

Jesus our Great High Priest

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Preacher: Peter Adam

- [0 : 0 0] Well, very good to be with you again. I must begin with an apology. I made a mistake last week and was helpfully corrected by a beloved brother. Well, anyway, someone.
- In chapter 2 of Hebrews, verse 13, we read, again, I'll put my trust in him. And again, he says, here am I in the children God has given me. And I talked, I think, about Jesus having children.
- But that's not true. The right understanding is that God has given Christ his children, God's children, as his brothers and sisters.
- And as I was reflecting on that, I was reminded of the story in Mark chapter 3.
- Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him and they told him, your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.
- [1 : 0 9] Notice how the phrase is repeated. Who are my mother and my brothers, he asked. Then he looked around at those seated in a circle around him and said, here are my mother and my brothers.
- Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother. Isn't that lovely? So, Philippians 2.13, the children God has given me are Jesus' brothers and sisters.
- Now, I think this is the most complicated and hard to understand of the three talks.
- And I'm not sure which is the better place to sit in the building because the cooling system is on that side. So, you dear sisters and brothers may end up frozen stiff.
- And there's no cooling on this side. So, you may fall asleep because you're too hot. So, there are the dangers. On the other hand, I'm on this side as well.
- [2 : 1 6] So, please notice as we go through this session, Jesus, our great high priest, that Jesus expresses both his divinity and his humanity in his high priesthood.
- To be high priest, he is both clearly a son of God, the eternal son of God, who is an eternal priest, but he's also a genuine human being.
- And whenever Hebrews writes about Jesus' priesthood, he's either emphasizing the divinity of Christ, the godness of Christ, and his great power and authority, and his eternal life.
- Or he's emphasizing the humanity of Christ and his deep sympathy with ordinary human beings that we talked about last week. So, we'll be repeating some themes from the first talk and the second talk because both the divinity of Christ, his godness, and his humanness come together, of course, in this idea of Christ as our great high priest.
- Now, let me tell you why I think it is worth you listening tonight and paying attention to what Hebrews says about Jesus, our great high priest.
- [3 : 4 9] We sometimes feel that God is remote from us a long way away. And we sometimes feel that the work of God for our salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ was remote in time.
- It was 2,000 years ago. Over against that idea that we are remote from God or God is remote from us, we're on earth and he is in heaven.

And over against that idea that God's great work of salvation was done 2,000 years ago is the complementary truth that Jesus is now our great high priest interceding, praying for us in heaven.

I remember when I was teaching at Ridley, asking a theology class who are meant to be, you know, people who know something, what was Jesus doing between his ascension and his return?

And there was a long silence. I said, well, do you think he's having a bit of a rest after all that business on earth? You know, perhaps he's just having a bit of a kip asleep.

[5 : 03] And the Holy Spirit's running around doing things, but Jesus is inactive. Well, as we'll learn tonight, Jesus is not inactive because he is our eternal high priest interceding for us.

What's the background to this idea? Well, it's very clearly in the Old Testament. Do you remember after Moses has received the law on Mount Sinai? Then God says, Exodus 25, have them make a sanctuary for me.

That is that the tabernacle later become the temple. Have them make a sanctuary for me. And listen to this, that I may dwell among them. Here's a neat summary of Exodus.

I think I've mentioned it already. God came down to rescue. God came down to speak. And God came down to live among his people. Now, this is a breathtaking idea, isn't it?

That the great Lord of heaven and earth, whom heaven and earth cannot contain, would somehow make himself accessible and present on earth in the tabernacle, in the Holy of Holies.

[6 : 14] And, of course, the Ark of the Covenant was his throne on earth. So, please notice that God has made the journey.

He's not saying to the people, you come to me. He's saying, I'm coming to you. And the coming of God down in glory in the last chapter of Exodus, to live in the tabernacle, to take up his throne on earth, is, if you like, a foreshadowing of the incarnation of Christ.

He came down in his presence there in the tabernacle and lived among his people. But he came down, of course, in person in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Word made flesh.

But what's it like to have God living among you? Well, the answer is, it's a bit dangerous. And so you have to be kept at a distance.

