

**Hebrews 2: 14-18; “Christ’s Giving Aid to Believers”, Sermon # 11 in
the series – “Holding Fast our Confession”, Delivered by
Pastor Paul Rendall on February 26th, 2012,
in the Morning Worship Service.**

In our last message I began to open up for you the truth that Christ has destroyed the devil by His partaking of flesh and blood and by His dying on the cross. In doing this He destroyed (or He rendered powerless) the devil. He freed all of God’s Elect children from the power of death in which they had been held by the devil. The devil’s having this power of death does not mean that he is the one who decides when people are to die. (Matthew 10: 28) That is totally in God’s hands. The time of our death is God’s appointment, not the devil’s. You should remember this. But the power of death was the devil’s because it was he who so deceived Eve, that she ate from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And afterwards she convinced Adam to eat of it; he heeding her voice, and directly disobeying God. The two of them fell from their original righteousness and Adam, as the head of our whole race, passed on the guilt and pollution of his sin to all of his descendants. Romans 5: 12 says – “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. This is how the devil had the power of sin. This power of death begins to be broken over the sinner when they first trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation. When a person first comes to Jesus Christ, their spirit has been made alive in the New Birth. Their sinful heart is circumcised spiritually (they experience a real death to sin in their soul in what theologians call definitive sanctification) and they are regenerated. They are given life by the power of the Holy Spirit whereby they are made alive in Christ Jesus. Since Jesus Christ is raised from the dead, His resurrection power invades their life, and He is continually giving them aid in regard to all of their temptations and in regard to all of their working to keep His commandments. They are not saved by these good works, but these good works come to be seen flowing from their lives, because of His aid to them in His grace given to them. Their salvation is the free gift of God, and they receive the forgiveness of their sins, and they have Christ’s righteousness imparted to them in justification, from the moment that they believe. But they are also being made progressively holy by Christ’s grace which helps them to prove that doing God’s will by faith in the Lord Jesus glorifies God. It is this progressive working of Christ to give the believer aid in living their Christian life that I want to speak to you about today. 1st of all, I want to give you an eschatological overview of Christ’s giving aid to His people. 2^{ndly}- I want to give to you the High Priestly overview of Christ’s giving aid to His people. And then 3^{rdly} – I want to give you the Personal overview of Christ’s giving aid to His people. I believe that this will help you in a very great way as a believer to trust in Christ that He will give you every good thing necessary to save you from sin and deliver you from the devil’s power.

1st of all want to give you an eschatological overview of Christ's giving aid to His people.

Verse 16 says, "For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham." John Gill says, "The word "aid" or "help" which is used here signifies to catch hold of anyone ready to perish, or to lay hold on a person running away, and then with great vehemence and affection to hold anything fast, that it be not lost, and to help persons, and do good unto them." This is what Christ does for us. This is how much He loves those who believe in Him. He not only holds us fast to Himself, but He will destroy our enemy who would take our souls to hell. I want to give you an eschatological overview of Christ's giving this aid to all believers. "Christian eschatology is a major branch of study within Christian theology." "Eschatology, from two Greek words meaning last (ἔσχατος which means last) and study (λογία, which literally means "discourse"), is the study of the end of things, whether the end of an individual life, the end of the age, or the end of the world." "Broadly speaking, Christian eschatology is the study of the destiny of man as it is revealed in the Bible, which is the primary source for all eschatology studies." I want to give you an eschatological overview of how Christ has given and will give aid to His people in the destruction of the devil. I began to tell you of this grand truth last Sunday, but I was prevented by time from fully developing it. Why doesn't the writer in this verse say, "He does give help to the seed of Adam?" It is because Christ does not give help to all the descendants of Adam; He rather gives help to all the seed of Abraham. He is talking about spiritual descendants of Abraham; all those who have faith like Abraham's whether they are Jew or Gentile; for Abraham is the father of them all. What I was not able to finish telling you last week was that this truth of Christ's destroying the devil has an eschatological aspect to it which affects both our Justification and our Sanctification in our salvation. The devil's power was actually destroyed at the cross in regard to his being able to prevent the salvation of all of the Elect. But Christ's aid to men, whom the Father was intending to save, began in the garden of Eden when Adam fell. In relation to the curse which the Lord God placed upon the serpent, all who would believe in Christ for salvation received a promise. The Seed of the woman, the Virgin Mary, would crush the head of the serpent. This promise was further elaborated and began to be fulfilled in the promises which were given to Abraham concerning the coming Messiah. The fulfillment of those precious promises given to the father of the faith Abraham, whether they are Jew or Gentile, came to pass in the Incarnation. Jesus came to live the righteous life, and He came to die the sacrificial death for us, so that Satan's power of death over us would be destroyed. Because He died and rose again, the Elect shall all be saved, and nothing shall prevent it. Christ has purchased them, soul and body, with His precious blood. Because Christ fulfilled all the righteous requirements of God's law, God could then impute that righteousness to the believer. Because of Christ's death, all of the believer's transgressions could be forgiven and covered by Christ's

blood. Then in the actual conversion of the Elect believer, the devil's hold over that person is destroyed forever.

