee, Every hour I need Thee! O bless me now, Savior, I come to Thee."

And the more we live life with Jesus, the more we want to please him, the more we desire to walk in love and joy and peace, the more keenly we are aware of our need for help! The more we want to overcome sin and self and the devil, the more keenly we are aware that we need God's help!!

We need help from God because we were created with a need for help! From the beginning, we were never intended to live on our own, limited resources! We were always intended to live life with God's help. We were created to be fellow-workers with God, with God always providing the help, the strength, the victory and the fruit, in all we do.

In 1 Corinthians 3 Paul said, "...neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow...For we are co-workers in God's service". We get up in the morning, we do what we do, we work, we plant and water, but it is God's help, which brings the fruit. Psalm 127 says "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it!" It is God's help that makes things work! That makes us sufficient for life. Paul said, "Not that we are adequate to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God!!"

Trying to live life without God's help causes us to break down, and wear out, losing joy and peace, carrying things we were not meant to carry. Learning to confidently trust God for his help, in virtually everything, is the way to life! It is not a hopeless cry for help!

The reason that we can be confident that God WILL help us, is that God is a God who helps his people. He is a helping God. This is a life changing revelation! Just as God is love, God is holy, God is

good, God is a helper! The Bible says, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”. Psalm 46:1

David said, “Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the helper of my soul”. Psalm 54:4 You need help with things going on around you, you need help with things going on inside of you!!

In Isaiah 41:10 God himself says, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and HELP you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”. God helps us with anything we fear! Hebrews 13:6 “...we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

Psalm 121:1 “From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” Psalm 121:1

It is God’s very character to help! When you look up into the sky, or into the darkness of night, or into the space around you, there is not emptiness, or merely matter, molecules and elements, but a personal living God is there! And he wants to help you! The universe is filled with a, loving and merciful God who is inclined to help you in time of need! We are surrounded on all sides by help and support! We sing about “the deep deep love of Jesus, Rolling as a mighty ocean; In its fullness over me. Underneath me, all around me; Is the current of your love.” The same can be proclaimed of God’s help and support!

We are not calling upon a God that we must beg to help us against his will. We do not need to cut ourselves with knives and shout louder and louder, like those crying out to Baal. He is looking for those he may strongly support! "For the eyes of the LORD move to

and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.” 2 Chronicles 16:9

*In a very real sense we need God’s help all the time, but there are situations and seasons where we keenly feel our need. God’s help is especially manifested in those times. Psalm 34:18 says, “The LORD is near to the brokenhearted. And saves those who are crushed in spirit.” Our passage encourages that we may receive mercy and grace to help “in our times of need”. However often you feel need, no matter how great your need or how small your need may seem, God has committed himself to his people to be there, to help!

BUT....Why should we have confidence that God would respond to our cry for help with mercy and grace? Why should we have the audacity to think that we, fallen, weak and sinning people, can get this help we so desperately need from a holy and righteous God!! Because we have a remarkable High Priest in Jesus, which is the basis for this confidence!!! Three revelations about him:

First, verse 14 says “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens,....” The Bible teaches there must be a mediator between us and God. This mediation, or this go-between, is the role of the High Priest. And Jesus is our High Priest.

Jesus alone is fully able to bring us into an uncondemned state of friendship with God. He brings us to God, so that he can be our God and we can be his people, the people he helps! He has done this by becoming our High Priest.

In the Old Covenant the High Priest was a human being, who went to God on behalf of the people. Their appeals for forgiveness, for

help, for their needs, went through him! As good as this system was, for a time, God's purpose was that his own Son would be our High Priest. So the point here is we have such a superior High Priest! We have a high priest "who has passed through the heavens". There has never been a human High Priest anywhere in history, in any country, in any religion, who has passed through the heavens!

One translation, "who has penetrated the heavens". Or "entered heaven". What is the significance of that? While God is present everywhere, heaven is the place where God's power and glory is fully on display, and his will is fully carried out. Heaven is the place of God's throne! It is the place from which he rules! It is the place from which his power and love and mercy and grace is poured out. John said, "I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in Heaven with someone sitting on it." The writer of Hebrews calls this the throne of grace. It is the place where all grace is found; it is the place where all grace and help comes from. **WHATEVER** help you need, **THIS IS WHERE IT IS FOUND**.

Jesus, through the sacrifice of his body, tore open the access to heaven and entered this humanly impenetrable (inaccessible) place, and is right there, today, in the direct presence of God. Hebrews 10:19 says, "we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh".

He opened up the way for us to the throne of God. He is there in heaven to represent you, and your needs, and your problems, and your weaknesses, and your need for help in your temptations. He is there to give you access, through him, to the Father, so that you may receive **WHATEVER HELP YOU NEED IN ANYTHING!**

Secondly the author points out that our High Priest is “Jesus, the Son, of God”. This communicates the uniqueness of Jesus, and his unique privilege or status before the throne of God. He is God’s own Son! He is not just a priest selected from among a group of human beings! He is God the Son! AS THE SON, he has full access to all the resources of God, to all the mercy and grace of the Father, to all the storehouses of heaven!

