

Saturday, April 25, 2020

Turn off the outside “noise” for a couple of minutes and consider this message from God’s Word.
I am praying that it calms your spirit and encourages your heart.

HEBREWS 4:14-16(TNIV)

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ *Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

— PART 5 —

*I found that when a passage of Scripture has been very familiar to me for a long time — such as this passage! — if I will simply **slow down** . . . take my time . . . and read thoughtfully and reflectively, it can become alive to me in new and fresh ways.*

❶ *“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace WITH CONFIDENCE —*

Yesterday we saw that Guthrie beautifully renders this: “Christians, therefore, should draw near to God *with unabashed openness* since God alone is the true source of mercy and grace.”

GEORGE H. GUTHRIE, *Hebrews* (NIV Application Commentary).

So according to Hebrews 4:14-16 we come into God’s presence with great confidence because Jesus is our high priest . . . but Hebrews 10 tells us we also come into God’s presence with great confidence because *Jesus’s body* was broken and *his blood* was poured out to open that door! Someone paid *dearly* to give us access!

HEBREWS 10:19-22 (NIV)

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since **WE HAVE CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE MOST HOLY PLACE** *by the blood of Jesus,* ²⁰ *by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,* ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² **LET US DRAW NEAR TO GOD** *with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings...*

So it’s fairly impossible to miss the message, isn’t it?!

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence” (Heb. 4:16)...

and “[LET US] CONFIDENTLY ENTER THE MOST HOLY PLACE” (Heb. 10:19)...

and “LET US DRAW NEAR TO GOD” (Heb. 10:22)...

If you are like me, sometimes it’s easier to **study** God’s Word than it is to **practice** God’s Word! So I would encourage us all at this moment to do what it says! To pause from our study, to turn away to worship and to pray, to draw near to God, to come with *chutzpah* into his presence.

But **why?** What could we possibly gain from coming into his presence?



② *“so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. —*

Tom Wright suggests that “What is on offer, for those who come to God through Jesus, is ‘mercy and grace’: **mercy**, to set us free from the sin and folly in which we would otherwise sink completely; **grace**, to strengthen us and set us on our feet for our own lives of service and witness.’

TOM WRIGHT, *Hebrews for Everyone*

And it isn’t surprising that to receive mercy we would come to the “**mercy-seat**,” as it is called in the Hebrew Scriptures, and that to find grace we would come to the “**throne of grace**.” The One enthroned there is the “**FATHER OF MERCY**” (2 Cor. 1:3) and the “**GOD OF GRACE**”...described over and over in the First Testament with these words: “The Lord is **gracious** and **compassionate**...” (see Psalm 103:8 for example).

“The *throne of grace* is the place of God’s presence from which grace is given to his people. ... *Mercy* has already been associated with Christ ‘the merciful high priest’ (2:17), and through the new covenant God is merciful towards transgressors (8:12). *Grace* has been linked with Christ’s deliverance of his people from death and its paralysing fear (2:9, 15).”

PETER T. O’BRIEN, *The Letter to the Hebrews* (Pillar New Testament Commentary).

Are you in need of God’s mercy? Are you desperate for a touch of God’s grace?
You know where to go!

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Thank you, Lord Jesus, our great high priest, for offering your body and your blood to gain us access into the very presence of the Living God — so that **TODAY** we can come to God’s throne with enormous *chutzpah*, and receive the mercy and the grace that we need!

And since tomorrow is Sunday morning ... I would encourage each of us to reflect

on the wisdom of Hebrews 10:

HEBREWS 10:24-25 (NIV)

²⁴ **And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,**
²⁵ **not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.**

So I hope to “see” you tomorrow . . . let’s come into God’s presence . . . together in spirit, if not yet in person!

Pastor Doug

P.S. We would love to hear from you! How are you doing right now? And we would love to pray for you! Email us at info@bethanyonline.net

P.P.S. Keep checking our “ENCOURAGEMENT FOR TODAY” webpage — we will try to post fresh encouragement **every day** during this crisis!

P.P.P.S. And watch our **LIVE-STREAM Worship Service** this coming Sunday at 10:30 A.M. for more encouragement.