

The Place of Grace

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[0 : 00] Let us for a short time turn back to the chapter we had, Hebrews chapter 4 and reading again verses 14 down to verse 16.

Hebrews 4 verses 14 down to verse 16. Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet with it is sin.

Let us then with confidence put on near the throne of grace, that we might receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Again looking just at these few verses this evening, but just for some brief context, I know you have as a congregation looked at Hebrews before, even again in our time together several years ago, to a brief, I think in the pre-emitting look at Hebrews once or twice.

[1 : 05] The context of course is the Hebrew church, the offer was writing to a group of Christians, of young Christians, of new Christians we presume, but of course we are being tempted back to the old ways, tempted back to quite literally the smells and the bells of the temples, of the worship of the garments, of all they once left.

Persecution was coming in, difficulties were coming in, and it was all so easy for them to look back to where they once were and go, life was easy back then.

We had the temple, we had the offerings, we had the incense we could see and we could exist in the temple and taste and smell and now we have nothing but ourselves.

Now we believe in a saviour who has gone up into the heavens, we'll see. We don't longer have any robes, any vestments, there's no more place to go and these Christians are finding it understandably difficult.

In the context of that, the offer writes them this letter. In our chapter here, chapter 4, he is of course reminding them that, I've always said before him that their forefathers in Israel, that not even they found the rest they were looking for.

[2 : 22] They looked for it in various places, and we don't have time to even look into the context of chapter 4 properly, but we read together in the chapter, they looked for it, the reality was there was a greater rest still to come.

The rest that their forefathers did receive, the rest that God did give them, even that was just a foretaste as to the greater rest that was to come to be found of course only in Jesus.

So that's our context here as we come to our verses here, verses 14 down to verse 16. But before we get there, let's look together at verses 11, briefly verses 11 down to verse 13.

Just before the offer finishes this section of thought, just before he reminds them of Jesus for a great high priest, he reminds them of verses 11 non-words, verses 12, verses 13, that they are before a holy God.

We know that ourselves, we've heard that before, but as we look to verses 12 and verse 13, we're reminded so clearly this evening as Christians, but we're before the one who is truly, this word is living and active in verse 12.

[3 : 35] And the imagery of that, we're perhaps so used to hearing it, but it's very clear imagery of verse 12, the word of God living and active, sharp of an eight-edged sword, piercing to the division of his soul and of the spirit of joints and of marrow, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart that nothing is hidden from God.

We approach, as we say this morning and just now, we approach in the presence of a holy God who is holy, holy, holy. There's no one else like him, we're in his presence this very moment.

A presence of a holy God who sees all, who knows all, again the verse 13 just emphasises that no creature is hidden from his sight, all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

As we come to the end of this chapter, of this section of thought, the offer leaves these struggling Christians with no doubt that they are before a holy God, yes.

That the God, their ancestors worshiped as the same God they worshiped. His holiness has not changed, his glory has not changed, their sinfulness before him has not changed.

[4 : 49] If we were to end at verse 13, we would leave this chapter having learned and having heard, yes, that we worship and we trust in a holy God who is perfect and who we're exposed before and that's true.

If we were to end at verse 13, we'd have to ask, well, where's the comfort? Where's the help in that? We praise God that verse 13 isn't the end.

We are reminded we're before a holy God, but then we're also reminded that before that holy God we have one to stand before us, to stand between us and him.

We have our mediator, our high priest, and see that as we go on. Looking at verses 14 to 16, just under three very brief, very general headings.

First of all, looking at verse 14, we see the access of our high priest, then verse 15, we see the awareness of our high priest, and then finally in verse 16, we see the approach, access, awareness, and approach.

[6 : 02] Dear Christians, as we come to read on the committees verses for a short time this evening, it's been encouraged to remind it of the wonder that we have, that we come before our Saviour, who is our great high priest.

This moment, this moment as a Christian, those who know and love Jesus, you have access to this one, oh Grace. So first of all, with that in mind, let's look at verse 14, looking at access, the access we have through Jesus.

