

Hebrews

Hebrews 5:1-10 – Four Truths

February 1, 2009

I. Introduction

A. **Hebrews 5:1-10** . . . For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; [2] he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; [3] and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. [4] And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. [5] So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "You are my son, today I have begotten you"; [6] just as He says also in another passage, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." [7] In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. [8] Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. [9] And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, [10] being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

B. There is a lot of rich material in these ten verses and we could spend this entire teaching time talking about the historical and theological significance of this material as it relates to Jesus – such as, Jesus in relation to the Levitical Priesthood, and Jesus in relation to the sacrificial system established in OT times by God, and Jesus in relation to Melchizedek, and the stickiest of all, Jesus in relation to praying to be saved from death. In addition to talking about these historical truths, there is the matter of trying to explain how an all-knowing, perfectly sinless God – who took on the form of human flesh as Jesus – would need to learn obedience.

1. I know each of these topics I've just mentioned are of interest to me and I suspect they would be of interest to some of you. And in relation to studying the Bible, these are worthy topics of study.
2. However, the longer I looked at these ten verses and wrestled with what to teach on today, the more I came to the conclusion that I should teach on four life impacting truths found in these verses.

- C. These Four Life-Impacting Truths Are:
 - 1. When It Comes To Service, God Uses Us – We Are Not To Use Him
 - 2. There Is A Place For Fervent Prayer In The Christian’s Life
 - 3. Suffering Produces Accelerated and Advanced Christian Growth
 - 4. For The Christian, Faith and Obedience Are Synonymous

D. Prayer

II. Four Life-Impacting Truths From Hebrews 5:1-10

- A. When It Comes To Service, God Uses Us – We Are Not To Use Him
 - 1. **Hebrews 5:1, 4-5a** . . . For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God . . . [4] And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. [5] So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest . . .
 - 2. Certainly, being a high priest is a leadership position – and leadership positions within the Church is what I am addressing today with this first truth about serving God.
 - a. Our tendency is to think that if we are gifted in some leadership capacity or if we can improve on what the current leadership is doing or if we have something to say which we think others ought to hear, then we feel we should move into a leadership position in the church.
 - (1) Christ – most gifted, most to say – did not glorify himself
 - (2) Notice, it speaks of NOT Christ glorifying himself which points to a serious problem in the church – Christians wanting to glorify themselves and doing so through noticeable service in the Church.
 - b. Giftedness or knowledge is not enough for worthy service.
 - (1) Worthy service comes out of godliness – that is, a holy life – or at least a life that is well on the way and demonstrates a solid commitment to continuing the process of growth.
 - (2) II Timothy 2:20-21 . . . Character before service
 - (3) Acts 6:1-3 . . . Chose servants of proven godly character
 - 3. Humble service is God way. Waiting for God to put us into a leadership position – or into a position that we think glorifies us in some way is God’s way.
 - a. When it comes to leadership within the Body of Christ, focus on growing up in the faith and in godly character. Break free

from using Christian service to feed your ego or your need to feel important or be in control. Embrace the truth that God wants character before service, not as an optional addition to service.

- b. In the mean time, serve where God has called us all to serve – in your home, your neighborhood, your work place, and in the lowly and possibly unwanted positions in the church.

B. There Is A Place For Fervent Prayer In The Christian's Life

1. **Hebrews 5:7** . . . In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.
2. Prayer with groaning, loud cries, and tears is the deepest, most desperate, most impassioned form of prayer.
 - a. There is no record that this was Jesus' common form of prayer. (*And strangely, there is no record of Jesus praying with His disciples.*) I am not suggesting that prayer with groaning, loud cries, and tears must be our common form of prayer, but I do want to say that there is a place for this kind of praying.
 - b. The point I want to make today is that there are matters which ought to be of great concern to us. How do we pray about them?
 - (1) The matter that lay before Jesus was a great concern to Him and He prayed accordingly.
 - (2) Are there matters, concerns, and hopes that you would be wise to lay before the Lord with groaning, loud cries, and tears? When it comes to prayer, do you care about anything this much?
 - (3) Surely our confession of sin ought to often include tears. What about our prayers for the lost – especially those nearest and dearest to us? What about our prayers for this church, for our zeal in worship, for our learning and spiritual growth from the teaching, and for our numeric growth? What about our testimony in the home, workplace, or neighborhood? What about our becoming more and more like Jesus – to the glory and joy of our Loving Father?
3. Fervent prayer is never required by God. It is a response on our part to things we care enough about to pray as Jesus prayed.

