

The High Priesthood of Christ

(Hebrews 4:14-16)

Introduction:

1. Last Sunday evening our lesson was based on Hebrews 3:1 -- we are to "*consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*"
2. The book of Hebrews contains a lengthy discussion of the Lord's priesthood (2:17-ch.10).
 - a. Throughout this section, Christ is repeatedly shown to be far superior to the Old Testament priests.
 - b. The reason for this is to prevent Christians from falling away from the Lord.
 - c. When we have a proper appreciation for the Lord's priesthood, we should be motivated to remain faithful to Him.
3. In the verses we are studying, Jesus is shown to be:
 - a. a great High Priest
 - b. a compassionate High Priest.

Discussion:

- I. FROM VS. 14, WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS A GREAT HIGH PRIEST
 - A. This can be seen when we compare Jesus to the Jewish high priest.
 1. (Hebrews 5:1-4) The Jewish high priest:
 - a. was a man (vs.1a)
 - b. offered gifts and sacrifices for sins (vs.1b)
 - c. had compassion on the ignorant and on those out of the way (vs.2)
 - d. made offerings for the sins of others and for himself (vs.3)
 - e. was called of God (vs.4).
 2. Jesus is shown to be a greater High Priest in that:
 - a. He is the Son of God (4:14)
 - b. He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice once for all (7:27)
 - c. He has compassion on others because He was tempted (2:17-18)
 - d. He had no sin for which to offer a sacrifice (7:26)
 - e. He was called of God after the order of Melchisedec (5:10).
 3. When we study this comparison carefully, we see that Jesus is indeed a great High Priest.
 - B. His position also indicates that He is a great High Priest.
 1. He is passed into the heavens.
 2. (1:3) He is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 3. There He makes intercession for those who come to the Father by Him (7:25).

- C. (vs.14b) Since Jesus is such a great High Priest, we are given an appeal -- *"let us hold fast our profession."*
 - D. In addition to being a great High Priest, . . .
- II. WE LEARN FROM VS. 15-16 THAT JESUS IS A COMPASSIONATE HIGH PRIEST
- A. He is compassionate because He is *"touched with the feeling of our infirmities."*
 - 1. He is touched because He *"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*
 - 2. (Matthew 4:1-11) Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.
 - 3. However, Jesus also experienced:
 - a. the pain associated with death
 - 1) of a family member -- John (Matthew 14:10-13)
 - 2) of a close friend -- Lazarus (John 11:35-36)
 - b. rejection
 - 1) by His disciples (John 6:66)
 - 2) by His family (John 7:5)
 - 3) by His countrymen (John 8:59)
 - c. betrayal by His own apostle (John 18:3-5)
 - d. unjust treatment (John 19:1-3)
 - e. being forsaken by His close friends (Matthew 26:56 -- *"Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled"*).
 - B. Since Jesus is such a compassionate High Priest, we are given another appeal - we are encouraged to approach His throne of grace.
 - 1. We are to do so "boldly" [with undoubting confidence, courage, and assurance].
 - 2. At His throne of grace we can find:
 - a. *"mercy"*
 - b. *"grace to help in time of need."*

Conclusion:

- 1. Jesus is truly a great and compassionate High Priest.
- 2. This should motivate:
 - a. those who are outside of Christ to become Christians
 - b. those who are Christians to be more dedicated to serving the Lord.
- 3. See Hebrews 7:25a