“So let us hold fast our confession”. Or “let us hold firmly to what we believe”. We have something great in Jesus! Our salvation is great. Our Savior is great! He stands for us at the Throne of God. All we need for life, is available to us from the Father through Jesus! Don’t let your confidence in Jesus deteriorate! Hold fast to the things you believe! With resolute heart, remain true to the Lord!

Then the author of Hebrews reveals the third truth about Jesus our High Priest, which gives us confidence to come to God’s throne. Verse 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”. He is perfectly suited to be our high Priest! He is exactly the kind of representative we need!

Our High Priest, Jesus, Son of God who has gone right into heaven, is even right now, this morning, sympathizing with us, especially with our weaknesses. He is sympathetic to your needs, to your struggles, your battles, your vulnerabilities, your trials. He knows how hard it is. He knows the weariness you experience. He knows the discouragement you might feel at any time, day or night, in all situations.

He knows what it is like to be tempted. You have struggled with thoughts and desires to do things that you would not want anybody else to know about. Jesus understands you and is sympathetic toward you. He had the same experiences that we have that work to pull us away from God, away from the path of righteousness. He had the same temptations to quit, to give up, to turn away from the cup the father had for him. Yet he never caved in to sin!

The author of Hebrews now says, With such a High Priest, “let us draw near with confidence”! Or “Therefore we should come with boldness to the throne of grace”. We are not only encouraged and commanded to draw near to God’s throne. We are told to come with confidence! Or with boldness! That does not mean we come flippantly, or irreverently, but we come with complete liberty! Because we know that his attitude toward us is sympathetic, let us come without fear!

This attitude is VERY important! If we are not sure we are welcome someplace, we usually won’t go there! Or we don’t want to go there! We shy away from it! It makes us nervous and fearful and uncomfortable! But because of Christ, we are NOT told to stand back from God’s throne! We are told to come right up to God without cowering in fear. We are told to come right up to God with confidence that we are welcome there!

And, it is not merely that we have the option to come with confidence. We MUST come with confidence! This is the way we come to get help. This is the way we experience God’s mercy and grace. This is the way we experience the resources of heaven in our daily life! We come with confidence to the throne of grace!

It is not confidence in anything about ourselves; it is not confidence that we are so special, or that we are so sincere, or that we are so important! It is confidence in our High Priest Jesus! It is confidence in HIS perfect performance of our mediator. The throne of grace is fully accessible to you for one reason and one reason only!!

On our own, because of our sin and God's holiness, we have no business going to his throne! But with Jesus, God's Son, having entered heaven for us to represent us, we have standing before God! We have special status in God's presence. God's door is always open to us!

Lewis Allen said, "Ministry is the battle against mistrust and misapplied confidence...". That is so true! We are fighting against misplaced trust! Ministry is a constant struggle to wean people off of trust in themselves, and others and other things, and to generate GREAT confidence in Jesus! Jesus and HIS work is completely sufficient to usher us to the Throne Room of God!

I think people try a lot of different things to open the windows of heaven so to speak. Many seem to just not be satisfied with the new and living way that Jesus opened up for us. There is nothing besides Jesus as your high priest, you need, to come to the throne of God.

*And there we find real help. ".that we may receive mercy and find grace to help.... ". This is not just a spiritual exercise we go through that has no results. The idea clearly is that something happens! We get help "in our time of need". This would include every need, but the context, especially points to the needs we have in the hour of testing, or temptation.

If you are in trouble or concerned about anything in your life,... You confidently go to God's throne through your High Priest and ask for help in your time of need. And you WILL get it!! We go to God and something happens in our soul and we know that we are being supported. Something changes in our heart. Many times something happens in our circumstances and we see that it was God sending help! We find that that temptation to quit, or give up, is overcome and your inner person is renewed in hope and courage. You find more strength to run your race. Or...A solution comes to you from somewhere you didn't expect, the issue gets resolved, the need is met, you get help! It's real. It's from the throne of God. It's from God! David said, "My heart trusts in him and I am helped"!!

To know God as your help or your helper makes all the difference in the world. It changes your whole outlook on life, how you think and speak about your problems and needs, it changes how you come across to others! It changes you and it changes your testimony!!!

*Our goal as a church: to call you to live before the throne of God, drawing near to him and continually receiving mercy and finding grace to help. This IS the true LIFE we are called to in Jesus!

Hymn by Charles Wesley:

Arise, my soul, arise,
shake off your guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice,
in my behalf appears;
My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child;

I can no longer fear
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

Are you living at the throne of grace? We all live somewhere. Are you living at the throne of grace, receiving mercy and grace to help? Or are you living at the throne of your own needs? Or the throne of your fears, and problems? Or some other throne? Draw near to God and find all that you need in him!