

(The Life of Jesus) His Exultation

by Earle Maxwell

Jesus Christ is our great high priest, who is both God and man, and has a unique and forever priesthood that enables us to have access to God's throne in times of need.

Duration: 30:32

Scripture: John 14:9, Hebrews 1:2-3, Hebrews 4:14, Hebrews 6:20

Topics: "Christ Our Leader", "Faith And Mercy"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of Christ in our lives. He highlights three key aspects of Christ: Christ as our leader, Christ as the truth, and Christ as the source of life. The speaker encourages the audience to hold fast to their faith and to confidently approach the throne of grace for mercy and help. He also shares a story about a man who brings comfort and encouragement to a woman in a hospital by reminding her of God's presence and the victory we have in Christ. The sermon references the book of Hebrews and emphasizes Jesus as the Great High Priest.

Transcript

I'm going to take some, a little time just to share some meditation that comes from the reading that we've already listened to this morning. And as a preface to my comments let me just say that during the war, the Great War, the Salvation Army in Australia had a number of chaplains serving with the forces. And it so happened that one of these Salvation Army officers was a real man's man and he was always near the the front line where the action was.

And in one of the battles in which he was involved he heard a young voice calling out, Is there a priest? Is there a priest? And he could detect by the agony and the tone of voice that here was was a young person whose life was ebbing away. And so after William Mackenzie inched his way towards where he heard the sound. And when he got there the young boy who was dying with severe wounds said to him, Padre, do you know a Roman Catholic prayer? Here's a young Catholic boy dying and he's talking to a Salvation Army chaplain and he says, Padre, do you know a Roman Catholic prayer? And the Salvation Army officer said, Yes I do lad.

Say it after me. God be merciful to me a sinner. The word priest of course, sometimes we we don't get the fullness of meaning that there is in it when we restrict its identity more in terms of a Christian denomination rather than going to the word of God and saying what does it mean according to the scripture? Because right back here in the Old Testament in Psalm 110 and then in Zechariah you get two references to Christ

as the priest.

And then when you move into the Hebrews, the writer of the Hebrews, his whole theme is the priesthood of Jesus Christ and what he is doing and continues to do in heaven for every one of us. Hallelujah. And so this morning I'm going to take as my text Hebrews 4.14, 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.

We've gone through the life of Christ and if you go back to the first chapter of the book of Hebrews and in verse three you'll find that as this part of scripture is very similar in some respects to the book of Genesis. It starts with God and if you look at the opening words of chapter one, God who at sundry times and in divers manners. Then in verse two the writer says God has given us Jesus Christ and one translation says who is an exact imprint of the Father.

God has given to you and to me this supreme revelation of himself in Jesus Christ. And then in verse three it says he now is seated at the right hand of majesty on high. The risen, the ascended Christ now seated at the right hand of God.

I never read this segment of scripture but I remember how that in John 14 Philip says to Jesus show us the Father. There's an agony in his cry show us the Father and it suffices us and Jesus said have I been so long with you that you haven't got hold of the message he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. And so in this magnificent book of Hebrews suddenly we get Jesus.

We see him by the Father's side and right throughout these magnificent chapters we're introduced to him again and again as the great priest, the great high priest. And we'll discover in our study this morning what it is that contributes or what is it that identifies that greatness. And this morning because time is against us I only have two points instead of three.

Our high priest is a great high priest and our high priest is a gracious high priest. Great and gracious. You know when you look at the life of Jesus you'll soon realize how he answers the needs that you and I have.

Because mankind, mankind needs a prophet who shall declare to him the word of God as the standard for his life. And man not only needs a prophet man needs a priest who can mediate on his behalf and reconcile him to God. And man not only needs a priest he needs a king who will rule as sovereign ruler of his life according to the will of God.

And Jesus does all that. He is my prophet priest and king who did for me salvation bring. Hallelujah.

