

A Sympathizing High Priest

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The second chapter of Hebrews is a very critical, important portion of scripture. Not to minimize anything else but in the second chapter, we have the description of the very incarnation of Jesus Christ. We're told what happened. Now, sad to say, there are those who are denying and do deny that Jesus Christ had a literal human body. To deny the literal body of Jesus Christ is deny his very work on behalf of us as his Lord and his Savior. I've given you our notes for this morning and the title of the message for this morning is "A Sympathizing Savior."

As you here know, the last couple of weeks I have been suffering, and I mean suffering, with a sciatic nerve problem. Now that won't kill you but you think you are going to die with the pain, especially as it runs down either your right or your left leg and it is a lot of severe pain. Things have happened to me in the last couple weeks and one of the benefits that's happened to me is I've prayed more. I've prayed every day and many hours through the night for the Lord to give me some relief and he has from time to time, and today I'm happy to tell you that by God's grace and mercy, I'm much better. As you can tell, I walk much better and so forth, and I thank you for your prayers and the prayers of other people who have been praying for me. I'm doing everything medically that I can do to minimize the problem to bring about healing, and I'm doing everything that someone else tells me to do. If it'll work, I'll try it. But I want you to continue to pray for me.

But in this experience and I've been praying and asking the Lord, "Lord, what is it that you are doing and teaching me?" Well, there are many things. As I said, I'm praying much more, but one of the things that I've learned again afresh is how precious it is to have other people who can literally sympathize and empathize with you. They understand what you're going through. Brother Kurt Settles up in Cookeville, TN has gone through the very same problem, only his was on his left side, mine is on the right side, and Brother Kurt has walked me through this experience and he's told me what he's done, and he will check on me from time to time, and I just appreciate so much Brother Settles' sympathy and his empathy with me and being able to help me.

Well, you know that also, you know how precious it is to have someone else who has had the same kind of problem that you have had. Many years ago, I fell and broke my left arm and it was a very bad experience. I broke my wrist and my elbow both. I went through almost six months of physical therapy with it, and going through that experience was

very painful and one of the things that I got some relief from was talking to other people who have gone through similar things. And there is a dear sister up at Ripley, MS, Sister Williams, and she fell and broke her wrist about the same time, and I met her and we talked and we have become closer friends because we had a similar problem that we had a broken wrist. Well, you know what I'm talking about when I say how precious and how good it is and comforting it is when you go to meet someone, you go talk to a doctor, or you have a nurse, or whatever it is, or a friend, and you go talk to them and trying to explain your ailment, your pain, and they say, "Yes, I know. I've had the same thing." And you can just tell that person and you just know that whatever that person is saying to you, that they are sympathizing, and as the new modern word is, at empathy, they are at empathy when they have had the same kind of pain and they can relate to you. Whether it's the pain or whether it's the loss of a loved one, whatever it may be, loss of a job or corona virus, whatever it may be, you talk to someone else and they can say, "I have gone through that same thing and I want to tell you, I know how painful, how bad it is, but I want to tell you, you'll survive." Well, that's the news you want to hear and it's very important to you.

Well, here in this second chapter of the book of Hebrews, we have the purpose of the incarnation of Christ set forth for us, and in verses 17 and 18 is our primary text for today. Now I've given you notes and I want to tell you on the second page of those notes, I don't want you to look at them during services, and they are to be read when you get home because they'll distract you. There are some things there, a poem, a couple of poems I put in there for you, but I want you to, then, to follow me on the third page and then here's what I want you to do on the back page that I've left you a blank sheet, on the back page when you get home sometime through the week, I want you to think about how it is that Jesus Christ has helped you in your Christian experience. Now I'm going to give you something but you will have some personal things, and I just want you to write them down. You can be very personal, for you personally, but write them down on the back of that sheet of paper and put them in your notebook.

So Paul here tells us by the Holy Spirit of God how it was and why it was that Jesus Christ experienced and must needs, must needs to have the incarnation. So Paul here says in Hebrews 2, he will tell you that Christ was made like unto his brethren, made to be like unto us, and so he uses a word here in the second chapter of Hebrews I want you to note. He says, verse 10, "For it became him," in verse 10, "it became him." Now understand, Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He never has any beginning of his existence. He is the eternal Son of God. But in the eternal covenant, he stood as our surety. We were given to Christ as the elect of God and we were given to Christ as a people, and Jesus Christ stood as our surety in the eternal covenant whereby that he agreed that he would come and die for his people given to him by the Father.