Verse 14, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

We heard verses 11 and verse 13, we have as we said, this reminder of God's holiness, God's perfection, and we're left wondering, well, we understand that, we believe that, so what do we do, what do we say, where do we go?

God is holy, God is perfect, we stand before Him naked, exposed, nowhere to turn to, He knows our thoughts, He knows our minds, and we think, well, that's a dangerous place to be.

[7 : 05] We, of course, know our own thoughts, we know our own minds, and that's often bad enough for us, that when we are reminded that our holy, eternally holy, eternally perfect God cannot behold sin, sees and knows our minds and our thoughts.

We are rightfully humbled, and we are rightfully reminded just how small we are before Him. As we said, we praise God that it doesn't end there.

The writer goes from these verses to verse 14, as he brings these young Christians, these suffering Christians, brings them back in their minds, that they, yes, are perhaps pining after what we used to have, but now in Jesus they have a great high priest.

The priest of the temple of their day was still sacrificing, they were still doing the actions as it were, but the high priest, the family priest had come, and he reminds them, and he reminds us this evening, that we have a great high priest.

So what does it mean that we have a great high priest? What access do we have through Jesus this evening? Well, we see that in the first few words here of our verse.

[8 : 18] Since then, of course, these are just quite a few connecting words, they tell us that what's about to be said connects to what's said before by the offer.

In these verses, we are, in this verse verse 14, we see at least three reminders, three reminders as the access that we have through our high priest.

See all the other high priests, before the great final high priest, they faithfully served. I'm sure many of them did the best they could for all their years of service.

They loved the Lord, they served the Lord. That's where we reminded, their service was tainted by sin, as all our services, and eventually, of course, the end would come for them, they had to die at some point.

Their service stopped them, and then the next high priest came up after them, and so it began. There was no continuous high priest, there was no perfect high priest, just a line of imperfect high priests, trying their very best, I'm sure, but not completing the work that needs to be done.

[9 : 28] We reminded of that in Hebrews 7, verse 23, where it tells us, the former priests were many a number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, speaking of Jesus, but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever.

So let's look at the access of our high priest, the eternal high priest, how through him we have access to the throne of God.

First of all, look with me please, the name given to him, the title given to him. Since then we have a great high priest, great high priest, that separates him from the priest we just talked about.

Plenty of our high priests, plenty of our well-serving, good, godly high priests who loved our Lord, who served our Lord, only in Jesus do we have the great high priest.

Only he is given this exact title, and of all the other high priests in Scripture, only the final one is given this exact title. This separates him from even the best of the previous high priests.

[10 : 38] In Jesus, the final high priest we have the one, the only one who is the great high priest, superior to all who came before him.

He alone is called great, he alone is highly exalted, and because he is greater than all the previous high priests, he's done something that none who come before him could have done, because he is greatly exalted, because he is the great high priest he has made access to the throne.

He's done what they could never do. His finished work has granted us access to the favor. So we are assured of our access because of the name and the title we see here, because we worship this evening, our great high priest.

The second we see the evidence of our access is the description we have here, our great high priest who passed through the heavens.

Now this is a strange phrase, isn't it? He passed through the heavens and we can read it and think, what's that really saying to us? What does that even begin to mean?

[11 : 54] As you said, this letter of course is to those who were very much of a Jewish background, all Jewish converts, as far as we understand, and who were being tempted back to the old ways of things.

And the use here of heavens, the same use we see throughout Hebrew writing throughout Jewish writings of the time, the cultural of the Jews of the day, the culture outside of Scripture, but the culture taught and they believed culturally that there were levels to heaven or levels of heavens.

Now we don't say that's what the scripture teaches, we don't say that at all, but that's what we believe, that's the culture of the day. We see Paul referencing that same culture, we know what he talks about, being caught up to the third heaven.

Paul's just referencing the culture of his day, same as we would do today. So we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens.