Well now let's move into our study this morning for these moments and I just want to suggest to you what is it that constitutes our Lord's greatness when he's referred to in the by the writer of the Hebrews as our great high priest. Aaron in the old testament was a high priest but never did he deserve to be called great. And I'm going to just give to you some seed thoughts that you might follow through with your own leisure.

But I think this morning that first of all I've got to say that the greatness of Jesus Christ is that he is both God and man. And this is declared forth by his name. Did you see in that verse Hebrews 4 14 seeing that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens Jesus.

The name that was given to him at his birth and we talked about that on last Sunday night. You shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from his sins his humanity and his ministry. And then the writer of the Hebrews says he's not only Jesus he is also the son of God and there's his deity.

And so in this marvelous togetherness in this phrase we see Jesus as man and Jesus as God and it aligns itself or should I say doctrine number four that we share in the salvation army aligns itself with this truth that he was truly and properly man and truly and properly God. And it's this magnificent combining of being a man and being God that equips Jesus as the risen and ascended Lord and as our great high priest to be able to bring people to God and to bring to people the resources of God that enables us to know victory. His greatness his greatness is identified in his name Jesus the son of God.

I read a report from an officer in Indonesia at a Salvation Army leper hospital. Recently we're in India and we saw some work along similar lines that the Salvation Army has for lepers in that country. And this officer in her report said that how on a Sunday evening they were not able to go out to the meeting because some of the patients were too sick and so they had a meeting in the hospital ward.

And the man who was very disappointed that he wasn't well enough to go to the meeting on Sunday night he got up and gave his testimony but before he sang he said I want to just give thanks to God tonight that I was born a leper. Because he said if I had never been born a leper I would never have been brought to this hospital where I heard the name of Jesus and Jesus changed my life. And then he sang take the name of Jesus with you child of sorrow child of woe it will joy and comfort give you.

Says the colonel who wrote the report he had a lovely voice he'd been a prisoner and when he was released from prison eventually he found his way to that Salvation Army hospital and she said he became a wonderful trophy of grace. One week later they stood by an open grave and there they laid to rest his emaciated mortal remains and as they placed his body to rest they again sang take the name of Jesus with you. He is our great high priest because his name brings that declaration and gives us that focus he is Jesus the son of God but he is also our great high priest as it says here not only by his person but also by his position he has gone into the heavens the writer says.

We are not handicapped as they were in biblical times that we have to go to a priest and we've got to wait for somebody to represent us to God in our needs and the sacrifices are offered. No the writer Hebrew says he is our great high priest because he's gone into the heavens into the presence of God and no longer do we have to be handicapped by making an earthly pilgrimage to a priest because we have our great high priest in heaven. How tender and merciful not only is he great because of his position in heaven but also there's another truth that emerges from this message this morning.

He is a great high priest because he is enthroned in heaven at the right hand of God and look at it there verse 16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace. We're invited to come there.

There's no hesitation it's like Dr. Arthur the other night in preaching on the woman with the issue of blood and just putting a hand out sort of tentatively wondering whether and yet feeling that that was all the faith she could muster just to touch his garment. The writer the Hebrew says we have a great high priest in heaven who is enthroned and you and I are asked and invited to come boldly into his presence. No wonder John 1 John 5 14 says and this is the confidence that we have in him.

This is the confidence we can ask anything according to his will and he heareth us. But if you look at this throne of what it is here it says the times that you and I should always remember our access to the throne is in time of need. I need thee oh I need thee every hour I need thee.

And so as you look at it there it says you can come in your moment of need and why would the writer speak in those terms because when Paul wrote to the church at Philippi he said my God is able to supply

all your need. How? According to his riches in Christ Jesus our great high priest in glory. Isn't it wonderful on this Sunday morning you and I can come into his presence and we can come boldly because this is the confidence we can have in him.

And when we come to the throne what does God in Christ make available to us? Mercy and grace. Verse 16 it's called a throne of grace. God's riches at Christ's expense grace.