Now there's a bad episode that's going to happen and you'll find Paul makes reference to that beginning in verse 6, really, when he talks about what is man. Adam was made the first of all mankind, the first man, and he was blessed with creature innocence, creature innocence. He was, I won't say that he was righteous, I won't say that he was holy, but he was without any sin as of yet, creature innocence, pure. But you know what happened in

the garden. Paul will tell you here, "Thou madest him," talking about man and he's quoting from Psalm 8, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; and you crowned him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." Adam was given the authority and the power and dominion over all creation but something tragic happened. He sinned and he was not able to maintain his position over all creation but, rather, all creation came under the curse of sin. The universe that you and I live in, the reason why we have storms, tornadoes, earthquakes, death, pain, all of those things are the evidence of the curse of sin. Every time you drive by a cemetery, remind yourself that that's the evidence of the curse of sin. Every time you hear of a crime being committed, that's the evidence of the curse of sin. Every time there is a storm, a tornado, whatever it may be, all of those things are the evidence of the curse of sin. All creation, Romans 8, is under that curse but by the work of Jesus Christ, it will ultimately be delivered from the curse.

I like that song, it's not in our hymnals and I want to put it in there, "This is my Father's world," and the last verse of that song says, "Jesus who died shall be satisfied, earth and heaven shall be one." He died not only to redeem his people from their sins, but I want to tell you, he died also to redeem all creation from their sin. Now I don't know what eternity is going to be like except what I read in the word of God, but I do believe that we are going to see a new heaven and a new earth and God's elect people are going to enjoy it, and I don't know how all that's going to be. Someone said, "Well, you know there's got to be some fishing ponds there." Well, I don't know anything about that but it will be heaven however it might be.

So but man lost it and this tragedy of losing dominion over all creation, think how bad we would have been, think how bad it would be to live in this world, sin-cursed world and never be delivered from the curse. Well, there are some people who believe that this is eternity that we're living in right now and that the world that you see right now, that's all that it's every going to be. I'll tell you, that's wrong doctrine. It is that this world is going to be destroyed by God by fire, and there's going to come forth a new heaven and new earth because of the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

So Paul says in verse 9, hallelujah, "But we see Jesus," the source and the hope of our salvation and the very basis of it is here. We see Jesus. What happened to Jesus? He "was made a little lower than the angels." Just as man was made a little lower than the angels, so he was made a little lower than the angels but "crowned with glory and honour." That's his ultimate happening. That's what's going to happen. He's crowned with glory and he's made a little lower than the angels, he's going to be crowned with glory and honor. That's what Paul will tell you in the second chapter of Philippians. He says that Jesus Christ who was equal with God made himself of no reputation, but he says he also, he will be, in verse 8 of the second chapter, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Oh, what if it stopped right there? What if that was the end of Christ? What if there was no resurrection? Do you know where we would be? We would be helplessly, hopelessly lost for all eternity.

But the next verse, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." You here who know Christ as Savior, you have already done that; by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit of God, that's already happened in your heart and life and you have Christ as your Savior, and he's being glorified and exalted in your personal life. Yet there's going to be a day when he's going to be exalted before the whole world and you're going to be there, we're going to be there and I say, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Now back to Hebrews 2. He was made to suffer death in verse 10, "For it became him." Why? In what way? It was necessary for him to do the work that he could do for his elect people. He must experience sin, not that he becomes a sinner but he must experience human nature. Now I've told you before there are two words that describe the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf and if you never get anything else that Herb Hatfield has ever preached to you, I hope that you will gain and learn these two words, and if you'll grab ahold of those two words and understand what they mean, you will understand clearly the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. Those two words are vicarious, which means in the very place of, in the very place of, vicarious, standing in the very place of. Now it's not possible, Paul will tell you in Hebrews 10, it's not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. How was it, then, that Christ became our Redeemer and our Savior? Paul would tell you it is by the death of Jesus Christ. So he died. An animal cannot die for your sins. No one else, nothing else can except another human being identified with you. Vicariously. The next word is expiation. It means to remove the guilt.