Why is it important? Well this is the offer reminding these struggling Christians that you're a high priest, my high priest, he's done it all.

[13 : 07] As it were with respect, he's gone all the way, he is fully exalted. There's a whole theology, again not scriptural, but it's cultural of the day, of the different levels of heaven and who went where.

The high priest, using the language of the day, the offer reminds him he's fully exalted. He's passed through the heavens, but nothing stopped him, nothing stood in his way.

He completed his time on earth, he completed his work, as we signed together in Psalm 110. That great Messianic Psalm for telling the great coming high priest, or last time together, we actually looked together at that Psalm.

The great eternal Machhissadek, the one who'd reign and rule forever as priests and as kings, he has ascended up through the heavens. Nothing stopped him, why?

Because he did his work. His work is complete, his time on earth is complete. The writer is clear that the great high priest, he's fully exalted, he now occupies the highest of places, at the right hand of the Father.

[14 : 15] The place of completions we said before, the place that shows ongoing involvement, the place of power. We worship this evening, brothers and sisters, we worship an exalted, ascended high priest who has fully completed the work needed to be done with the salvation of his people.

Because he now is there through the heavens, at the right hand of the Father, we are assured yet again that we have access to the Father through him.

He is the only high priest to have ascended through the heavens, the only high priest to have completed his work perfectly. And because that's the case, because he's sitting at the right hand of the Father, because he now reigns there as priest as king, this very moment we have full assurance, or we should at least lay hold of our full assurance that we have a high priest who has given us, secured for us, purchased for us, access to the Father, access to the throne of grace.

A few beautiful words from Philippians 2, verses 9, down to verse 11, speaking of course of Jesus, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every other name.

So the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, the glory of God the Father. God has highly exalted him, a name above every other name.

[15:49] Dear friends, this very moment, our Savior, our brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who is the Son, the only Son of God, eternal, that he passed through the heavens and now sits and reigns and rules over the right hand of the Father, assuring us of our access.

His title assures us, His place assures us, but then just in case we need any more assurance, we have one more token of assurance we could say in verse 14 to remind us, to assure us of our access.

And we find that in the name we find given to him. His title, we're reminded of the end of verse 14 just who our high priest is.

Since then the great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus, Mary's boy, a trained carpenter who lived to experienced life, and we'll see more of that in the next verse.

Jesus who lived in his full humanity, in his total humanity, who lived that perfect life that we can never live, he's the one who now represents us before the Father as our high priest.

[17:11] Our high priest, yes, fully human, fully human. We see in this title his name also fully God.

Jesus, the Son of God. Fully human and fully divine. Of course dear brothers and sisters, as aware of the mechanics of that is beyond us and so it should be.

We can't even begin to understand that and nor will we ever begin to understand that. It's not for us to understand it. It's for us to see it and to find assurance in it.

But this very moment, at the right hand of the Father, is our great high priest who has passed through heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, fully man, fully God.

Just very briefly, our confession helps us here and we're thankful for it. Confession of Faith chapter 8, section or paragraph 2, speaking about Jesus, so that two whole perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition or confusion.

[18:29] Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

For him to be our high priest, for him to be able to serve us truly as our high priest, he had to be like his people. He had to be human, fully human.

But then for him to perform his duties perfectly as high priest, he had to be fully God. And the title of our Savior here, that even his title alone assures us and reminds us and gives us full confidence of our access before the throne of God this evening.

That we worship our Savior, the one who stepped into his own creation, who took on flesh, who remained fully God, fully man, and who is now fully God and fully man for all time, the right hand of the Father.

Dear brothers and dear sisters, this is the Jesus you know, this is the Jesus we love. And this evening because the verse 14 is true, because of his assurances of our access before the throne of grace, we have every reason to hold fast our confession.

[19:50] You can know and you can say for certain, without doubt, without worry, if you know Jesus, if you love him, if he is your Savior, then you can know for certain, despite how you feel, despite how you think, despite what's happening in your situation, you can know for certain through the living word of God that you have access, full access through his finished work to the throne of grace this very moment.

