Our Perfect Priest

October 4, 2015 · PM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2015/our-perfect-priest/

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Hebrews 5:9

Introduction:

1. Most of us are at a distinct disadvantage to appreciate Jesus, for we grew up without having priests.
2. Priests are a necessity of religion, as determined/declared by Jehovah, which all false religions ape!
3. Any God worthy of worship must be so far above His worshippers that there is a need for a go-between, thus Job spoke of one and Paul declared Jesus that One (Job 9:33; I Tim 2:5; Gal 3:20).
4. The Hebrews, or Jews, well understood the importance of a priest for the remission of sins and peace with God, for they had a 1500-year history of priests descending from Aaron of the tribe of Levi.
5. Paul used much of this persuasive epistle proving that Jesus was far superior to any of their priests.
6. The High Priest of our profession is Jesus Christ (Heb 3:1); forget all other men as your high priest.
7. He took on our nature, not that of angels, to be able to commiserate with us (Heb 2:14-17; 4:15-5:3).
8. He was called by God to the office like Aaron (Heb 5:4-5), as declared by David in Psalm 110:4.
9. Details of Jesus Christ's Melchisedec priesthood are found primarily in chapter seven of Hebrews.
10. For Melchisedec priesthood details.
11. In the following verses, His Melchisedec priesthood will be defined by His intercession and results.
12. God cannot be His own mediator or priest, so He designed and sent the perfect Man Christ Jesus!

Who in the days of his flesh

1. A great mystery of our faith is God was manifest in the flesh (I Tim 3:16; John 1:14).
2. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for a signal purpose – to die (Heb 2:9).
3. Paul commended and praised Jesus for this willingness for such humility (Phil 2:5-8).
4. The time of the following events was during His earthly, human life before ascension.
5. He became us with flesh and blood (but no fleshly sin nature) to suffer and to relate.
6. You have had no struggles with your flesh to justify any comparison to His strivings.
7. Jesus was in a flesh body, not glorified in heaven as He is now, for thirty-three years.
8. He still has a human, flesh body, but it has been glorified as we will be (Phil 3:20-21).
9. Do you want a High Priest that had a flesh nature subject to the weaknesses of yours?

When he had offered up prayers and supplications

1. Jesus prayed and supplicated in Gethsemane for God to allow Him another option.

1. Prayer. A humble and solemn request to God in words either verbally or mentally.
2. Supplication. Humble or earnest petition or entreaty – more begging than praying.
3. Notice there is no intercession here – he prayed not for others here, but for himself.
4. See/hear His humanity (Matt 26:36-39,42,44; Mark 14:32-36,39,41; Lu 22:39-46).
5. John's account of similar trouble is not in Gethsemane but before (John 12:27-28).
6. No man ever knew the will of God better, but yet He asked and begged to avoid it.
7. But always and with full conviction, He was ready and willing to do God's will.

2. We want to learn to pray as Jesus Christ taught us to pray and as He Himself prayed.
3. Even with duties you know you must perform, there is no sin or weakness in praying.
    1. Do not create bondage for your soul by defining weak faith that condemns Jesus!
    2. Your Father in heaven knows your human frame and pities you accordingly for it.
4. Do you want a High Priest that knows how to pray and supplicate the God of heaven?

With strong crying and tears

1. His praying and supplicating, both of which you must do, was very passionate indeed.
2. Do you see that Jesus was fully aware of the great horror coming to Him on the cross?
3. Remember well that there was much more to His crucifixion than mere physical pain.
4. He was very afraid, because he had a human nature to feel things like the fear we feel.
5. The Bible says fervent prayer avails much (Jas 5:16); think of strong crying and tears.
6. It is not wrong to cry, it is more like Jesus and His father David (Ps 6:6; 39:12; 42:3).
7. Jesus had bowels to produce tears, though knowing God's will (Jn 11:35; Luk 19:41).
8. Lacking tears generally indicates a lack of bowels, but we do not need more theatrics.
9. Do you want a High Priest very empathetic and passionate to pray or supplicate God?

Unto him that was able to save him from death

1. God was able to save Jesus from dying on the cross, but His will would not be done.
    1. The power of the Jews and Romans combined and squared meant nothing to Him.
    2. Hezekiah, in far greater straits, was saved immediately and totally from Assyrians.
    3. Jesus told Peter His Father could send 12 legions of angels right then (Mat 26:53).
    4. But if Jesus asked for them or God sent them, the scripture would fail (Mat 26:54).
    5. Never forget that God's will is declared in scripture so that the one is as the other.
2. You know from above that Jesus begged – for the cup to pass from Him, if possible.
3. If you ask for God to deliver you from something, even death, and He does not, think.
    1. Think … if God does not deliver, then the result is His perfect and righteous will.
    2. Think … if God does not deliver, then He will provide all you need to do His will.
    3. Think … if God does not deliver, it is the best result for you, no matter your view.

4. For the fitting song, Ten Thousand Angels.
5. Do you want a High Priest that knows and understands to whom to pray in great need?