After conversion, as time goes on, and as the believer lives his life unto God, Satan's supposed wisdom and power over his life are progressively being destroyed in the believer's learning not to trust in their own wisdom or strength to do what is right and to keep God's commandments. His trust is still fixed upon the finished work of Jesus Christ, and in the grace which His Savior supplies. The believer's ability to overcome the evil one is not of themselves, but it is of Christ. So the power of the devil over any believer in Jesus Christ has been destroyed, and it is being progressively destroyed. The power for the devil to keep the believer in the kingdom of darkness is lost at conversion. The believer is transferred from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of light. The power of Satan to hold the believer captive to do his will is broken. The believer is no longer the slave of sin or of the devil. So he can now make progress in holiness. And as the believer goes about to do God's will, he will find that all of the devil's strategies to stop him from becoming more holy will be progressive defeated, so that he will in the various situations of difficulty, tribulation, trial, and temptation, overcome by the power of Christ, the evil one's attempts to snare and to entrap him and to bring him back into bondage again to himself. In relation to all of God's Elect these strategies are defeated progressively, step by step, by the power of Christ working in the believer's heart and mind, and their being sanctified by the Word of Truth. This is walking with Jesus. We are saved, and we are being saved by Christ's great power.

We need to look at a couple verses in relation to this. Turn with me over to 1st John 2: 12. "I write to you fathers, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." "I write to you fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning." "I write you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one." "I write to you, little children, because you have known the Father." "I have written to you Fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning." "I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one." You can see here the progression that I am talking about. When a person is born again, they come to know the Father. Their sins are all forgiven them for Jesus sake. As they begin to grow in the knowledge of doctrine and the Word of God they find that by the Spirit's power they are able to overcome the evil one. These are young men in the faith. The "father" in Christ is a Christian who has known the Lord for some time and he has come to regard the experience of knowing Christ in relation to doctrinal truth as more important than his just being knowledgeable in the doctrines of the Word. He wants to be found in Christ not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ. He wants to know Christ, to win Christ, and to know the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable to His death that he might attain the resurrection of the dead as it says in Philippians 3: 9 and 10. Let me ask you if you know where you are dear Christian

in your journey of knowing Christ? Are you a babe, or a young man, or a father? Each one of us must attempt by grace to live up to the grace and truth which have been given to us.

What about the destruction of Satan in relation to the advance of Church and the Great Commission? You and I should understand that in regard to Christ's kingdom coming to reign upon the earth, Satan's strategies were destroyed by Jesus' willingness to suffer and die from the foundation of the world, yea even from all eternity, He was willing to "partake of flesh and blood" and through his death to destroy him who had the power of death, and thus He began to put an end to Satan's kingdom here upon the earth. In John 12: 31 He says, "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out." Was he cast out from all of his evil activities and His kingdom completely destroyed at the cross? Yes, we can say that it was in regard to all the Elect being saved in all generations; it was certainly so. In regard to Christ's kingdom of His saints reigning upon the earth, it is not yet so. The conquering of the gospel among the nations of the world is yet to come. But the basis of this great advance of the gospel conquering among the nations, is once again found at the cross. And in this sense we can legitimately say that Christ's present reign is progressively being worked out. His kingdom shall indeed come to reign upon the earth in a greater way than it ever has before, in the time of the Millennium. This glorious time period for the Church will take place before Christ's coming and not after it. All of Satan's strategies to prevent the advance of the gospel and the Word of God will eventually be overthrown. A time period of a thousand years (what I will term the Millennial Day) will eventually dawn, when holiness shall generally prevail among the nations of the earth. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Our Lord Jesus shall indeed bind Satan, as it says in Revelation 20, verse 2, "so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years are finished." "But after these things he must be released for a little while." There is much more of Satan's kingdom which remains to be destroyed. And there is much more conversion work yet for our Lord, and His Church, to do among many nations. There is much more that we can be involved in. So let us pray to be better soldiers of Christ in this regard, to help His kingdom forward by spreading the truth of the gospel and Christ's word to everyone around us.