But not only is it called a throne of grace it's called a place where we might obtain mercy. And the beautiful thing is that mercy is a dispensation a gift of God that you and I never deserved. Some of you are old enough to remember that very often of a Sunday night a decade or so ago we'd sing the song there's mercy still for thee for a trembling soul he'll make thee whole.

There's mercy still. Mercy God giving to me what I did not deserve. Grace is another dispensation of God that beautiful blessing which is given to me in measurable terms as I have need and given to me in sufficient measures that enables me to be more than conquerors through him who loves you and loves me.

And I'm just going to suggest to you this morning that this is another reason why he is our great high priest. And under this little subheadings these three that we've had and there's one more to go under the first thought this morning and it's this. He is our great high priest because his priesthood is unique.

It's unique. No one else could do what Jesus did. No one else this very day can meet our needs as we are promised according to the riches in Christ Jesus in glory.

But if you look in chapter 6 of Hebrews and in verse 20 we won't have time to talk about Melchizedek but we could have spent a little study there too because he's an unknown number in respect we don't know his parentage or his background and out of the blue he comes one of God's surprises. But in verse 20 whither the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus even Jesus made a high priest forever forever. And if you go through the book of Hebrews you'll find that there are at least six references to the fact that Jesus is our high priest forever forever and ever amen so let it be the uniqueness of Christ.

But also if you go into chapter 10 here's another little glimpse of his uniqueness in chapter 10 verse 11 chapter 10 every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins but this man but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God. Do you know that in the tabernacle the precincts of the temple there was seats were never provided for the priests the priests had to come in every day and they offered their sacrifices but the priests never sat down. But if you look at the the mention of Jesus again and again in Hebrews you'll find that when he went home to the heavenly father what happened he sat down at the right hand of God because he had no more work to do it was mission accomplished the victory had been won and because of his uniqueness he could sit down at the right hand of God and say to the father what you wanted me to do I have done victory is achieved oh I want to tell you in this Sunday morning what a great high priest we have in Jesus Christ.

But I want to just move into point two now we also not only have a great high priest we have a gracious high priest did you see tucked between verses 14 and 16 in Hebrews 4 we have a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities but within all points tempted like as we are. If you go back to chapter 2 and verse 18 it says for in that he himself has suffered he knows he knows what you're going through what I'm going through there's not one of us here this morning outside his providential care

but he is a gracious high priest and I'm going to put it to you in these terms because today he is in heaven as our intercessor. Hebrews 7 25 spend a moment to look at it wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

The writers of the Hebrews had this picture of the high priest whose ministry in heaven was a ministry of intercession and it's an understanding intercession. You remember in John 2 the close of the chapter it was said of Jesus, Jesus knew what was in man and so he appears for us before the father and you remember towards the end of his earthly ministry on one occasion Peter was just on the edge of one of his erratic behavioral patterns and Jesus said to him Peter Satan hath desired to have you that he might stick you as but I have prayed for you. What did Jesus pray for him about? That your faith fail not and when you've got the victory he said then you'll go and strengthen others.

Oh how wonderful to have a ministry that once God has reached you and blessed you you can then move out because you've known the impact of his prayer and you can bring blessing to others. Two years ago we were at Old Orchard and when we finished the Old Orchard camp meetings there I noticed that we had a couple of hours to spare and I said to Mrs. Maxwell Commissioner Roy Calvert's not well he's very very ill and no one from London's been able to see him since he became the TC so and it was just that General Tilsby has just retired and we were in that interim period before we had a new General so I was able to make some decisions and I didn't have to send them higher but I still prayed about them and I said to Mrs. Maxwell I think we should just dash across to Canada we can fit it in we can change our plane go back one day later. I went across and spent time with Roy and Ruth Calvert Commissioner and Mrs. Calvert and the Commissioner was in great pain his body was wracked with pain and we prayed with them blessed them we left just three or four days later the Commissioner went to be with the one who had been praying for him.

