

HEBREWS

“NO TURNING BACK”

Lesson 7

Ice Breaker: Have you ever had someone who believed in you more than you believed in yourself? If so, what was that relationship like? How did it affect you?

INTRO: While most of us want to be obedient to God and enter His rest, we also doubt our ability to keep our end of the bargain. Even when we want to be obedient to God, we still find ourselves being disobedient. It's like there is war inside each one of us... us against us.

In this section of the letter, the writer begins to explain how obedience is possible. It is possible because we are not alone in our war... it's not us against us anymore... it's us against us and Jesus.

READ: Hebrews 4:12-16

***12** For the **word of God is living and active**. Sharper than any double-edged sword, **it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.** **13** Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

***14** Therefore, **since we have a great high priest** who has gone through the heavens, **Jesus the Son of God**, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **15** **For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses**, but we have one **who has been tempted in every way, just as we are**—yet was without sin. **16** Let us then **approach the throne of grace with confidence**, so that we may receive **mercy and find grace to help** us in our time of need.*

Q: If the “Word of God is living and active” as verse 12 says, what should it be doing in your life?

- The Word should be cutting into you... like a surgeon.
 - It is very difficult for the Word of God to cut you if you are not close to it!

Q: Verse 12 also says the Word of God penetrates to point of defining your soul from your spirit. What is the difference between your soul and your spirit, and why does this distinction matter?

- The apostle Paul identified 3 distinct parts to every human: the spirit, the soul and the body.
 - 1Th. 5:23 “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your **whole spirit, soul and body** be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- The Greek for spirit is *pneuma*. It is the spiritual part of man that thinks and feels, the part of us that was made in God's image.

- The Greek word for Soul is *psyche*. It is the physical part of man that thinks and feels.
- This is important know because it helps us understand the war within ourselves.

Q: How does Word of God work in relation to these two parts of you? (vs. 12)

- It should be cutting into you and exposing which thoughts and attitudes are from your new nature that wants to please God, and which thoughts and attitudes are from your sinful nature and want to please you.

Q: Verse 14 says Jesus is a great High Priest. What does a high priest do?

- A High Priest served as the middleman between God and man.
 - The High Priest was the offered the sacrifices necessary for God to be able to relate to man.

Q: According verse 15, what makes Jesus such a great high priest?

- Jesus has been tempted in every way you have been.
 - He gets you. He is sympathetic, not judgmental.
- Other High Priests had their own sins, which kept them from being able to stay in God's presence.
 - Jesus has no sin, so He is able to stay in God's presence all the time, speaking to God on your behalf.

Q: Why is God's throne called the "Throne of Grace" in verse 16?

- The Greek word for grace is *charis*. It describes the divine influence upon the human heart and the resulting change in a person's actions.
- God's throne of Grace is where we receive divine power to change!

Q: Why should we approach the Throne of Grace with confidence?

- We approach God's throne of Grace through Jesus, our High Priest... we are approaching God with His Perfect Son speaking up for us.
- Jesus is totally sympathetic with our weaknesses. He walked in our shoes. He represents us to God in a positive way, even though we are weak and flawed.

Q: What 2 things do we get from God's Throne of Grace?

- Mercy and Grace... when we need it most!

Q: What do mercy and grace do for us?

- The Greek word for mercy is *eleos*, and means compassion.
- Paul said God's mercy (compassion) made him trustworthy.
 - **1Cor. 7:25** "Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in **His mercy has made trustworthy.**"
- Paul told Titus that grace was a teacher.
 - **Titus 2:11-12** "For the **grace of God** that brings salvation has appeared to all men. **12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,...**"

- Mercy (God's compassion) and Grace (God's divine influence on our hearts) change us from the inside out; causing us to live the life God has called us too.
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APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. How close are you to the Word of God?
 - a. Do you keep it close enough to let it cut you?
 - b. How might you let it get even closer?
2. How does it make you feel to know that when you approach God's throne you receive compassion and help to change?
3. Are mercy and grace changing you? If so, what are they changing?