You can approach the throne of grace this very second, how often we lack spiritual confidence. It's not just some useful theological knowledge to us to have, no, this is what shapes us as Christians. We must lay hold of what Christ has got for us. He purchased this access for us, as far as to take up and to use, and we neglect his finished work.

We don't make the most as it were of the gifts he'd given us, but not making full use of them. He has purchased for us the access to the throne of grace.

And we have assurance, after assurance, even in this one verse, that that access is true, it's real, and it's for us.

[21 : 02] Because of his finished work, we can, indeed, we must throw near to the throne. So our access is clear. But then in verse 15, we see something even more glorious.

So we've been reminded that we are, of course, before a holy God. We've been reminded that because of the finished work of a high priest, we have access to the fathom, we confirm that, we affirm that, we love that, we believe that.

We can know for certain from verse 14 that the wrath of the fathom and its fullness has been placed on Jesus. Our high priest was also a final sacrifice.

And we can stop at verse 14 and be quite happy, I'm sure, be quite satisfied with the knowledge that salvation is ours, that access to the throne is ours.

And because of Jesus, that we must now rest, that we can now rest, because of his finished work, we can come and we can approach the throne and find mercy.

[22 : 03] And that itself is beautiful, that is incredible for us this evening, that itself is wonderful for us. There's even more to be found in verse 15. To be very honest, Proverbs and sisters, this evening, effort to be very, very honest.

As much as we affirm, all we've just said in verse 14, as much as we affirm, as much as we believe and we confess ourselves that yes, we find our hope in Jesus, that yes, we believe it through him, we have access to the fathom, that yes, we are assured our salvation is ours because of his work and living to do with us, we confess all that, we believe all that, we hear all that, we love all that, but it's not, I'm almost more than certain, it's not a wild guess to say just now that every one of the believers here, if not most of it, everyone, let's say everyone, because we know it's true, every one of us here this evening who are believers have at times found our hold on that confession less than solid, we find our assurance gone if not just clinging on, we know it ought to be true but we find ourselves not quite believing it, we know we have access to that, that access just feels so far away, it perhaps even feels so closed up, we know that we can come to the Father through the Son, we know we have a high priest, we know we have one who prays for us and who loves us but we feel that love so far away, we feel that reality just so distant, I know that every believer here, we all know that perhaps we're going through that just now, for very honest and it doesn't take me to come from Gdavra to tell anyone this but sometimes life is hard, we know that ourselves, we live in a fallen world where life is hard, where we go through situations that are difficult, that are dark, that are confusing and sometimes and perhaps quite often for some of the believers our journey is difficult and it's so easy for us and by the way I'm including myself here, so easy for us as the Lord's people or especially as the Lord's people to have this thin veneer over who we are, we look the part, we dress the part, we sound good and the reality is but things aren't always good, are they? We act as if things are okay when reality is, things are not okay, we find it so difficult to be honest and to be open about our frailty and to be honest and to be open about our weakness and we all know that, we all, I'm sure I've found ourselves at times just not being honest and we praise God and that's not what we find in verse 15, it's not what we find in these verses, we find it hard to be honest, we find it hard to be open about our frailty about how weak we often are, about how hard our journey or life actually is, that's not what we see in verse 15, verse 15, for we do not have a high priest who isn't able to sympathise with our weaknesses.

See if we stopped at verse 14 we'd again be happy to have a high priest who has done all the work for us as we said a lot before but verse 14 on its own, we have a high priest who has done all for us but who perhaps is distant, who's passed through the heavens and who might feel far away and who might feel far off, who's done the work, yes you're saved, yes but he's up there and we're here and well, life's still hard.

But when verse 15 comes in and reminds us that the reality of course is quite the opposite. See for all our bluff, for all our bluster and all our finvenier of lies if we're honest, our saviour, he knew and he knows the people he came to save.

