

Hebrews - Jesus the Final Word: God of Empathy

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Hebrews 4:14-5:14

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Reflection & Discussion

When Jesus looks at your brokenness, his response is empathy

Read and discuss Hebrews 4:14-16 (NIV)

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.

*What do you see in these verses about how Jesus responds to our brokenness?

*What misunderstandings of empathy are there?

*What is the definition of empathy given here?

The nature of the empathy of Jesus is that of Melchizedek – priest AND king

Read and discuss Hebrews 5:1-10 (NIV)

⁵ Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. ³ This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. ⁴ And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵ In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son;

today I have become your Father."

⁶ And he says in another place,

*"You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek."*

⁷ During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

*How does this passage bring fullness to the understanding of empathy?

*What authority does this High Priest – King have to help us grow in our weaknesses and understand our brokenness?

Jesus is fully and always BOTH – mercy and help

His vision for our life is to experience all of this to become fully alive.

*How have you experienced this compassion and challenge of Jesus in your life?

*Do you tend to look to Jesus as or want him to be just one or the other? Why do you think this is?

*Where do you need Jesus to burst into tears with you? Where do you need Jesus to call you on your own BS?

*What develops and grows in us when we embrace both parts to God's empathy?

This author calls us to grow up in righteousness: caring about God's justice for the world and our personal holiness

Read and discuss Hebrews 5:11-14 (NIV)

¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

*How do you see yourself growing to care more about these things? Is your heart changing in some way?

*What is keeping you from approaching Jesus with a humble confidence? What would it look like to embrace that?

*What is Jesus your coach trying to work with you on?

*What is the Spirit saying to you about Jesus as your High Priest and King?

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