

Our Great High Priest

by Robert Constable

Our high priest is a loving and devoted Savior who gives us a new quality of life, intercedes for us, and wants us to share his joy.

Duration: 34:27

Scripture: Exodus 25:40, John 2:1-2, John 5:6, John 6:15-21, John 9:1

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on two stories from the Bible that demonstrate the compassion and power of Jesus. The first story is about Jesus walking on water and calming the fears of his disciples. This shows that Jesus is not only able to perform miracles, but also cares for his followers and wants to alleviate their fears. The second story is about a man who had been sick for 38 years and was waiting by a pool for healing. Jesus approaches him and asks if he wants to be made well, showing his deep compassion for the sick and his willingness to heal. The preacher emphasizes that it is never too late to seek healing and restoration from Jesus, no matter how long one has been in a state of spiritual stagnation.

Transcript

For see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount, according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. During the past winter season in Boca Raton in Florida, the ladies of the assembly had asked me to have a study with them of the book of Exodus. And, in the study of the book of Exodus, we learned that the book is about three different things.

It's about the exodus, the deliverance from Israel, the great work of God. It's about the giving of the law, another great work of God wherein God showed men their need of and then pointed to his provision for that need. That's all in the law.

Then the other thing was the building of the tabernacle, according to the pattern shown to Moses in the mount. That's very important. Everything in the tabernacle pointed to Christ, therefore everything in the tabernacle had to be according to the pattern that God gave.

He wanted men to know about the provision he was going to make for them, and so in the tabernacle itself we get the picture of the person of the Lord Jesus. And, in all that transpires in the tabernacle, we get a picture of the work of the Lord Jesus. And so, the book of Exodus becomes a rich unfolding of the mind of

God for us, as he tells us about this pattern, as he gives Moses the pattern in the mount.

It's a wonderful study, really, a thrilling time we had together. But, in the passage that we have just read this evening, while it speaks of the tabernacle and the pattern that was shown to the people in the mount, and all this speaks of the Lord Jesus, I want to use the other part of the passage that we have read. That part that said, that part that told us about the high priest.

We have such an high priest, we read. We have such an high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. Now, we could spend our time very profitably in what I have already discussed, the sharing together about the tabernacle, those things that pointed on to Christ.

But, rather than that this evening, I want for us to think about the fact that is stated here that we have such a high priest, a minister of the sanctuary, and I want us to look back and see what kind of a high priest we have. The people in Israel and in the wilderness, they looked ahead to the kind of a high priest they would have. We are on the other side of the cross.

We look back to see, oh, it's true that our high priest is seated in the heavens. He no longer is in the tabernacle made with hands, which is a figure of the truth, but he is in heaven itself making intercession for us. He is acting tonight as our high priest in heaven, and the question I want us to be concerned with this evening is, how is he acting? What is he doing in heaven for you and for me? Now, I think that since the Lord is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, we can look back on his ministry in the earth and learn the kind of things that he does, and then we'll understand something about the kind of priest he is in heaven.

So, let's turn to John Chapter 2 to begin with, and I'm going to be referring to several passages in the book of John. So, I hope you have your Bible, and that you'll turn to these with us. It's a great deal more important what the Word of God has to say about what the Lord Jesus did than that I have to say, so I'm going to refer you to the scriptures this evening a good deal.

John Chapter 2, verse 1. On the third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there, and both Jesus was called and his disciples to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said unto him, they have no wine. Jesus said unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.

His mother said unto the servant, Whatsoever he says unto you, do it. And there were set six waterpots of stone after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three perkins of tea. Jesus said unto them, fill the waterpots with water, and they filled them up to the brim.

And he said, Draw out now and bear it unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, the servants which drew the water knew, the governor of the feast called the bridegroom and said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse.

But thou has kept a good wine until now. Now, this is the Lord's beginning of miracles. It was one of the first things he did in his public ministry.

What did he do? Well, he changed one kind of life into another. He changed life from one quality into another, and I submit this to you, that the difference between water and wine is the same kind of

difference between natural life and the life God did. Back in the book of the Psalm, the 104th Psalm, the psalmist speaks of why God gave wine to men.

There he's speaking of God's wonderful provision for his creation, and he says that he gave wine to make glad the hearts of men, and oil to make his face to shine. Wine was given for gladness. Wine was given to men to lift them up above the circumstances, to make them glad, to make them overflow, to make them rejoice.

That's why wine was served at the wedding, but they ran out of that. They ran out of the wine they had. All they had left was water.

Water can be pretty flat. It's very good if you're thirsty, but when they told the Lord Jesus that the wine was run out, what did he do? He took that water so flat, and he changed it into something that would make their hearts glad, and that's the first thing he did with us, isn't it? Didn't he? He took the flatness of our natural life, and he changed it into something that bubbled up, something that made our hearts glad. This is what he does as our priest.