He as we said before, he had to become one like us, he came, he experienced all of human emotion, all of human weakness.

[26 : 40] Dear brethren sisters this verse reminds us yet again our high priest he knows what it is to live a life on earth, to feel pain, sadness, to mourn, to feel times of joy of course too and times of happiness of course too but to feel tired, to feel hungry, to feel worried, to feel pain, everything else.

As we approach verse 15 we begin to see one of our students who gives us as we seek to journey on, we have a high priest, we have a saviour who is fully able to come alongside us in all our sufferings, all our pains, who fully understands, who fully sympathises with us.

Quite literally the word used here sympathises if we do a very literal study in that word it translates so simply as the one to suffer along with.

We have one who suffers along with us. How beautiful, how simple. How often we neglect that reality. We have a saviour who is not distant.

He doesn't stand with respect at a distance and look at us and see our situation and shake his head and think oh that's a shame. And though we will never think that, we won't teach that in our practice situations, in our lives situations often we live that way don't we.

[28 : 05] We go through a situation or something happens and we don't go to him straight away.

We suffer by ourselves, we try and deal with it by ourselves, we work through it by ourselves and eventually as we realise that we can't endure it, we can't work through it, we can't do anything about it.

It's then of course as Christians we think oh yeah let's take this to my saviour. Our eternal high priest he knows exactly the suffering we are going through.

We heard that this morning, the shepherd knows his sheep. The high priest he knows what it is to suffer. And again I know some faces but I don't know and indeed you don't know the story of the person beside you, even how well you might know of him.

You don't know our story, you don't know our exact situation. To those online perhaps we don't know who's listening in or who might listen in. Those here who are going through darkness, who are going through tough provinces and dark situations, even now you know that this is not just some theological useful thing to know, this is perhaps what keeps you going, the reminder, the knowledge that you have.

You have a high priest, you have a saviour, who knows you, who's with you, who in a very real sense promises never to leave nor to forsake you.

[29 : 28] In difference we should have confidence in the truth of verse 15. The confidence to hold fast to our confession, it doesn't come from us, it comes from the truth of verse 15 that we had a high priest who walked alongside us, who suffers the wear alongside us.

Weak Christian, suffering Christian, pained, anxious, tired, whatever the scripture might fit you just now or might fit you this week.

Remember your high priest is for you, he's for you. Draw near to him in your time of need for he knows you and he knows your situation like we said no one else does.

So joy and hope and assurance in verse 15 for the suffering Christian, but also in verse 15 we're even more than that. We also see hope for the tempted Christian.

I have to pause here just for a second and to say that in general we're quite happy aren't we, we're quite happy to affirm and quite happy to discuss and believe fully in the divine nature of our high priest, that Jesus is fully God, yes we understand that as much as we can, we grasp that as much as we can, we affirm that.

[30 : 53] Sometimes we perhaps are not as comfortable or not as willing to lay full hold on the fact that we have a savior who's also fully man.

We believe it, yes, we confess it, yes. Sometimes we're a bit more reserved perhaps than our approach towards that reality. Dear friends, it's a reality we must lay hold of, we're reminded here of that reality.

Our high priest, Jesus, he did not sin, yes we affirm that, we know that, he did not sin, he is a perfect, he is a spotless lamb, the only true undefiled sacrifice that was ever offered up.

We proclaim that, we confess that, yes. But look at me to verse 15, we also declare that we have a high priest who in every respect was tempted as we are.

There's no wasted words in scripture. If this is here, it's here because it's important for us to understand it and not to skip by it. We have a high priest who was tempted in every respect as we

are.

[32 : 10] Jesus, in his time on earth, was tempted in all ways. Dear Christian, dear brother and dear sister, your savior and my savior, he was willing to leave his place, eternal glory, stepped out into creation, to be tempted to sin.

To be tempted to go against and to commit acts against his own eternally glorious nature, such as the love of our savior for his precious, beloved people.