And that's why the regulations about the Ark of the Covenant in the most holy place, to which only the high priest can go on that on one day a year, then there's the holy place where the priests can go, and then there is the court of Israel where the ordinary people can go.

[7 : 35] But they're kind of God saying, if you like, come near, but keep your distance. And he's saying, come near, but only come as you offer a sacrifice, particularly a sacrifice of forgiveness for your sins.

So God is saying, come near, but don't come too close. Come near, but only come through the offering of a sacrifice. And most significantly for tonight, most of all, you can only come into my presence once a year in the person of the high priest.

So the ordinary people can't come into the presence of God, but their representative high priest can. And if you like, they come, he is their access to God, to the presence of God.

So come near, but keep your distance, lest you be destroyed by my holiness. These priests and sacrifices and the high priest, they're to negotiate the gap, if you like, between God on earth and his people gathered around him.

Now, the really exciting thing about Hebrews is that this negotiated gap, if you like, between the God who is present and his people is broken down by the sacrifice of Christ and by Christ, our high priest.

[9 : 13] And these are some of the glories that we'll see in our session tonight. Well, we've had the reading. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who's ascended into heaven, Jesus, the son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

And then there's the divinity, if you like. Jesus, the son of God, verse 14, verse 15, his humanity. We do not have a high priest who's unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but one who's been tempted or tested or tried in every way, just as we are, yet did not sin.

Now, I have lots of conversations with people about the tests and trials that they are undergoing as believers. And some of them are very painful conversations, because some trials and tests that people go through as believers are very severe indeed.

But even more troubling, I think, is when someone comes to talk to me about a trouble or a trial that their husband or wife is going through, or their child is going through, or their sister or brother or mother or father.

And often when we see genuine believers going through these trials, our faith is tested. When we go through these trials ourselves, our faith is tested.

[10 : 43] But here is the good news of verse 15. We don't have a high priest who's unable to sympathize or empathize with our weakness, but one who's been tempted or tested or tried in every way, just as we are.

Yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence that we may find mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

For every high priest, he's now writing about the Old Testament priests, of course, is selected from among the people and appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer us gifts and sacrifices for sins.

That high priest, the Old Testament high priests, Aaron and his successors, are able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and who are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.

That is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. And in talking about the Old Testament priests, still going in Jesus' day, the same line, still going, no one takes this honor on himself, but receives it when he's called by God, just as Aaron was.

[11 : 56] However, 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, and you are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

Now, if you have a couple of moments tomorrow, please read through Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. They are linked psalms. They are the most quoted psalms in the New Testament.

As a matter of fact, Psalm 110 is the most quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament. That's how important it is, because both psalms are about the glory and dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they complement each other.

Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. But what's this line in Psalm 110? You're a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

It's not a very popular name nowadays. I haven't met any young children called Melchizedek, but it's obviously important.

[13 : 02] We'll ask the question, why Melchizedek, in just a moment. Here, now in verse 7, the writer turns again to the humanity, the suffering humanity of Christ.

In 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. I take it those are about his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane, as we noted last Wednesday.

And he was heard because of his reverent submission. He did die, but he was raised from dead. Son though he was, that is, son of God though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered.

And once being made perfect, that is, having died and being raised again, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be a high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Well, Melchizedek only appears twice in the Old Testament. Once in Genesis chapter 14, where the story is told of Melchizedek, and then here again in Psalm 110.

[14 : 16] And I'm now going to try and explain why Christ is of the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek. What I'm doing is summarizing from the rest of Hebrews, the story of Genesis 14, 18 to 20, but you can read that perhaps tomorrow sometime.

This Melchizedek was king of Salem, that's the city of Jerusalem, by the way, and priest of God Most High. Now, God Most High is an expression that Abraham uses about God.

So, although Melchizedek was a Gentile, not a Jew, he was a believer in the true God. He met Abraham, who was returning from the defeat of the kings, and he blessed him.

And Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means king of righteousness. And then he's also the king of Salem, that is, king of peace, because Jerusalem means foundation of peace.

Without father or mother, that is, in the Old Testament, his father and mother aren't named. Without genealogy, that is, without descendants, we don't meet Melchizedek's children and grandchildren and so on.