He gives us a new quality of life altogether, and that quality of life is as different from our natural life as wine is different from water. Turn to John chapter 5 and verse 1. After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now, there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water. Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had, and a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

When Jesus saw him rise and knew that he'd been there a long time in that case, he said unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool. While I am coming, another stepeth down before me. And Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked. I love this story, because I can see the Lord Jesus on the porch there at Bethesda, and I can see him walking among these impotent folk, and feeling sorry for all these sick people. And he was sorry for sick people.

He had great compassion for men and women. And here he sees this man. Thirty-eight years he'd been sick, and the heart of the Lord Jesus was touched with compassion.

And he stopped by this man's palace, and he asked him that amazing question. Would you like to be made well? Touched with the feeling of our infirmity. This man had been a long time so, it says.

You know, the Lord Jesus is still doing this. He still breaks the limitations of our human inability, the limitations of our abilities. He sees how weak we are, how helpless we are, how beset all around with the circumstances and the illnesses of life, the limitations of life.

And he looks on us, and he instills this compassion. And he says to you and me, would you like to be made well again? Would you like to be made perfectly well? Very often we are like this man. We say, too late.

No, it wasn't too late in this case after thirty-eight years, and I submit that it isn't too late for you. It doesn't matter how long you have spent your spiritual life in the in the bat wash. If you want to be made vital and alive, and to walk for God, all you need to do is to let him know it.

He's ready. He's compassionate. He'll make you that kind of person.

Look at chapter six, verse 15. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. And when evening was now come, his disciples went down to the sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum.

And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew, and when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship, and they were afraid. But he saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid.

And then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land wither they went. What does this tell us about the Lord Jesus? It tells us that he comes to us in the storms of life, when the winds are contrary, and the waves are high, and our circumstances are dark, and we don't know where we are, or what's going to happen. And he comes.

He comes. That's when he comes. Oh, we can hardly believe it is he.

And we're afraid. And he says, be not afraid, it is I. It is I. What comforting word that is. He comes in the dark.

He comes in the storms. He comes in the contrary wind of the circumstances of our lives. He meets with us there, and when he comes into the ship, there's peace.

We talk about having peace with God. We talk about having the peace of God. That comes through having the Lord Jesus come to us in the storm, and bring peace to our hearts.

We need this experience as the disciples needed it. That's why he lets us go alone into the storm sometimes. But he always comes.

He comes to quiet the storm, and to bring peace to our hearts. Chapter 9, verse 1, And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth, and his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sin, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day.

The night cometh, and no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. And when he had spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam.

He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. We are told in the word of God that the natural man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. We were blind, and we often are blind.

We all have our blind spots, things about the word of God that have not come through clearly to us yet. We have struggled in our lives because we have not made application of the word of God to our lives in those

circumstances. We are blind, but Jesus comes, and he puts the clay upon our eyes.

He touches us, and what happens? We come seeing. Why do we do that? Because we have such a high priest who is at the right hand of the majesty on high, who is concerned enough to come and touch us, who loves us, who brings us the light when we respond. Now, he didn't just do this automatically to this man.

He put the clay on the man's eyes, but he said to the man, Go and wash in the pool of Salome. And, if the man had not gone to the pool of Salome, he'd have been blind yet. The man obeyed.

He went and washed in the pool of Salome, and he came seeing. Sometimes the Lord Jesus comes to us this way. Sometimes he comes, and he gives us a command from his word.

He tells us to do this, or to do that. He gives us a conviction within that we have a responsibility that we need to fulfill. We have something that he wants done.

He gives us the command, and it is as we obey that we come seeing. He does it the same today as he did it in those days. Chapter 11, and let's begin in the middle of verse 11, where Jesus said, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well. However, Jesus spake of his death, but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then Jesus said unto them clearly, Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe.

Nevertheless, let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, let us also go that we may die with him. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

You know the rest of the story. Wonderful story. How Jesus came, and he brought life out of death.

He spoke, Lazarus come forth, and he that was dead came forth. Do you remember that statement of the word of God, that dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall not hear. It's still happening.

The dead are still hearing the voice of the Son of God, and those that hear. Aren't you glad you have a high priest in heaven that has a voice like that, that can speak, and then come to life? He spoke, and you came to life. He's doing that still.

Now, we're helpless to produce any kind of life, but he is not. In our utter helplessness, he can come, and he can do what we can never do. He can bring life out of our dead situation.

John 17, verse 11 again, and now I am no more in the world. The Lord Jesus is praying in this chapter to his Father, and now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now I come to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

I have given them my word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray thee that thou should, not that thou should take them out of the world, but that thou should keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. This is another function of our high priest in heaven.

