

Hebrews 4:14–16

#0112

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—December 13, 1974

Let us turn to Hebrews the 4th chapter, verses 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. For we have not an 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” Hebrews 4:14–16.

Our hope lies not in what *we* are doing but in what *Jesus* is doing. We are looking, then, not to *something* here on this earth but to *someone* in Heaven—Jesus, the Son of God. We all recognize this to an extent, but I’m trusting that we shall recognize it in a greater way because this is where our *power* lies. The part man has in the plan of salvation is immeasurably small. It’s true that it’s important because man’s choice enters into the matter, but the power is of God. The sufficiency is of God. The inspiration is of God.

The sanctuary shows us Jesus not only as the Lamb who *died* for us but as the Priest who *lives* for us. He died upon the cross. His ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary spans the centuries. He lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25). That is what Jesus is doing tonight. That is what He was doing a thousand years ago. That is what He is going to continue to do as long as probation lingers. He is there making intercession for us.

We need to think of the practical implications and applications of this. Whatever our problems, we can bring them to Jesus. Whatever our needs, He is willing to supply, *anxious* to supply. And we are to trust not only in His death for us upon the cross but in His intercessory work on our behalf. We are to trust in the prayers of Jesus.

Did you ever wonder if you are worthy to come to God? Well, you’re not. None of us is worthy. But *Jesus* is worthy, and He has invited us to use His name. We can present His credit card, and His credit rating is better than ours ever was or ever could be. He has a high credit rating in the bank of Heaven. And He has invited us to use His name. He has invited us to trust in Him and in His intercession on our behalf.

As a part of the work that Jesus is doing there, He is supplying us with all that belongs to Him. It is like our God to give big.

Go to Colossians chapter 1:

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” Colossians 1:11.

“May He strengthen you in His glorious might, with ample power to meet whatever comes, with fortitude, patience, and joy, and to give thanks to the Father” Colossians 1:11 (*New English Bible*).

Jesus intends that, through His intercessory work in the sanctuary above, you and I shall receive day by day and moment by moment all that it takes to meet any situation that we are confronted with. He has made full provision for that. This is a very practical thing. It includes money, it includes time, it includes wisdom, it includes strength to meet the enemy, it includes discernment to detect the tempter, and power to resist him, it includes love to win souls, it includes the courage to lift us above discouragement and depression. Every situation is taken care of by this program of Christ's intercession for us in the Heavenly Sanctuary.

Paul says in Philippians the 4th chapter and the 13th verse:

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” Philippians 4:13.

Quite a statement for a man in prison, isn't it? We might say, “Paul, why don't you get out of jail if you can do all things?” Well, he could if that was the Lord's program for him. Peter walked out of prison in the middle of the night with all the guards around him. The angel put them to sleep and opened the gate, and let Peter out. Anything that God wants to be done can get done, and anything that God doesn't want to get done, Paul doesn't want to do anyway. In fact, if you read the whole book of Philippians, Paul is thanking the Lord that he is there in prison because he said it's for the furtherance of the Gospel. He said that more is being accomplished by his being in prison than if he were loose. Some of the brethren wouldn't be so bold. But as they see him in jail, they realize they've got to get busy and spread the truth. And it penetrated even to Caesar's household. (See Philippians 4:22.)

Nothing happens to a Christian but what God has made provision for it. He doeth according to His will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Nothing surprises Him. Nothing perplexes Him.

“All things are open to His divine survey. And from His great and calm eternity, He orders that which His providence sees best” *Ministry of Healing*, page 417.

Our problem is at times that, while we believe all that, the way the enemy limits us is in making us feel that all that would be wonderful if we could only get hold of it, but because of this and that, we are not able to latch onto it as we would like to. I tell you, the Lord Jesus, in the plan of salvation, has made arrangements for weak people as well as strong people, for faulty people as well as those who don't have faults. Jesus came to save sinners. We need faith not merely in the power of God to help people who seem to go along on a high level; we need faith that God can help people as weak and helpless as you and I are. This is what we need. This is what God is seeking to give us.

It's interesting how the Devil will be perfectly willing to acknowledge to you that God can help a man over here and a woman over there just so long as the Devil can keep you worried and fearful that God can't use you in your situation.