[15 : 41] Without beginning of days, we don't know when he was born. We don't know when he died. He was resembling the Son of God. He, in the Old Testament, remains a priest forever.

Now, that's not saying he actually lived forever, but the saying, the saying the way he's portrayed in the Old Testament is that there's no beginning and no end. Whereas with the, with Aaron's priests, descendants of Aaron, all their, their parents and their fathers are named, and descendants are named.

So, here is someone, Melchizedek, who is kind of a different kind of priest from the normal Old Testament priest. Next point, Melchizedek was greater than Levi, who was the ancestor of all the priests, and so greater than the Levitical priests who served in the temple.

Now, this is very subversive, isn't it? Because the temple is still open, Herod's temple is still open, when this letter is being written. And the priests are still offering their sacrifices in the temple, at this very time.

So, he is a subversive priesthood from the Old Testament. And this Melchizedek is greater than the priests in the temple. Verse 4 there, just think how, next page, think how great he was.

[17 : 07] Even the patriarch Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful, gave him a tenth of the plunder. Now, the law requires that a tenth of Levi, who became priest, to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their fellow Israelites, even though they also are descended from Abraham.

This man, that is, Melchizedek, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed him, who had the promises.

And without doubt, the lesser, is blessed by the greater. That is, Abraham, is inferior to Melchizedek. Isn't that extraordinary? We know what a great hero, Abraham was, how important he was.

The great promise in Genesis 12. Through you, all the nations of the world, will be blessed. Abraham is a great Old Testament figure, none greater except Melchizedek.

Without doubt, the lesser is blessed by the greater. In the one case, the ordinary case, the tenth is collected by people who die. In the other case, it's by him who is declared to be living, that is, Melchizedek.

[18 : 21] One might even say that Levi, who collected the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

So, why Melchizedek? First reason, Melchizedek had no successor recorded in the Old Testament. He appears as an eternal priest. Second, as we've just seen, Melchizedek was greater than Levi, and so greater than the Levitical priests, who served in the tabernacle and the temple.

Next point, God's promise of a priest like Melchizedek, showed the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood. That is, if the priests, the Levitical priests, Aaron and his descendants, who operated in the tabernacle and temple, if they were, whether they were God's final version of the priest, well, then there'd be no need for Jesus, and there would be no need for a promise of Jesus, like Melchizedek.

If a perfection could have been attained through Levitical priesthood, and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood, why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron?

For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. So, if you remember reading Romans, or Galatians, you'll know that Paul's argument is that the law works for a while, but actually the promise to Abraham is bigger than the law, and the law reaches its end when it points to Jesus Christ, and then we don't have to keep the law anymore.

[20 : 10] Here's a parallel argument. The priests were provided through the law, but actually Melchizedek is a sign that these priests will have their day, they'll become obsolete, because one like Melchizedek, promised in Psalm 110, will become the great priest.

For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. He of whom these things are said belong to a different tribe, no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. That is, Jesus was the tribe of Judah, not of the tribe of Levi.

For it's clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and regard to that tribe, Moses said nothing about priests. What we've said is even more clear. If another priest like Melchizedek appears, that's Jesus, one who's become a priest, not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry, but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.

For it's written, it's declared, you are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Well, how can a human being be a priest forever? Only if they've been miraculously raised from the dead, as the son of God.

Next, God promised to provide an eternal priest like Melchizedek with an oath. It was not without an oath. Others became priests without an oath, but he became a priest.

[21 : 47] Jesus became a priest with an oath when God said to him, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever.

So he is not just God saying something, but saying, this is certainly true. This is rock solid shore. This is certainly true.

You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And because of this oath, this promise, this solemn promise, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

The new covenant, the covenant which replaces the old covenant, the new covenant, which replaces the law, the new covenant, which provides a better priesthood.

Next, Jesus, our eternal priest, always lives to make powerful intercession for us, having offered himself on earth as our sacrifice for sins.