And just as Jesus is able, and just as he does come alongside those who are suffering weakness and pain and misery and darkness, he is also able to understand the situation of a Christian here just now who has been tempted.

And again, if we're honest, that's every single one of us. Just as much as we pretend that we aren't suffering at times, we also have a very bad and unscriptural habit of pretending that temptation and sin somehow doesn't affect us, what it does, every one of us.

In all our temptations towards sin, of course, yes, we fight them and we rail against it and we hate it, but we also confess that we fail.

[33 : 31] We sin. Our savior, for his whole time, his whole life on earth, he was tempted.

He resisted all that temptation. Richard Lawrence, very helpful, he gives a good illustration to help us perhaps better understand the true level of temptation and the true level of wonder of our savior. He says, he asks the question, who understands suffering better? The person who, when tortured, gives in and tells us, captors everything, of a person who resists despite the fact that his torture continues.

We who give in to temptation so easily. We cannot even guess how strong temptation can be. Jesus, who never gave in, he knows.

Whatever the sisters, in all our temptations, in your continued fight against sin, in your shame and in your misery for sinning against a holy God, you can take that to your savior.

[34 : 51] Indeed, it's much stronger than that than verse 15. You must take that to your savior. He alone knows your weakness. He alone knows what it is to be tempted, truly tempted in a way that not even we can begin to understand.

And he alone, as we heard in verse 14, through his finished work, he alone, through his perfect righteousness, has shown you, his precious child, that he has made provision for you.

And him alone do we find one who was tempted, yet did not sin. And him alone do we find forgiveness for our sin.

Our sinless high priest, who is truly the friend of sinners. We have access to the throne through Jesus.

We have a high priest who is aware of our weakness and aware of our sin and able to come alongside us in both these realities. And finally, and very briefly, we have in the final few verses, we see the approach we must take.

[36 : 00] We believe and we love verses 14 and verse 15. And because these verses are true, let us look as we leave this place to verse 16 and see the approach.

We've been reminded of his divinity, reminded of his glory, reminded of his power, of his finished work, reminded that he suffered and how they felt pain, he attempted in all ways, reminded, if we enter a last verse, that we must not hide our face from him, we must instead go towards him.

And we see that very briefly in verse 16. Let us then with confidence, throw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Let us then, all we've just said, all we've just looked at is the priesthood and the person of Jesus, because all that is true.

Again that connecting verse, we had at the start of verse 14, again the same kind of grammar here, verse 16, that connecting verse, because verse 14 and 15 is true, because we believe it, because we love it, let us then.

[37 : 14] You believe all that, good, so do something about it. Because we believe all verse 14, because we love the truth of verse 15, it leads us to verse 16, let us then.

So what as Christians must we do? Let us then with confidence, throw near to the throne of grace. Of course the throne of grace is the imagery, it's just used to convey the presence of God, the place of God's presence.

The mercy seat, of course, again speaking to a Jewish audience, because of Christ's finish work, because of the reality of verse 14, the truth of verse 15, we can with confidence this moment, the

second, draw near to the presence of God.

That presence which in verses 13 and verses 14 seems so unapproachable and so terrifying, that presence, that vision, that holiness that sees us as naked and as exposed, that doesn't change. God still sees all that we are, knows all that we are. What has changed is now we're reminded that He sees us as He sees the sun, we covered that before together.

[38 : 39] Christian, the question this evening is at this very moment, only you can answer this, do you feel able? Do you feel the confidence we have in this verse, this very second, do you feel that confidence to draw close, to draw near to the throne of God?

To draw near to His presence? You might well be thinking, you might well be saying to yourself, it's okay to say that there, but you don't even know the week I've had, the day I've had, the month I've had.

Am I thinking, I get that, I understand that, but I've not served Him well this day, I've not served Him well this week, I've had a rubbish week, a rubbish month, I failed to him this way, I failed him that way, I feel so distant, I feel so useless and so on and so on and so on.