I was interested in how Philippians 4:13 is translated by others. I'll give you the background of Paul's statement here. I'll go back to the 11th verse, and I'll read it in some of the other renderings:

"I have learned to be content, whatever the circumstances may be. I know now how to live when things are difficult, and I know how to live when things are prosperous. In general and in particular I have learned the secret of facing either plenty or poverty. I am ready for anything through the strength of the one who lives within me" Philippians 4:11–13.

Where was Paul's hope anchored? Within the veil where Jesus is. He knew that all power in Heaven and in earth had been given to Christ, and that He was dispensing that power to his servants here on earth as fast and as far as they needed it. He had an unlimited credit rating on the bank of Heaven, and so he was ready to venture out.

In doing that, notice it didn't mean that Paul didn't go through some hard experiences. Very few followers of Jesus have ever experienced as much suffering as he did, in prison and out of prison, shipwrecked, kicked, stoned, lied about, all kinds of things he went through. But through it all, his faith was with Jesus in the sanctuary, and he knew that he was on an errand for God, and he knew that Christ was his sufficiency, his efficiency, and he went right ahead, regardless of circumstances, knowing that Christ was with him.

The Lord wants you and me to pursue that same course. He wants us to be utterly independent of circumstances only as we use them as instruments with which to work. He wants us to seize upon these things that happen as providences, grasp them and use them to His glory, always believing that God is able to take even our weaknesses and use them to His strength.

Look at 2 Corinthians the 12th chapter. A wonderful statement. You remember that the apostle Paul, at the time He accepted the Master, was blinded on the road to Damascus. At the time of his baptism, he received sight, but he never had the full use

of his eyes as he had before. That weakness in his eyes was left to him as a "thorn in the flesh," he called it. This caused him to sense his need, his weakness. He thought of all he might do if only his eyesight was fully restored. He was a great student, a scholar. He loved to read, to study, to research. But his eyes hindered him.

So he tells us here that he sought the Lord earnestly that this thorn might be removed:

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" 2 Corinthians 12:8–9.

We had just as well get used to the way the Lord works. We map and chart out a way, and we think, "If the Lord will only answer my prayer and do this and that, then that will open the way for me to do wonderful things for Him." But what we have mapped out may not happen. What we have asked for may not be granted. It may not be a lack of faith. Paul had so much faith that he healed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people, yet he himself carried this thorn in the flesh to his death. All through his life, he had this reminder of his human weakness, leading him to rely wholly upon the intercession of Jesus in the sanctuary. Anchored in Christ, he went forward, claiming the assurance of Jesus, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Do you have a weakness? God's strength can shine through it. You need not wait until your prayer is answered, and you become strong, either physically or mentally, in the way you would like to. You may not be able to remember the Scriptures as much as you wish you could. You may not be able to think through things as you wish you could. You may have other weaknesses, faults, and failings. Let God have your life, failures and all, and believe that Jesus has made provision to use weak people, faulty people.

I'm not talking about defiant rebellion against God. A man who deliberately defies God and rebels against God, God can't use him only in the sense that He uses the Devil, letting him demonstrate what a fool a sinful man can be. This is not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the failures and weaknesses that so often manifest themselves in our lives even when we are *seeking* to follow the Savior. Let us not wait until we see no more of those in our lives before we have confidence that God can use us. Let us believe that, as we come just as we are, God has a work for us to do, and that by His mighty power, He is using us.

Here's a little statement:

"Constantly God is laboring to make up man's deficiencies"
In Heavenly Places, page 221.

I like that. This has given me a world of courage. Think of it: my Lord is on duty 24 hours a day. What for? To make up my deficiencies. Why is He on duty all the time? Because my deficiencies are there all the time. In spite of everything I can do, they show up. You see some of them; I see *more* of them; God sees more still. But God is in the business of using me in spite of those deficiencies, and in making them up. I believe that. That's why I'm in His work. That is the confidence I have in Him.

"Constantly God is laboring to make up man's deficiencies." What does "constantly" mean? All the time—yesterday, a year ago, tomorrow—He's still on the job. What is He doing? Cleaning up after me, fixing up after me, patching up after me.

Somebody says, "Yes, but I wish it weren't that way."

In Heaven, it won't *need* to be that way. But we're not *in* Heaven tonight; we're right here. And if we refuse to be students in His school until we can spell all the words right every time the teacher asks and hit every note on the piano right, I'm afraid we won't learn. Jesus is encouraging us to play the instrument, to speak His Word, to witness for Him in spite of our weaknesses and inefficiencies, friends. And He has made full provision for taking care of that kind of problem. Why not let Him do it?