- [22 : 51] Now, there have been many of these, these priests, that is the priests who served in the tabernacle, then the temple, since death prevented them from continuing in office.
- Well, that's pretty reasonable, isn't it? You've got a job. You're not expected to keep working after you're dead, are you? That's, that's fair enough, I reckon. But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.
- Please notice that Jesus' priesthood is not completed on the cross. It is an ongoing priesthood, a permanent priesthood, an eternal priesthood.
- It was a single sacrifice for sins. That was the work of Christ on the cross, the finished work of Christ. He offered his sacrifice. But he didn't finish being a priest when he was on the cross.
- No, he continues now as an eternal priest. He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore, he's able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
- [24 : 01] That's verse 25 on the notes on the second page. Now, please notice the phrase, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, doesn't just mean by means of him.
- It means in him. So, as I explained before, when the Old Testament high priest went into the Holy of Holies, into the presence of God on earth, he went in place of the people.
- He went because they couldn't go in. But Jesus is a different kind of priest, isn't he? Because he not only goes into the presence of God, but he brings us with him.
- He enables us to enter the very presence of God. He is, as we saw last week, the forerunner, that is, the person who goes first, not in order to replace the people who are following, but the person who goes first to find the way, so all his brothers and sisters, all the family of God, all the children of God, can be with him.
- He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them, to pray for them. Such a high priest truly meets our need.
- [25 : 38] We need this high priest. One who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. We need a high priest who's entered the very presence of God, so we can enter the presence of God.
- If he hadn't left earth, if he hadn't risen from the dead, if he hadn't ascended to heaven, then he would be not effective as a high priest, because the purpose of the high priest is to embrace the family of God, and bring us all into the presence of God.
- Now, this is so important. I often meet Christians who feel that God's at one end of the universe, and they're at the other, and God said to them, I forgive you, and accept you, and love you.
- Well, that's true. If you know that, that's wonderful. If you've heard that from God, you're convinced by the scriptures that God loves you, and forgives you, and accepts you, that's wonderful, but that's not all there is.
- And this is not going to work, by the way, this is the following suggestion, so please don't take it up, but I'd like all of you to come and live at my place. I've got, I should warn you, I play the grand piano at midnight, and I've got two yappy dogs, and lots of books, but it'd be lovely to have you at my place.
- [27 : 10] Now, when I issue that invitation, you think, you must be joking, but you'd at least know that I was serious about getting to know you, wouldn't you? If I said, come and live with me, that'll be fine.
- But that's exactly what God says. Come into my presence. Not keep a distance, not stay away, but come into my presence, through Jesus, a high priest.

Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices, day after day, first for his own sins, then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins, once for all, when he offered himself.

For the law appoints high priests, men in all their weakness, but the oath, that is God's promise, God's solemn promise, which came after the law, in Psalm 110, appointed the Son, who's been made perfect forever.

When I hear Christians praying, I often hear them apologizing for their being human beings.

[28 : 28] You know, I'm only a mere mortal, what can I do? I'm only a feeble 20-year-old, what can I achieve? I'm only a more feeble 80-year-old, what can I do?

There's no reason to apologize for our humanity. It's what God made us to be. And then I hear Christians say, well, I, you know, I know I've been forgiven, but I still feel unworthy.

Perhaps it's because I became a Christian late in life, and I can think of my life before as a Christian, I still cringe when I think about it. Perhaps I've been a Christian for a long time, but I'm increasingly aware as I get older of ways in which I hurt people in the past.

Sometimes I intended to, and sometimes I didn't mean to do it, but it seemed to happen anyway. It happened kind of accidentally. I can see the mistakes I've made.

So lots of Christians, I think, kind of hold back from the presence of God. But we have no reason to hold back from the presence of God, because Jesus is our high priest.

[29 : 39] He is our forerunner into heaven, 620. Well, I think the key verse in Hebrews about drawing near is, of course, in chapter 10.

And I want you to listen carefully as I read this for the two reasons that we can approach God with confidence. Therefore, brothers and sisters, this is 1019, since we have confidence to enter that most holy place by the blood of Jesus, there's the first reason.