In a little note that Mrs. Calvert sent she said you know in the last day or two I just had to take Roy to the hospital the pain was too great and we were ushered into an emergency ward and we heard all sorts of strange sounds people were coming in with different emergencies and she said it seemed as though we had to wait an eternity before anyone could come and attend to us but she said I just stayed by Roy's side and prayed that he might not be too disturbed and then she said a man came in polishing the floor and he saw me and she said I could just hear his humming above the noise of the polisher and he was humming How Great Thou Art he came over and said look I'm sorry I'll come back and do this later and then went on his way but then he returned a few moments later and he said excuse me can I just tell you that God is with you can I just tell you that even death is not defeat but it is victory because our Lord already has won the victory for us and then that man a polisher in a hospital left the little emergency ward and went on his way at that moment said Mrs.

Commissioner Calvert God came to me in a new way I believe Jesus also was interceding you see our great high priest is in heaven as our intercessor but our great high priest is also our benefactor in heaven and the beautiful thing is that when you look here at the scripture he not only pleads for his people he not only presents the petitions that we have he not only secures our pardon but he also brings to us special blessings and I want to just give one or two of them very quickly to you first of all when Jesus went back to heaven that great high priest what was the first thing that happened that was the signal for the release of the Holy Spirit Acts 2 33 Jesus when he returned to heaven to be with the Father at the right hand that was the moment that signaled that the Holy Spirit we

could be on the flood side of Pentecost after that moment and that's why you remember on the first night that we started this series I said you always remember the human spirit fails unless the Holy Spirit fills what a beautiful blessing has been made available to us because our great high priest went back to be with the Father and not only is that one blessing but as I mentioned earlier Jesus said I want to tell you through this scripture that there is grace to help us in our time of need I like what Brangall said Brangall said I carry a mercy seat in my heart do you do that some moment when you feel that your Christian life has had a little bit of a quiver a wavering and you feel a little uncertain as to some experience or you're anxious about something that you've got to confront and

you say oh my god and you find that place within your own soul and you say thank God I too carry a mercy seat within me let me just tell you that when you look at grace if you just go for we'll just take quick three quick references from 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 please 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 2 Corinthians 8 and verse 9 I call this enriching grace for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that you that ye through his poverty might be rich to my mind that's enriching grace and if you go over now to chapter 9 of the same chapter 9 and verse 8 I call this enabling grace and God is able to make all grace abound towards you that you always having all sufficiency all in all things may abound to every good work and then thirdly let's go

to 12 9 and I call this enduring grace my grace is sufficient for and so I want to suggest to you this morning our gracious high priest is in heaven as our intercessor he's in heaven as our benefactor and then also if you go back to verse 14 and have one little look at again chapter 4 of Hebrews the writer says let us hold fast our profession it seems as though that the Christians who would have received this correspondence may have been under some pressure there may have been someone from the established church in quote who turned to them and chided them and said but we have a priest and you can go to our priest and we have the sacrifices and you can go to our sacrifices you can bring your sacrifices and we have our solemn occasions and you can be part of it but the writer of the Hebrews

says don't ever forget hold on to your profession because we have a great high priest great in terms that his name communicates his greatness Jesus the son of God great in terms of his position that he is now in heaven great in terms that he is now enthroned in heaven great in terms that his priesthood is forever therefore our gracious high priest is in heaven not only to give to us the blessing of the Holy Spirit but he's there as our intercessor and he's there as our benefactor and he gives to you and to me the grace that you and I need in our times of need who is he i want to suggest to you this morning that if i could just close this message by referring again to just three lines that i used earlier in this series Christ the way lead me for without you there is no going Christ the

truth illumine me for without you there is no knowing Christ the life live in me for without you there is no growing may you and i hold fast to that profession or confession if you like of our faith but in so doing remember that you and i have a great and gracious high priest who says to you and to me come confidently to the throne of grace that you might find mercy and help in your time of need

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