- C. Suffering Produces Accelerated and Advanced Christian Growth
1. **Hebrews 5:8** . . . Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.
 2. Jesus learned about obedience in times and situations when disobedience would have been the preferred choice by most every other human being on the planet.
 - a. Obedience in times when the payoff or reward is both obvious and personally enriching, or when the cost of obedience is minor or non-existent, is easy obedience. Obedience in times when the cost is obvious and the suffering great is hard obedience. **Jesus learned hard obedience.**
 - b. Willing obedience (submission) to a higher authority is the supreme expression of trust and love by one under authority.
 - (1) When obedience is a choice, we must have sufficient inner motivation to obey – especially when obedience results in personal suffering or loss.
 - (2) Therefore, nothing less than trust and love toward God will motivate us to obey God at serious cost to ourselves.
 3. However, obedience is not the only lesson we need to learn. There are other lessons that we need to learn. So whether it be obedience or some other lesson, suffering provides the best basis and the most advantageous setting for learning. Why? Because:
 - a. suffering pushes us to the brink of trust in God's goodness and obedience to God – come what may;
 - b. suffering provides the kind of circumstances where we are powerfully tempted and most inclined to make the good of self and self-interest more important than the glory of God, the good of our character, and the honor of the Church.
 4. When it comes to suffering, we have many hard choices to make – and all of them have to do with who or what we trust the most, who or what we love the most, and if we will persevere to the end or leave the narrow path in order to ease our suffering.
 - a. James speaks of embracing hard times as a blessing which strengthens our faith in God and strengthens our resolve to persevere in our pursuit of godliness regardless of the circumstances.
 - b. Job came out of his suffering with stronger faith, clearer understanding of God and God's ways, more intimacy with God, and blessings greater than when he went in.
 5. Will you embrace suffering as God's school of discipleship?

- a. How can we know how far we will go in paying the price of obedience if we are not tested?
- b. How will we grow in the more mature and persistent forms of obedience if we are not tested?
- c. How can we prove to anyone that we are choosing God if we will not choose to obey when faced with significant loss to ourselves?

D. For The Christian, Faith and Obedience Are Synonymous

1. **Hebrews 5:9** . . . And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,
2. Faith and obedience are synonymous. Therefore, faith without obedience is not saving faith, but rather agreement that something is true without agreeing to or committing yourself to live according to that truth.
3. NOTICE: By one man (Adam), sin entered the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.
 - a. And what was Adam's sin? It wasn't some heinous sexual sin or murder or torture or idol worship or some other evil that is reprehensible to us.
 - b. All Adam did was eat fruit from the forbidden tree. How bad can that be? Well, it was eating the fruit that killed him. WHY? Because it was disobedience to God.
4. If Adam and Eve lost their home in the Garden of Eden over disobedience, and if a whole generation of Israelites were forbidden to enter the Promised Land because of disobedience, isn't it probable that disobedience is a serious offence against God?
 - a. **I Samuel 15:22** . . . (Samuel said) **to obey is better than sacrifice.**
 - b. **John 3:36** . . . (John the Baptist said) He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but **he who does not obey** the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.
 - c. **Acts 5:30-32** . . . (Peter said) The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. [31] He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. [32] And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, **whom God has given to those who obey Him.**

- d. **Romans 6:15-19** . . . (Paul wrote) What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! [16] Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? [17] But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, [18] and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. [19] I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.
5. Never be so foolish as to think God's grace and your faith free you from obedience to the Will and Word of God. There is no grace for the willfully and persistent disobedient. There is no faith in God that ignores or treats casually obedience to God. Faith and obedience are synonymous for us Christians.

III. Conclusion