Now here's the law of God, here's God's justice that must be satisfied. It is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Nothing else could be done to satisfy the holy law of God except, except, except it be the guilty person's very guilt moved to something else, to take away sin. It is the death of Jesus Christ and his shed blood is the only means whereby that we have satisfaction with God concerning our sin, and so Paul will tell you by the Holy Spirit, "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain," the captain, "of our salvation," and the word is perfect, it means complete, complete, to make him fully qualified. So he must, what? Paul will tell you, well, verse 11, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." And the Lord did that there in the Upper Room. "And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Verse 14, "Forasmuch then as the children," now this is critically important, "Forasmuch then as the children," what children? Those that were given to Christ before the foundation of the world. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Now those words mean that you take part but not all, the reason being Christ never was without sin, and so he was not born a sinner. Now he was made to be sin on the cross of Calvary but he was not born to be, he was not born to sin, and so he took part of the same. How did that happen? By the miracle and the marvelous work of the incarnation. The eternal Son of God came down to earth and in the womb of

the virgin Mary the Holy Spirit of God joined together in a miraculous way in the seed of woman, the eternal Son of God, and the Son of God became the God-man. He is no less God. He is no less man. He is the God-man. Uniquely, divinely, miraculously prepared and qualified to be our substitute on the cross of Calvary and to be our Savior and our great high priest, and that's what Paul will bring you to in just a minute in verses 17 through 18. But I want to go on.

He "took part of the same; that through death he might destroy." The word "destroy" is somewhat a little bit misleading here. It's simply the Greek word, it means "to bring to naught, bring to nothing." To the child of God, what's death? Oh, now come on. I'm ready for this. I'm going home. I'm going to glory. I'm not one to commit suicide but I'll tell you one thing, I'm anxious to go to be with the Lord, and the older you'll get, the more you'll be more anxious. That's what the Lord does for you. You say, "Well, I've got too many things going on here." But I'll tell you what, you've got more things for you in glory than what you have here in this world. And the death is nothing. The child of God, John 11, does not die. We bury the bodies of our loved ones but they're with the Lord, and when we are carrying their bodies out to the grave, I want to tell you, they're in heaven around the throne of God singing praises. And so he's brought to nothing death, and not only that but there is a resurrection. When that body which was placed in the grave because of the work of Jesus Christ on their behalf, that body will come forth in a glorified body. It was sown in weakness, it will be raised in strength. It was sown a corruptible body, it will be raised an incorruptible body. It will be a glorified body made like unto our Lord. Death has no sting, no power over the children of God because of the work of Christ on their behalf, that he might bring to naught "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

And there's much discussion about that when you read the commentaries, exactly what does this mean that he might bring who had the power of death. Well, whatever power the devil has, he is on a chain and he is controlled by almighty God, whatever the devil does. You say, "Well, you mean to say that if somebody gets killed, somebody shoots somebody, that God honored that?" No, here's what you know: it was the devil in that person. What was it your read about when Judas betrayed the Lord? It is the devil filled his heart and he went out then afterwards and hung himself. Who brought about his death? The devil did. By deceiving him and filling his heart to betray the Lord, he brought about his death. Oh, be careful, young people, what the devil inspires you to do, not only young people, us adults also.

But verse 15, "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed," now note this, the seed, "the seed of Abraham." I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Galatians for me, please. Galatians 3, I believe is where I want to go to. Galatians 3, particularly verse 16. Galatians 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made." Now some people are misguided about this. God made a great blessing to Abraham, he promised it to Abraham that "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," and some people think that that is a promise made to the national nation of Israel, and that every Jew, and I don't mean to be antisemitic here, I'm just wanting to be scriptural, that every Jew is the person of that blessing, and that all Jews

have a special blessing that they are the chosen of God. Now the Bible will tell you later on in the New Testament, that Jew and Gentile alike are God's chosen people. The elect of God, there is no race description that's definitive in the elect of God. All God's people come from all races of people. The elect of God, we call them, the Bible calls them the Israel of God. That's the elect of God.