By a new and living way, open for us through the curtain, that is through his body. And here's the second reason. And since we have a great priest over the household of God, blood and high priest, then, verse 22, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart, with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

It is by the blood of Jesus that we enter the most holy place. Not a holy place on earth, but heaven itself. To say that we enter that holy place by the blood of Jesus is to say that we enter that holy place by the death of Jesus on the cross, by his offering of himself as a sacrifice for sins.

That happened in history outside Jerusalem many years ago. But we also have confidence to enter the most holy place because we have a great priest over the house of God.

[31 : 34] We have now a great priest over the house of God. So it's because of Jesus' death 2,000 years ago and his eternal life in heaven now as our high priest, as one of us, as one who still retains his human body, still has his memory of his human weakness and frailty and temptation and testing.

Jesus, who is high priest by the solemn promise of God, you're a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus, who is at the right hand of God because he is the son of God, raised to God's right hand, the place of all authority and power and glory and beauty and holiness and the universe.

Because we have this Jesus, our great high priest, therefore, we can draw near to God. Let us draw near with a sincere heart and the full assurance that faith brings.

Years ago, I preached a series of sermons at St. Jude's on Hebrews, and I kept saying all the way through the series, you need a great high priest. And someone got the message and gave me a mug with, you need a great high priest.

And a mug is a kind of cup, I hope you know. Not another kind of mug, no. A sort of cup thing with, you need a great high priest. But I now think, I wish he'd put on it, you have a great high priest.

[33 : 09] That's even better, isn't it? We need a great high priest, and we have a great high priest. So we're saved, not just by what Jesus did in the past, but we're saved by Jesus, the high priest now, as he applies to us in his mercy and kindness, the power of that single sacrifice for sins offered so long ago.

He completed that sacrifice. He was raised from the dead. The sacrifice was offered, was accepted by God the Father. We know that because he raised his son from death. But he is still enabling us to enter the presence of God and still praying for us.

Isn't it lovely when we read in the Gospels of Jesus praying for the disciples, praying for Peter in all his weakness? Well, he's still praying for us all by name.

We should not think that God is only a remote God because God has welcomed us into his presence. We should not think that our salvation is just a past act.

It is a past act when Jesus died on the cross and rose again. But it's a past act which is being applied to us all the time. He's able to save us effectively because he always lives to make intercession for us.

[34 : 45] And how high priest Jesus is not just the high priest who goes on our behalf.

He's the high priest who is the forerunner who enables us to go into the presence of God with him. He takes us with him into the presence of God. When the folk in the Old Testament saw the high priest heading off to the Holy of Holies, they'd think we won't see him.

We won't see him again for a moment. He's gone to see God. Left us behind. Jesus doesn't leave us behind. He takes us with him. Paul has a similar idea in Colossians 2, verses 9 and 10.

Please listen carefully to this. You'll hear the phrase in Christ twice. Listen for it. What's happening in Christ? In Christ, all the fullness of God lives in bodily form.

And you have come to fullness of life in him. So who is in Christ? God is in Christ.

[35 : 58] And we are in Christ. That's how Paul addresses the Colossians in chapter 1. To those who are in Colossae and those who are in Christ. Where do you live?

You live in Christ. Who else is in Christ? God is in Christ. Couldn't get closer than that, could you?

God is in Christ. Amen. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, you are a priest forever.

when we hear those words in Psalm 110 we're overhearing what God the Father said to God the Son you are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek so the certainty of our salvation doesn't actually lie in the promise of God to us it lies in the promise of God to his Son the Lord Jesus Christ you are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek and a priest will have a people for whom he will offer a sacrifice as Jesus did and a priest will have a people for whom he prays continually as Jesus does for us there is the certainty of our salvation there is the joy of our salvation and there is our coming into the presence of God himself through his Son

Jesus our great high priest hallelujah hallelujah hi can you hear me just like to ask there seems to be a connection between Melchizedek Melchizedek and the house of David so in Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 I think the immediate context of those Psalms were that they were addressed to the Davidic king during that time and also there does seem to be certain other connections as well for instance David became the king of over Jerusalem and while Melchizedek was king of Salem and also the episode where