And was heard in that he feared

1. Note the fear in this verse – this is not Jesus' fear of dying, but rather His fear of God.
    1. Jesus' fear of the cross was not the bottom line, for He was totally willing in faith.
    2. The bottom line to His prayer in Gethsemane was submission to God's will over His own will, which is fear and reverence of God perfectly applied and illustrated.
    3. It is not our fear of a situation that gets God to hear us, but rather our fear of Him.
    4. Paul explained later in this epistle: fear of God is acceptable service (He 12:28-29).
    5. Jesus had taught fear of God, Who had power to kill and cast into hell (Lu 12:4-5).
    6. Jesus is said to have trusted God, like fearing Him, for His deliverance (I Pet 2:23).
2. These words plainly declare that God did hear the prayers of our Lord in Gethsemane.
3. Jesus prayed in the garden in the middle of a night, but hours later God forsook Him.
    1. Though God forsook Jesus in fellowship, He supplied what He needed in strength.
    2. Even when we lose the joy of fellowship, God will sustain us to remain faithful.
4. How did God hear Jesus? He heard and sent an angel to strengthen him (Luke 22:43).
    1. See His boldness to go meet the mob coming to arrest Him and identify Himself.
    2. See His confidence on trial and total lack of shirking or threatening (I Pet 2:21-24).
5. How did God hear Jesus? Psalm 22 says God did not hear, but did hear (Ps 22:1-3,24).
6. Do you want a High Priest that though troubled reverenced God and was heard for it?

Though he were a Son

1. As the Son of God, Jesus should not have had to suffer something so personally ugly.
    1. But you see in Gethsemane His humble submission to His Father's will for Him.
    2. He did not complain it was unfair, or it was inconsistent, or it belied God's love.
2. But as the Son of God, He had been charged and sent to lay down His life for sinners.
    1. He understood His office and was willing, yea ready and eager, to do God's will.
    2. He knew, for we are told elsewhere, that He would be highly rewarded for dying.
3. We, though the children of God, will have our ugly things in life to endure and suffer.
4. Do you want a High Priest, though privileged most highly by God, did all expected?

Yet learned he obedience

1. The Son of God willingly submitted to pain in order to learn and illustrate obedience.
2. This learning should be understood as experimentally and practically, not just academically, intellectually, or conceptually, for He had always obeyed (John 8:29).
3. How can we ever complain about our trials, when He bore worse ones so much better?

4. Do you want a High Priest that did what He asks of you, though better through worse?

By the things which he suffered

1. It was not so much His sufferings that taught Him, but rather His submission to them.
2. Suffering is good, as we have recently learned, to acquire patience, experience, hope.
3. No soldier dying for His country comes close to Christ's conscious, knowing decision.
4. For more about afflictions.
5. Do you want a High Priest that suffered significantly and willingly chose it for God?

And being made perfect

1. He was, and became, and is, an infinitely perfect priest in every way by any measure.
2. He carried the value and worth of His own sacrifice to God in heaven for the elect.
3. He did everything perfectly … lived, died, buried, resurrected, ascended, intercedes.
4. Consider His person, office, humility, obedience, supplication, endurance, mercy, etc.
5. This idea of perfection of Paul by the Holy Spirit is not new, but repeated (Heb 2:10).
6. Jesus sent word to Herod that after three days He would be perfected (Luke 13:32).
7. It is the combination of all Jesus was, all He did, and all He does now that is perfect.
8. Do you want a High Priest that is absolutely perfect in every way by any measure?

He became the author of eternal salvation

1. God gave the elect to Christ, and He gives to them eternal life (John 10:28-29; 17:2).
2. There is a Man in heaven that has guaranteed and will complete your entire salvation.
3. At the right hand of God with His sacrifice finished (Heb 1:3), He gives us eternal life.
4. Not only did He die and rise … He ever lives to intercede (Ro 5:10; 8:34; Heb 7:25), which Paul elevated to a very high level indeed in comparison to His death.
5. Do you want a High Priest that has finished and is doing everything for eternal life?

Unto all them that obey him

1. The Holy Spirit can choose whatever He desires to describe recipients of salvation.
2. In this place, and many others also, He chose to identify the elect by their obedience.
    1. Your decision to invite Jesus into your heart is not a condition or proof anywhere.
    2. Your baptism no matter how much you believed is far too little for real evidence.
    3. The real evidence of eternal life, for those Jesus will surely save, is true obedience.
    4. The evidence of election is your obedience (I Thess 1:2-4; II Pet 1:5-11; Gal 5:6).
    5. Salvation has never been a decision, except for God's choice to save (Ro 9:15-16).
3. Obedience as evidence.
4. Remember, obedience has already been introduced, the Lord's obedience in suffering.

5. Do you want a High Priest that rewards the wicked and punishes the righteous (Ezek 13:22), or One whose gift of eternal life is consistent with godliness as the result?

Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec

1. David foretold his Lord, chosen by his LORD, would fulfill Melchisedec's priesthood.
2. Psalm 110 is one of the Messianic Psalms and declares Jesus Christ King and Priest.
3. For His Melchisedec priesthood.
4. Do you want a High Priest that fulfills all the great traits of Melchisedec's priesthood?

Conclusion:

1. There is much more to be said of Jesus Christ's priesthood, and Paul did, but his audience was dull.
2. Are you advancing in the knowledge of Christ by His Spirit and word, or are you also a dull hearer?
3. Men will do most anything for false priests on earth, but you have a perfect priest gone into heaven!

For Further Study:

1. Sermon Outline: Order of Melchisedec
2. Sermon Outline: Our Great High Priest.
3. Jesus made us kings and priests to God.
4. A summary of Melchisedec priesthood.
5. For Jesus Christ's testimony on trial.
6. For an introduction to Messianic Psalms (see also).
7. Overview of Israel's Day of Atonement.
8. Running our Race like Jesus Ran.
9. More about Running Like Jesus.