Now note what he says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made." Now note this particularly, "He saith not, And to seeds," plural, "as of many; but as of one," and who is that seed? And that seed is Christ. Now note something, friends, note God's promise, how he keeps his promises. He made a promise unto Abraham and hundreds of years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ, God made this promise to Abraham and the nation of Israel and the descendants of Abraham have gone through many many years of wars, tribulations, enemies, but Christ, God preserved the nation of Israel, he preserved the tribe of Judah because it was in Judah that God had promised that the Messiah would come forth, the scepter shall not depart from out of Israel, from Judah, and the promise that God made to Eve in the garden that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, that seed is preserved and perpetuated to the very mother of Christ, the virgin Mary, and she brought forth a body that had the seed of Abraham. God keeps his promises. God keeps his word and it is of the literal body, blood, flesh of the seed of Abraham but it was sinless because he had no earthly father.

The Holy Spirit of God brings this miraculously together. You say, "How did it happen?" I don't know. Paul says great is the mystery of godliness, that Christ was born of a virgin. That's a mystery. In Luke, you have all the details about it. Luke was a doctor and he will tell you many things about it, but Christ was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary with a body that has the seed that goes all the way back to Abraham, but not only to Abraham, all the way back to Eve. Why? Why was that necessary? So that he might be literally identified with you and I, his elect people, who have a physical body. He is going to become our Savior by having a body that died on the cross of Calvary, and if he doesn't have a literal body, he is not the vicarious sacrifice. So remember that word "vicarious."

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." You see how God preserved the seed down to the appointed time for Christ to come forth.

"Wherefore," and that's a very important word right there. You ought to just circle that word or underline that word in your Bibles because it's very important. Why? Because what God here is telling you what the benefit and the purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ was that he might be identified with his people for whom he was going to die in a literal sense, vicariously, and also expiatory, to take away our sin.

So Paul will tell you, "Wherefore in all things," in all things. Paul has told you that he must suffer death, he's told you that he would be identified for the very express purpose that he might bring many sons on to glory, all these things. He was made to be a complete

Savior and Redeemer to sanctify us and redeem us. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made," there's the word, made. How was he made "like unto his brethren"? By the incarnation. Hebrews 10, you'll read, "A body has thou prepared me." Man didn't do this, God did it. It's not a natural thing, it's a supernatural thing. It is a miraculous thing. God by the power of the Holy Spirit, the virgin Mary said, "How can this be seeing I know not a man?" What does she mean? She didn't mean she just knew about, didn't know about any man, for she knew who Joseph was, she knew who her earthly father was, she knew other men, but she's talking about there has been no embracing in a sexual way. That's what that means here. "I have known no man. How could this be?" "The Holy Ghost will come upon thee and overshadow thee and the thing that shall happen, it will be the holy thing of God." And when Joseph was mindful of her pregnancy, he was mindful to put her away privately. He loved her. He knew her virginity. He knew her character. But what he didn't know what God had done, and so he was of a mind to put her away, to not marry her. Really, she was to be stoned to death, and so he wanted to put her away privately but the angel of the Lord said, "Joseph, you go ahead and take her to be your wife because this is what God has done." And he took her to be his wife.

"In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." For what reason? Now here are four words I'm going to give you. Four words, I've got them right there written down for you: merciful, faithful, reconciliation and succor. Those words from this text, "made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful." The word here "merciful" means "compassionate." Oh, what a compassionate Savior we have in Jesus Christ. When you go to a doctor, when you have a nurse, when you have someone taking care of you, what do you want from them? You are not so much concerned about their intelligence, about their skills, you want them also to be compassionate. You bring your skill and you bring your knowledge to me and you do it in a compassionate way.

I read in Matthew 9, "when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." The multitudes of Israel, the people out of whom, his elect people, and he saw those people and they were being guided in the wrong way, they were being taught false doctrine by the priests and the Levites, and he was moved with compassion upon them. Oh, hear him as he sits and weeps over Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you." He knew what was going to happen to Israel. He knew the judgments were going to come. He knew the devastation that was going to happen to the city, yet he said, "O Jerusalem." He weeps over Jerusalem. He is a compassionate Savior.