[39 : 02] David David went in the temple and and his followers ate the consecrated bread does that I'm not sure if I'm reaching but does that seem to also suggest that there's a foreshadowing that perhaps like Melchizedek the priesthood of Melchizedek would be transferred to a descendant of David yes you're on the right track thank you so much Psalm 110 is a Psalm of David and the first verse is the Lord said to my Lord now the Lord is God and the question is who is my Lord and you might remember that Jesus has a little bit of fun with the Jewish Jewish people saying well if David calls him Lord how can he be his son well the answer is the person what David is doing is then quoting what

God says to my Lord that is to great David's greater son the Lord Jesus Christ there are two two sayings of God the first one is in verse one of Psalm 110 sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet and the second is in verse four the Lord a swarm will not change his mind you're a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek so whoever David's Lord was was going to be the one who would reign from Zion and the one who would be the eternal priest so there is certainly a connection with the house of David there and in theory the my Lord of verse one could have been someone who wasn't from David's line but as we know actually it was of someone from David's line because Jesus was the Lord to whom God ultimately spoke these words so exactly right exactly right and that I think was Jesus' authority also for cleansing the temple which is a you know he wasn't a Levite so he wasn't allowed to do that but because he was this this Lord of David who was a priest forever he could do that yeah spot on someone's going to ask me the question so I'll answer it anyway and if you don't ask it well you you should someone's going to say well I haven't thought very much about

Christ being my high priest and so what should I do about that well if that's you my advice is to make yourself a little list of things you pray every day and make sure that includes praising Christ because he is your great high priest you'll make it your own by saying it and by praising Christ and you can praise him for the reasons you're thanking him for being your high priest that he offered a sacrifice for you that he's of the father's right hand that he's always praying for you so if you want to make something your own which is kind of a bit on the edge of your Christian experience and knowledge then the best way to do it is to make it a matter of daily prayer then you can pray it not just for yourself but for others as well so dear dear heavenly father please help aunt Mildred to know that Jesus is her great high priest and so on and so on yeah thank you for asking that question that was a really spot on question hi Peter thank you again for tonight it's a great encouragement to be reminded of the confidence that we have in Christ as our high priest my question is how do we balance

I guess a holy reverence of God but also a knowledge of the invitation into his presence through Christ I tend to ask myself this question if Christ were to come today should I fall onto my face in fear as it's seen in God's presence in the Old Testament or should I embrace him as my saviour what are your thoughts on this yes you should not be frightened of him but you should be reverent before him so there's a kind of there's a right fear of God a right fear of Christ which is not taking him lightly so please don't think that you can pat him on the back and say buddy it's great to see you again how have you been what have you been doing since we met last I wouldn't advise that approach but nor should you be frightened of coming into his presence so a worshipful respectful adoration and thanksgiving would be the right kind of attitude yeah he is after all the lion of Judah as well as the lamb so don't be afraid of him but don't take him for granted or think he's just someone on your level yeah

I think you'll know what to do when he appears by the way yeah wouldn't worry about it good evening Peter got one question where did milk come from from his mummy and daddy I guess that is he presumably had parents as people usually do usually too but the names of his parents aren't recorded in the Old Testament and if you know your Old Testament you'll know that anybody who's anybody's ancestors and descendants are named so what the writer is taking up is that he appears out of nowhere but did he have was he an ordinary human being yes certainly he was yeah and did he die yes he did yeah he was an ordinary human being but in a literary sense he doesn't have ancestors or descendants now you might think that's a kind of you know an odd way of describing somebody an odd point to make but it was just the way in which people thought in those days and the scriptures were written in a particular time in a particular literary style which suited the people of that time not our time so we have to put up with long lists of names which we wouldn't normally put in a book and the use of the

[46 : 01] Old Testament which is not something that we would do I think nowadays yeah yeah hi Peter you mentioned how we are in Christ and God's presence got fully in Christ I was wondering if there was a difference in the way in which we are both in Christ present in Christ yes so I imagine in my head that the presence of God is in his body Christ on earth but the way that we are in Christ I often imagine as in an ark or a boat as a vessel in an ark or a boat as a vessel that we are in Christ as Noah passed through the flood in an ark in the vessel oh sure yes and what role does the Holy Spirit have in us being in Christ yes there's a difference between the way which