However, let us now speak of the final advance, eschatologically, in the destruction of Satan will take place at the end of the age. This final advance will come after Satan has been released for his "little season", at the end of the Millennium, as it is spoken about in Revelation 20. Turn with me over to Revelation 20, verse 7. "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea." "They went up on the breadth of the earth and

surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city.” “And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.” “The devil who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are.” “And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” You can see here, that when the sun of the Millennial Day sets, at that time Satan will be released for a little season. Immediately he will set out to deceive the nations of the world once again like he did before the Millennium, but this deception will be short lived. He will succeed in deceiving a great number of people from the nations of the Gog and Magog regions of the world, and they will try to wage war against the saints again, but at this time Christ shall return. No one shall be able to determine the hour or the day, because no one will know how long this little season will last. When Christ returns the complete destruction of the devil will take place. It will not be the destruction of annihilation but the destruction of eternal punishment. The devil will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. That is the eschatological overview of how Christ aids believers against Satan. What a glorious Day that shall be when Christ shall return and every eye shall see Him and we shall all be raised to a glorious resurrection; those of us who have believed in Jesus.

Now 2ndly- I want to give to you the High Priestly overview of Christ's giving aid to His people.

Verse 17 says, “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” Almost the whole rest of the book of Hebrews is going to be taken up with this theme of Christ being our great High Priest. This is where the doctrine is first introduced. The reason that Jesus had to be made like us, to take to Himself human flesh and a human nature, is so that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. He needed, in the most practical ways, to learn obedience to God, in order to save us from our sins and help us in living our life to God. He needed to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with His God in order that we might do the same. And in His obedience He would have to obey God fully and perfectly in relation to keeping all of His commandments. This was the only way that He could “make propitiation for the sins of all the people” who would believe in Him for eternal life. I hope that you will come to understand this morning, if you never have before, that God is a God of Justice. Many people like to think about God being a God of love, and to dwell upon that love without relating it to His justice. It was because God is a God of Justice that He sent His only-begotten Son into the world. God's love cost Him the One who was most dear to Him. His Son. And it cost the Son His life when He atoned for our sins. He suffered and died so that those who believed in Him would not perish. To perish is not simply to die physically. It is to die eternally, being punished by God in the lake of fire forever and ever. In order that we might not perish, the Lord Jesus made propitiation for the sins of the

people. This word propitiation is a hard concept for many Christians to understand. It is the Greek word *ἡλισκόμει*, (hilaskomee).

Webster's Dictionary says that it means "to atone for; to make satisfaction for; to extinguish the guilt of a crime by subsequent acts of piety or worship, by which the obligation to punish the crime is canceled." "To expiate guilt or a crime, is to perform some act which is supposed to purify the person guilty; or some act which is accepted by the offended party as satisfaction for the injury; that is, some act by which his wrath is appeased, and his forgiveness procured." This is exactly what our Lord Jesus Christ did at the cross. His sacrifice appeased God's righteous wrath which was upon us because of Adam's sin, and our many sins over the course of our lifetime confirming Adam's sin. Before we come to Christ we are guilty and vile in the sight of God. It is not good to deny it. We all fall short of the glory of God. We cannot make atonement for our own sins, because anything we might offer Him would not measure up to the perfect standard of righteousness necessary to satisfy His Justice. But Christ as our High Priest offered His own perfect obedience as a High Priest on our behalf. This satisfies God's righteous requirement that we keep His Holy Law. And the Lord Jesus offered His body to be crucified, and His precious blood to be shed, so that His sufferings would satisfy God's justice which requires that we be punished for our sins. The value of Christ as the God man insured that His sacrifice would be of great enough value to God, that when God laid His righteous wrath upon Him at the cross, the punishment would be more than adequate to satisfy God's wrath, and thus the Father would remove it from us who believe in Him. How glorious is propitiation; the wrath-removing sacrifice which forever satisfies God's Justice concerning each and every one of His Elect. How great then, was the love that sent His beloved Son to do this for us. Will you not see that there can be no saving love shown to any man apart from God's Justice being satisfied? God has a general love for all mankind because He made them. But He cannot save people and bring them to Himself to dwell with Him forever unless propitiation had been made. "My little children," the Apostle John writes in 1 John 2: 1, "these things I write to you, so that you may not sin." "And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." The Lord Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins; that is everyone who might happen to read this letter and believe the truth of the gospel. And He is also the propitiation for every person who will be saved from their sins according to the Father's will, throughout the world, throughout the generations of this Church age. As Mr. John Reynolds (who helped complete Matthew Henry's commentary says on this verse – "The extent and intent of the Mediator's death reaches to all tribes, nations, and countries. As he is the only, so he is the universal atonement and propitiation for all that are saved and brought home to God, and to his favour and forgiveness." He was not making a plea for a general or universal atonement in the sense that Christ died for all men