You will see this, oh, you will see him in the leper. Turn with me in your Bibles, please, to Luke, the fifth chapter, and let me read to you here about this compassionate Savior. This leper there in Galilee, the Lord comes and this leper comes running up to the Lord, Luke 5:12, beginning at verse 12. Luke 5:12, he comes running up to the Lord, "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy," he doesn't just have it in his hand, it's over his whole body, "full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He is such a type of a sinner. Sin is described like leprosy. It's fatal. There's no remedy for it except the blood of Christ. There's no remedy for leprosy. People who had leprosy, they were

unclean. They couldn't be around their families. They were not to come within a certain amount of feet with anyone. In fact, someone like the corona virus today, you know, they were unclean and there was no remedy for them, there was no vaccine, no remedy for them in those days.

"And besought him, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." And look at verse 13. Oh, you know what it means if you touched a leper? You were unclean. If you touched the leper. If his shadow fell on you, you were unclean. You could not go into the tabernacle and the temple until you went through certain rituals whereby the priests would declare you to be clean from the sin of leprosy. This was a good rule, law, to try and keep them, what we call herd infection? That's what was here. They had no remedy for it and so separation, isolation was the act.

So he said, "if thou wilt, thou shall make me clean." And look what Jesus Christ does, the eternal Son of God, the God-man in verse 13, "he put forth his hand, and touched him." Oh, I don't care how unclean you are, how dirty you are in the eyes of the world, how filthy your sin may be, how disgraced you may feel, it cannot be beyond the power of Jesus Christ to cleanse you and to make you whole again.

"And he touched him." There's a song that says that, "And he touched him," and, oh, what glory filled my soul. You know what I'm talking about if you've been touched by the hand of Christ, a sympathizing Savior. Note this too, when Christ, the God-man touched him, Christ didn't become unclean, the leper was made to be clean. That's important to understand because those who are having problems with the virgin birth of Christ, they don't understand how a sinful woman, Mary was that, she was a sinner, how a sinful woman could bring forth a child without sin. Well, it's a miraculous act by the divine power of the Holy Spirit of God, but note, would you, when divinity, when holiness, when divine holiness touches that which is unclean, the unclean is made to be clean.

He was compassionate toward the leper. In Luke, the seventh chapter also, we read about the widow, the widow woman who lost her only son, and the crowds are all around Jesus Christ and they're trying to get to him, and they're pressing on him. There he came by a funeral procession in Luke 7:11, listen as I read, Luke 7, "And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out," who is this dead man? He's "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." Do you know what that means to be a widow woman without any children? It means you're going to sit on the streets begging for money. That's the only refuge, that's the only help you're going to get. You become a beggar. I've seen them in other countries. I've seen them in India. They don't have the welfare system like we have here in America and so forth, so I've seen the widows begging, begging, and your heart goes out to them and you want to try to help them but then you find out you help one and there's hundreds all of a sudden come up around, and so you have to be very careful in the street how you help them. But here's this woman, she's lost her only son and she's destined to become nothing but a beggar sitting on the streets.

"And she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her," when the Lord saw her, "he had compassion on her, and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." Isn't that wondrous? Isn't that marvelous? Wouldn't you have liked to have been there? Why, that would have been a great thing. "Oh look, this dead man, the son of this widow woman, God raised him up and restored him back to life." Why? Because he is a compassionate Savior.

The next word I want you to note is the word "faithful." Back here he was merciful and faithful. What does that have reference to? Well, these two words are very important. The merciful aspect of it is to usward, human speaking. He was merciful toward us. The next word, "faithful," is toward God. He is faithful to God's word and God's law. He is faithful to the eternal covenant, what he said he would do. Hebrews 10 again, "It's in written in the volume, Lo, it's written in the volume of the book." The volume of what book? Well, the covenant of eternal counsel and all the Old Testament promises, the volume of all them. He was faithful to all those prophecies. Not a one of them did he fail to keep. He kept all of them. He was faithful to the law of his Father, the will of his Father. Even in the garden of Gethsemane before he goes out to the cross, he is praying to the Father, "If it be thy will, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but," what? "Thy will be done." Faithful.