God is in Christ God is in Christ essentially that is who Christ is God is in Christ and God would be in Christ whether we are in Christ or not but what Christ does you see is embrace us into himself so as in Adam all die even so in Christ will be made alive so Jesus was a human being who died why is his death efficacious why is his death effective for lots of other people because he embraces us into himself and into his death Jesus is raised from the dead why is his death effective for us why is it that when Jesus says in the last day get up every human being will rise from the dead and why is it righteousness by the power of Jesus death and Jesus resurrection because Christ has embraced you into himself so we're in

Christ by grace God is in Christ by his nature that is the very person of Christ is God son incarnate thank you very good question hi Peter thank you for your message I was just wondering when does when is Jesus our great high priest or when does he become our great high priest was it eternally in him being the son as it says in some verses is it in his incarnation or his death and resurrection when he presents that sacrifice and is made perfect through his suffering yes sure well in one sense that's a slightly arbitrary question because once God has decided something then it's going to happen it's true whether it's happened or not but we can say that

Jesus is our saviour but he expresses his saviourhood on earth most clearly when he dies on the cross you might say well he expresses his saviourhood when he you know raises the widow of name son or when he raises Lazarus well yes that's true but the kind of quintessential expression of his being a saviour is when he dies on the cross and the quintessential expression of his priesthood is when he dies on the cross because that's when he offers the single sacrifice for sins the sacrifice of himself and then he continues to express that priesthood differently when sorry I forgot to talk about the Holy Spirit just a moment ago we're sustained in Christ by the power of the Spirit the power of Christ and the power of the Spirit is a way of talking about the same effect that is

Christ does it and the Spirit does it yeah somebody at the back I think if you're feeling like a run hi Peter I was wondering you spoke about how when we pray we can often hold back from the presence of God I was wondering what you think it would look like to not do that sure yeah well I think we have to enter God's presence by faith it's not a matter of feeling so sometimes we feel close to God sometimes we don't that doesn't matter particularly but it means we're trusting that in Christ we are in the presence of God to quote Jesus' words in Hebrews 2 he says to

[51 : 09] God here am I and the children you've given me so here we are there's a wonderful moment in Calvin's catechism for children when he asks if we might we can pray with confidence and he his reply is I've just adapted the word slightly but God hears our prayers as it were from the lips of his son because Jesus is high priest we pray through him so God hears our prayers from his lips well he's at the right hand of God that's pretty pretty close to God there's no chance of our prayers being lost or not heard by our gracious heavenly father so when we pray we're praying through Christ and God hears our prayers from the mouth from the lips of his son the Lord Jesus that's not because we're a long way away that's because we're there because he is our forerunner and he's embraced us into himself we are in

Christ we are in our great high priest embraced in him read those verses from Hebrews 10 90 to 22 learn them put them on your fridge put them on your screensaver whatever that is tattoo them on your left no I better not say that praise God for them every day and they'll be more and more part of your experience one more question hi Peter I get a bit confused about the concept of God's presence if God is omnipresent then what's the significance of being in his presence sure yeah you've got me on the run tonight I think I'll charge double for tonight for the question time such difficult questions yes God is present everywhere that's quite right yeah he's present where people don't recognize him he's caring for little sparrows all the time and weevils and things like that as he made so many of moths he seems to have made lots of moths this season as far as I can see he obviously likes moths but when we say that

God is present we often mean that he's revealing himself in a more particular way a special way or that he's doing something he's present in his power so is God present everywhere yes he is but God was in Christ in a special way that is he was incarnate in Christ the son of God took human flesh became incarnate so he was in Christ in a unique way he's nowhere else and he's present to believers because he summons us through Christ into his presence that we might the more God reveals of himself the more we worship him if you see God in creation all you can do is recognize his power and greatness and stuff like that but if you know him in Christ you know his compassion and faithfulness and steadfast love and forgiveness and so on so if you like the closer we get to

God the more he reveals of himself another human being you can be near another human being but not know them at all but the more time you spend with them the better you get to know them so it is with God the more he reveals of himself and the more you appreciate that person I hope yeah thanks thanks so much for your answers Peter now Andrew's going to come and lead us in prayer