everywhere in all times, irrespective of whether God will save them. He saying that Christ is the only atonement, the only covering for sins; He is the only propitiation for all that are actually saved and brought home to God. Let us understand that a general atonement will save no one in particular, but a particular redemption with a Universal free offer will save everyone who will believe and all that God intends to save by His electing love. Will you not come to Jesus Christ today, if you never have and take this Jesus whom I preach to you today as your Savior from your sins, and your Lord to rule over you? When you believe in Him you will find that you will not only be saved from all your sins, but you will have an advocate with the Father, One who will plead your case and intercede on your behalf when you fall into sin as a Christian. “If any man sins, he has an Advocate with the Father.” Is this not the best of news? It is no excuse for sin or license for sin, but it is great comfort to the penitent mourner; the person who sees his sin so very clearly as a Christian.

And then 3rdly - I want to give you the Personal overview of Christ's giving aid to His people.

Verse 18 says, “For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” When you believe in Jesus you are believing in the One who has taken your place upon the cross. He has suffered there so that all of your sins would be forgiven. But it also means that you now have One who is able to come to your aid when you are tempted. You have not only been shown mercy, you will receive real spiritual aid. This also is what He died for. Christ Himself by His Spirit will help you to resist the devil when He comes to tempt you. He has suffered being tempted Himself. We will be looking further into this subject when we get to Chapter 4, verse 14. All those verses that follow until Chapter 5, verse 10 will teach us much more about Christ's High Priestly ministry. But just now, we need to get the overview of this ministry of His in a personal sense. Christ became a man so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest. Christ knows the struggles against indwelling sin which you face, and He knows the temptations which you face from the world and the devil as well. In tender mercy He considers your soul for your everlasting good, dear believer. God is faithful and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, but in allowing these temptations he will be providing the way of escape for you, that you may be able to bear it, as it says in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13. But Christ the Son who is interceding on your behalf to the Father, is also able to sympathize with the strength of the temptations that you will face. And He will come to your aid to give sufficient grace to face temptations to sin and to overcome those temptations with righteous thoughts and right actions in such times. There are two real requisites to your being able to overcome the world and the evil one, and even your own sinful heart in the times of temptation. The first requisite for overcoming temptation is to remember what Jesus did when the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He answered the devil's suggestions with

the Word of God. The reason that He did that was because He was determined not to act independently of the Father's written and revealed will, but rather to believe it and act according to what God would have Him to do instead of what Satan would have him to do. Listen to Luke 4: 3. Jesus was hungry after 40 days of not eating. "And the devil said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.'" "But Jesus answered him saying, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" "Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." "And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.'" "Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." "And Jesus said, 'Get behind Me, Satan!" "For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only you shall serve.'" "Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.'" "For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you,' and 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" "And Jesus answered and said to him, 'It has been said, You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" This is how the Son of God suffered being tempted, but in each question that was put to Him by the devil, he passed the test because He immediately referred what Satan said to Him to what the Father has already said or commanded in the Word of God. Is this what you do my friend? Because when you do, you will overcome the devil.

The other requisite for overcoming temptation is prayer. Turn with me over to Mark Chapter 14, verse 32. "They came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.'" "And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed." "Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.'" "Stay here and watch." "He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him." "And He said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible for You.'" "Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will." "Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'Simon, are you sleeping?" "Could you not watch one hour?" "Watch and pray, lest you enter in temptation." "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." "And He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words." "And when he returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him." You can see here what is needed to avoid entering in to temptation; not to be able to support Christ's cause and kingdom in the hour of darkness when Satan has come to tempt. It is to watch and pray. The disciples had been told this and still they could not watch even one hour. Why? Because it take Christ's grace to watch and pray. It is our duty, but we must pray and ask the Lord to help us. We must ask for His aid. Only He stood in that evil hour. The disciples did not. But He loved them still, and went on to suffer, bleed, and die for

them. But I want you to see that Christ overcame all of His temptations by prayer. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful and troubled. But He continued to pray even when He knew that He would not be able to avoid drinking the cup of the Father's wrath in His going to the cross. This He did for our salvation. And once He accomplished redemption He sat down at the Father's right hand, and now He had grace to give to you and I in the temptations that we will face. Let us begin to face our temptations with prayer asking that He would be with us. And then let us continue to pray so that even when our flesh is weak, that we will know the reality of His grace coming to help us in our hour of trial, so that we will find ourselves doing what we know that we could not do without His aid; holding fast our confession of Him, and obeying His Word.