The next word in the King James and I defend the King James but the King James gives us that he might be a "faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." The word "reconciliation," that's the end result of the death of Christ. We are reconciled unto God, not God being reconciled to us but, rather, we are the offenders of the law of God and by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, we, our sins by his work as suffering for our sins, we are now reconciled unto God by the blood of Christ. But the word here in the Greek is the word "propitiation." Reconciliation is the end result of propitiation and when you talk about propitiation, you say satisfaction. Isn't that a wonderful word? Satisfied. God, God is satisfied with this old hell-deserving sinner. That's the only hope of salvation. Propitiation, Christ alone, alone. No other sacrifice made this to be a propitiation.

Paul talks about it in the third chapter of Hebrews. He also will tell you about it in 1 John, that he is our propitiation, the unique sacrifice that satisfies. No wonder when he had suffered on the cross he said, "It is finished!" Everything was accomplished. No more sacrifices. No more guilt. No more condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Christ has paid the price and we are now redeemed from the guilt of our sins, and God Almighty is satisfied concerning our guilt.

Can you ever imagine? I don't know if you've ever had to go to court. I've had to go to court over a speeding fine and saying guilty, but anyway, I had to pay a fine. It's awful and do you know what? If you don't pay the fine, it gets bad, really bad. The guilt, the price goes up and if you don't pay that price, you're going to go to jail. So all of that hangs over your head. If you violate the law in any way and you get a ticket, you get a charge, somebody has got to pay it, somebody has got to satisfy that charge. And when

you think about it, you dread it, you hate it because it's going to cost you money and it's going to cost you if you don't pay it. But when you've been able to pay it and that's taken care of, there's a sense of real relief. I'm glad that's over. The law was right, I was wrong, I've satisfied the law. But the law of God, nothing can satisfy it. No works. No silver. No gold. Nothing can satisfy the law of God except the blood of Jesus Christ, and so he is our propitiation. He is the one that satisfied the law of God on our behalf.

The chief role of the high priest is to make an offering, that is, a satisfaction to God for our sins, and when you read about the sacrifices in the Old Testament, you'll read that word "atonement." The Day of Atonement, the priest must go in, the high priest, he alone was to make the sacrifice whereby there was atonement made for sin. That word "atonement" means "a foreshadowing of that which is to come," and that's what Christ did, he satisfied the law of God on our behalf and there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

Now the next word is the word that I really want to talk about. I've talked about everything else and the word I really want to bring to you here is this word he is our high priest, sympathizing high priest. Look what Paul says here, he says, "in that he himself hath suffered being tempted." The word "tempted" we always think about as being tempted to sin. I'm not denying that Christ was tempted to sin by Satan. Now I believe in the impeccability of Christ, that means he could not have sinned because he is the holy God, but nonetheless, that does not deny or minimize the temptation. You know about up on the mountain, the devil came and he made those three great temptations to the Lord, "Turn these stones into bread. Cast yourself down off the temple. Bow down and worship me. I'll give you the kingdoms of the world." He was tempted by the devil himself. We think we have some big temptations, what if the devil came and talked to you and made some promises to you like that? There's a song, you know, "When the devil went down to Georgia," I believe it is, about a man who sold his soul to the devil. Well, the Lord was tempted but yet without sin.

Tempted why, what reason, for what purpose? "That he himself hath suffered being tempted,." Now the word "tempted," again, does not mean just to be tempted to sin, and I don't want to minimize that but it also means to be tested and tried, those things. Now I read in the scriptures that our Lord was a man who ate with drunkards and sinners. Now he's a human being and I don't think that there was the temptation like to do that which is immoral. It may have been, there may have been, I'm not knowing to what degree but I know this: no temptation was successful in contaminating and causing him to sin. He was sinless because he was very God, and he is tempted and tested and tried in every way that you and I could be tested and tried. "Oh," you say, "nobody knows what I'm going through right now." Yes, there is, it's Christ. He was made to be hungry. He was made to be despised, have friends turn against him, even his own brothers did not believe he was the Son of God until later. His own people denied him. He was made to hunger and to thirst and to become tired. All of those things, he experienced that.