Somebody says, "But it humbles me."

Sure. It does more than that. It *humiliates* us. But that won't kill us. Then the glory can be His.

God can supply all we need in two ways, either working in and *through* us or working *apart* from us, *outside of* us. He can come in in a mighty way and use some humble witness that we may give, or He can, while we sleep, send angels to water the seeds that we have planted in our weakness. He is not restricted to one channel. He has a thousand ways of which we know nothing. And He often hides His hand that we may trust His *Word* rather than what we see. He wants us to look to His *promise* rather than to what is *visible*. He wants us to sow in tears, to work on, believing that the promise is sure: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" Psalm 126:5.

Turn now please to Matthew the ninth chapter. This recent trip, I've come in contact with hundreds and thousands of people, and I was thinking of this text:

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest" Matthew 9:36–38.

Here we see the picture of an immensity of needs far beyond human resources. Christ Himself, as He saw the multitudes, recognized that the forces available were not

sufficient. So what did He urge His disciples to do? Pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers into His harvest. He kept doing all He could, but He saw a great ocean of human need.

Surrounded as we are with the multitudes that need help, we have no time for petty things. We have no time for the gratification of personal ambitions. We have no time for the indulgence of fleshly lusts. Nor have we time for the weakness that comes from brooding over our own failures. The battle is on. And weak as we feel we are, in the strength of Jesus we are to press in and press on and press up and press forward, believing in the sufficiency of that Man who stands at the mercy seat and is pouring out His Spirit in abundant power on all who will look where the power comes from. All who will go to work trusting not in what *they* can do, but in what *God* can do for and with and through them, will realize the fulfillment of His promise, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20). Greater works than any that have been done will you do because I go to My Father, and there intercede for you. (See John 14:12.) Oh, what wonderful possibilities through the gift of Jesus!

It is the help that helps us to help others.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" 2 Corinthians 1:3–5.

I will read that in another translation:

"Thank God, the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that He is our Father and the source of all mercy and comfort; for He gives us comfort in our trials so that we in turn may be able to give the same sort of strong sympathy to others in their trials. Indeed, experience shows that the more we share Christ's suffering the more we are able to give of His encouragement."

This is why God is using human beings to reach other human beings instead of sending angels to do the job. This is why He leads us into and through experiences of sorrow, of bereavement, perplexity, even apparent failure, so that we learn by experience to depend on *Jesus* rather than on what we see, on His *promise* rather than what is visible. And thus, as we meet others who are going through similar trials, we can say, "Take courage, brother, I have found the answer."

"What is it?"

“The key is the promise of God. Put that key in the lock and open the door.”

As the song says:

What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear;
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer.

Is He a real Savior? Is He a mighty intercessor? Does He have all power in Heaven and in earth? Faith lays hold of these promises and claims them. And don't forget: one of the reasons that God is allowing us to go through this trial and that difficulty is that we may be able to comfort others who go through similar experiences. We are to learn in a practical way that the promises of God are keys to open the locks of difficulty, and lead us, as David says, into a large room.

The intercession of Jesus in the sanctuary above is based upon His work on Calvary. The two belong together. Neither one is complete without the other. The merits He presents at the mercy seat are the merits of His atonement. The blood sprinkled there in the Most Holy Place is the blood shed upon the cross. The life which He presents in Heaven is the life He lived on earth and laid down at Calvary.

This is what gives us courage as sinners. This is what gives us hope to come to God. We are presenting the merits of One who has lived a perfect life in harmony with God and then laid that life down to pay the debt of our failures. This is true not merely of our past which we have confessed and given up. No matter how faithfully we seek to serve God today, in our human weaknesses, there are imperfections. We may be conscious of them; we may not be. But they're there. But the thing that makes them presentable to God is the precious blood that Jesus mingles with our prayers—the incense of His righteousness which adds fragrance to our requests.

Oh, let us come then boldly, with confidence, to the throne of grace. We have a great Savior, a mighty Redeemer. He loves to hear us pray. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and even with the utterance of them. And the relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though that soul were the only one in all the earth. God would do for you everything that He has done in the plan of salvation. The entire program—Christ's incarnation, His holy life, His sacrificial death, His mighty resurrection, His glorious ascension, His priestly work within the veil—all are for you as if you were the only one in all the world. Isn't He a wonderful Savior?

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