I'm sure we could all, each one of us go round and fill in the blanks of the excuses that we all cling to so often. I don't feel worthy, I don't feel right, it feels too forward perhaps.

And the truth is, you might be right in all your excuses, you might well be valid excuses, but your excuses mean absolutely nothing when you take them to verse 16 and you leave them there.

[39 : 53] Because verse 16 is not a suggestion for us, it's not if you want, if you fancy it, come close, no, let us then with confidence, it's an instruction, it's near enough a command.

Prophetic version of verses 14 and verse 15 are true for you, if you believe these verses then you must come with confidence to the throne of grace.

You need to, we all need to. Not based on us, but based on the truth of verse 14 and verse 15, based on the access we saw, based on the reality we worship, the living Son of God, fully man and fully God for all time.

The confidence of trusting in our risen triumphant saviour, of the right hand of the Father, who has done all the work necessary for us.

And sometimes, perhaps more than sometimes, perhaps quite often, we find ourselves reluctant to come to the throne.

[41 : 01] I'll wait till I'm serving him a bit better. I'll wait till I'm acting like a better Christian, till I'm reading my Bible more, till I'm praying more, till I'm whatever excuses you have.

Again, they sound so holy, they sound so pious and so good, but they mean absolutely nothing in reality. They mean nothing scripturally. Who can come and who should come to the throne?

It's for all those who know Jesus and who love Jesus as our High Priest. Again, sometimes we feel more holy not coming to the throne.

We feel perhaps as more reverential not doing so, but we're not coming to the throne. We are blatantly going against the command we have here in verse 16. By not going to the throne, we find ourselves in a greater situation, a more worrying situation.

Don't keep away because of sin. Don't keep away because of weakness. Don't keep away because of how you feel or how you think. All that's dealt with in verses 14 and verse 15.

[42 : 03] If you know Jesus, if you love Jesus, the place for you is at the throne of grace. It's been purchased for you. The work's been done.

A slowness to come to the throne, it does not reflect a greater sense of holiness. It's quite the opposite, doesn't it? A slowness to come to the throne, it really reflects a lack of full understanding of what your Savior has done for you.

Come with confidence. What do you find when you come in God's presence? When you come towards the throne? What do we find? What does this verse assure us of?

We come trust in the finished work of Christ. We find mercy. We find grace. God didn't design us. God didn't make us. God didn't plan us to go it alone. He made us. He planned it to work so we could go into the throne of grace, find mercy.

[43 : 07] Through the acts of our Savior, we can go and have full assurance of His love for us. Go and find mercy. Go and find grace. When?

To find it in the time of need. So often in our time of need, we find ourselves going the opposite direction. That's the old man, isn't it? That's a sin nature, taking over for a second.

But in time of need, in time of worry, in time of pain, in time of sadness, in time of sin, in time of temptation, in time of failing, it's to the throne, it's to the place of grace that we go. Don't delay in coming to the throne of grace. Even this evening, even just now, you will find mercy and grace from the God of all grace.

Let's bow our heads now, a word of prayer. God, we come before you again and we thank you for the gift of your word, Lord, that we have spent time in it together. We thank you for the wonderful realities we have heard just now about, despite our unwarveness, despite our own feelings and our own thoughts, that we must lay whole with the finished work, lay whole with the reality that in our Savior, that through Him, that we can and need we must approach the throne of grace, knowing that there we will find mercy.

[44 : 30] There we will find grace. There we will find, if we are yours, we will find you not raffle against us. We will find you, the Lord who loves His people so much that He sent His only Son.

God, help us even as we sing our final act of praise, to do so with hearts and minds set on the wonderful gospel reality that you're the God who cares for your people and who saves your people and who seeks to see the faces of your people as we come to you.

Help us even this evening as we leave this place to come before the throne of grace, to come before it, Lord, in tears if need be, to come before it and to see the mercy and grace purchased for us by our Savior.

Let's go all these things in and through, as per His name's sake.