He said, "The fowls of the air have a nest and the wolves and foxes have their dens, but the Son of man hath no place to lay his head." I think about that oftentimes when I go to

bed at night, and I thank the Lord for a bed that I can sleep in. I know, I've been in places where people didn't have a comfortable bed to sleep in, sleeping on the ground, sleeping out on the street, sleeping on nothing but a mat. I don't know what the Lord lay down on but he became tired and he had to go to sleep at times, but yet he said he had no place to lay his head. He didn't have a permanent home.

He was a stranger in this world, tempted and tested and tried and all points as we are, yet he was without sin. Why? Why must he do those things? That he might be identified with you and I in every way, at every point to succor. The word "succor" simply means "to help them that are tested and tried."

How is he going to do that? How did he do it? Well, first of all, he made the satisfaction to God concerning our sin. That's what Paul says, that it was that he might make reconciliation for the sins of our people. What a help, what a resource he is concerning our sin. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Satisfied God concerning our sin.

Paul speaks about this in Ephesians. I like these verses, Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption," that means deliverance, freedom, that means to be that you're out of the bondage, but not only are you free from the bondage and the guilt of sin but also the forgiveness of sin. That's a precious word. Redemption has to do with the legality of it. Forgiveness, that talks about the mercy of it. The death of Christ satisfied the law of God but not only did it satisfy the law of God but it secured for us the forgiveness of our sins. Colossians, Paul said, "who has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his Son, In whom we have redemption through his blood," and note this, even "the forgiveness of sins." Not just redemption but forgiveness. I like, one of my favorite verses is Revelation 1:5 and you've heard me say it many times before, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Forgiveness.

He also has secured for us access to the throne of God. Paul speaks about this later on in the fourth chapter, chapter 4, verses 14 through 16, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." How do you know that? Hebrews 2, made to be like us in every way, in every point, that he might be identified with us, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly," that means confidently, that means assuredly. Did you ever walk in to ask the boss for a raise? "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, well, yeah, yeah, yeah." Very unfriendly. But when you walk in to the boss and he's your kin, he's your elder brother and he's loved you and died for you and redeemed you from your sin and secured you from your condemnation, you feel a little bit more confident if he's manifested his love toward you. Therefore, he says, that we might come boldly," and note this, not to the throne of judgment but to "the throne of grace." The difference between grace and mercy, remember this, mercy withholds what we deserve, grace gives to us that which we don't deserve. Come to the throne of grace "that we may obtain," obtain what? Well, what are you going to be when you get to the throne of grace? You're not there to talk about your

goodness and your merit and worthiness, you're there because of your unworthiness and because, so to speak, "I've messed up." Come to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy. You know, the hardest thing in the world is to go to somebody and say, "I was wrong. You're right." It's hard, especially when that's your wife and your wife says, "You ought not to do so-and-so. You'd better not do it that way." And you go ahead and do it and you mess up and you have to go back and say, "You were right." No matter how much she loves you, it's hard to do that. I know.

But you go to the throne of grace that you may obtain mercy, and what's that mercy going to do for you? What's it going to do for you? What's that mercy going to do for you? Well, just say I forgave you and that's it? No. It's not just going to leave you there. "That you may obtain mercy and find grace to help." Now that grace, that grace comes in multiple different ways. It may be money. It may be healing. It may be something else. But you find grace to help.

My wife and I live in a house that when we went to buy it, we didn't have a penny to buy it with. I'm telling you the honest truth. I'd been out of work for over a year and we sat out in the parking lot and we prayed, "Lord, if it's your will, help us to get this house. If it's not your will, we don't want to get it. God, but we want to know it's your will." And we went into the bank, the banker said, "Yeah, we want to sell you the house." I said, "Mr. Banker, here's a problem. I don't have any money to pay down and I don't have any job to earn it with right now." I was out of work due to my broken arm. Do you know what the banker said? "Well, we'll have to work something out." And by God's grace, we did and we've been living in that house since 1998. It's God's house, we feel. God gave it to us. And find help. We needed a place to live, we were without a house, a place to live. We'd been living with Bill Rogers for over a year and we needed to get out and we had gone and tried different things, and we had prayed for God to help us and here at this time, particular time, we were literally without any money, living off the goodness of Brother Rogers and the family. We went to the Lord, we went to the throne of grace that we may obtain grace to help in the time of need, and he helped us. Now other people helped us too, I don't mean with money necessarily, but Bill Rogers and other people helped us to fix the house up so that we could go into it and live in it, and God gave us people. He gave us help in multiple different ways.