He intercedes for us, and he is asking for the same things today that he asked for for his people in that bygone day, when he prayed among his disciples, when he asked God for what he wanted. The only time the Lord Jesus ever did that was when he prayed. He never thought of what he wanted.

He thought of what others needed, but on this occasion he's thinking about what he would like, and I think there never was a prayer uttered that God was more anxious to answer than this prayer. This intercession by this son who pleased him so well, what did he ask for? Holy Father, keep them through thy name, keep them, keep them, keep them. Are you ever afraid that maybe it isn't as all right as sometimes you think it is? Do you ever have those occasions when you wonder, can it be? I fail, I don't seem to measure up to what the word of God says I ought to be, and you get overcome with these feelings of, oh, I hope it's all right.

You need to hear this. The Lord Jesus prayed his Father, and is praying his Father, keep them through thy name. We don't have to keep ourselves.

He said that they might have my joy. Do you think you have it? Have you got it? This is one of the things that Jesus, above everything else, wanted for his people, that they might share his joy. He who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high, and he wants us to share this joy.

That's why sometimes we say that Christians are supposed to be joyful people. Jesus asked God to give you this joy, and he is asking him today, and he said, thanketh thy them through thy truth. He wants us for himself.

Keep them apart. Separate them from the rest of the world. Make them your own through your truth.

Make their lives true, and clear, and clean. Make them the distinct people in the earth. Are we? This is what the Lord Jesus prayed for, what he is praying for.

And then, down in verse 24, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou loves me before the foundation of the world. Can't you just see the Lord Jesus waiting for the day when he can introduce us to the glory which he has had with the Father from before the foundation of the world? Oh, he wants to take you and me home. He wants to have us with himself, and put on a display of all that he has.

The word of God says, I have not seen, neither has he heard, nor has it entered the heart of man. The thing God has prepared for them that love him, but he has revealed these things unto us by his Spirit, so we can begin to enter in to all that the Lord Jesus is waiting to show us of his glory. We've got touch of his glory tonight, the one who gave himself for us.

Wherefore, the Bible says, God also has highly exalted him, given him a name which is above everything. We were thinking about that earlier this evening. Jesus wants us to know all about that.

He wants us to see his glory, and to share it with him. Look at Hebrews now, chapter 7, which is just a little behind our text tonight, verse 26. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's.

For this he did once, and he offered up himself. Oh, what a priest! Hidden comes the blood of animals. Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace.

But Christ, the heavenly lamb, took all our guilt away. A sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood. The sacrifice and the sacrificer.

The priest who gave himself. What does this mean to you, to me, that he gave himself? Well, let's go back to John 10. John chapter 10, in verse 15.

As the father knoweth me, even so know I the father. And I lay down my life for the sheep, and other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again.

This commandment have I received of my father. This is total devotion to his own. The Lord is totally devoted to you and to me, and to our welfare.

He is totally devoted to us in all our circumstances. He is totally devoted to bringing us to glory, and showing us all his glory. And it could be summed up, I suppose, in the words of David when he said, God is for me.

Isn't that a great statement? He is too. He's for us, and he's God before us. Who can be against that? I was very interested a few weeks ago to read the testimony of Carol Lawrence, a great actress, who had recently given her heart to Christ.

And in the article that was run in the Chicago Tribune, it was quite a good-sized article. I took maybe a fourth of a page. It was across the whole spread of the page about Carol Lawrence finds Christ, and all this is a significant thing that she said.

All my life they have told me I must love God, but nobody ever told me that God loved me. And oh, what a difference! We can get used to this. Oh, what a difference it makes to live in the consciousness of the love of God, of his presence.

Well, we have such, and I agree, a minister of the sanctuary who is in the presence of God, of God mind you, for us. For us. What a difference this should make in our lives.

God help us to appropriate this, to walk in the light of his truth. Shall we pray? Gracious God our Father, we thank thee that thou art the God thou art. Thou hast revealed thyself in thy word and in the Lord Jesus as such a God.

We could never have conceived of such a God as thou art, except thou has revealed it to us. We thank thee for the revelation of thyself in the Lord Jesus. We thank thee that his compassion was a reflection of thy compassion flowing through him to us.

He said, I do not speak my own words, I speak the words of him that sent me. I do not do my own works, I do the works of him that sent me. He that has seen me has seen the Father.

We are glad that thou art such a God, and we thank thee thou has given us such an high priest, that thou has taken him in to heaven and seated him at thine own right hand, and that thou will deny him nothing, and that he has prayed for us, and prays for us. Oh, help us, we pray thee, to enter into the joy of this. May the grace of Christ our Savior, and the Father's boundless love, and the Holy Spirit's favor rest upon us.

Come upon us in Christ's name. Amen.

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