Help in the time of need, and in the Greek it means the exact help that you need for that purpose. He doesn't give you everything. "Well, okay, all right, I'm going to give you a million dollars. Here it is. You just go ahead and take care of all your problems." No. No. No. No, that's not the way it goes. He gives you the exact help you need for that problem because do you know what? He wants you to come back again. You're not going just to forget about it, you're going to come back again and ask him again, and you're going to go to the throne of grace time and time again and you're going to find out that there's mercy there, inexhaustible mercy, multiple mercies, and you're going to go to the throne of grace and you're going to find mercy that will give you grace to help in the time of need. Why? Because Jesus Christ is your great high priest and he's touched with the feelings of your infirmities.

1 John. John says, "If any man sin," oh, John, you should have said when you sin, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Who is that advocate with the Father? It's Jesus Christ, that great high priest that we've been talking about. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father," he says in verse 2, "who is the propitiation." Well, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous," the righteous high priest, "and he is the propitiation for our sins." He is the one that satisfied God concerning our sins, and so you go back to the throne of grace and you seek mercy and it's mercy reserved for you, it's inexhaustible.

There's a story in the Old Testament about the prophet when he went to the widow's house in a time of famine and the widow had just a little bit of grain, food, cornmeal, oats, I don't know what it was but just a little bit of grain left there in the barrel, and she was going to fix that little bit of grain and when she was fixing it, when it was over with, she said, "This is all I've got and I and my son will die of starvation." The old prophet came to the house, you know the story. I believe it was the prophet Elijah, it might have been Elisha. He came to the house and he told her, he said, "Fix me some meal to eat. First, first, fix me some meal to eat." How cruel that is. How mean that is. "Why, you hard-hearted thing. There's just enough left for me and my son and you demand me to fix a meal?" No, no, he trusted in God. And the widow went to the barrel and I like to think she ran the cup across the bottom of that barrel and took the last grain out, carried it out there and fixed it for the prophet. But, "Hey, there's more down there." She scraped the bottom again. I don't know how long the famine was exactly, I think it was three years, or how far into the famine they were, but I know this, that grain never, she never used up all the grain. It fed her and the son for the rest of the famine. But I like to think she scraped the bottom of the barrel every time.

You think when you go to the throne of grace you scrape the bottom of the barrel. It's poured full and the word of God would tell you in Psalm 51, for instance, it was said that there is multiple grace, grace overflowing, and you go there and you take a little cup of grace and mercy and you say, "Well, I've gotten help from the Lord and I don't know if I can ever get anymore." And you go back again and again and again and it's there. Why? Because of this great high priest who is your succor, your helper, that's what the word means.

But I want to tell you, that's not just it. Number 3, Christ has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-18, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another," another, and that is an important word, another of the same kind. He's going to give you another holy, eternal Holy Spirit, another of the same kind, and what's his work? He is a comforter, and advocate. In the Greek it is "paraclete," we get the word "parallel" from it, to go along beside you. Oh, my helpmate, she's such a gift of God to me, my wife, and she is beside me, a helpmate.

"He will give you another Comforter, that he may," note this, "he may abide with you," indwell you, could be what he said there, "for ever." That Holy Spirit that God gave to you in regeneration that indwells the child of God, he is with you forever. Forever. Forever. He doesn't leave you. Even when you are doing things that are wrong, when you

grieve the Holy Spirit, he's still there. What purpose is he there? To convince you, convict you of sin, to correct you, and to bring you back into fellowship with the Lord.

So note what the Lord said, he gives you "the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." You say, "Well, why in the world are people doing such crazy things? Why are they living like they are?" Because they don't have the Holy Spirit. And if you didn't have the Holy Spirit, you'd be doing the same thing. Why? Paul will tell you in Ephesians 2 that we "walked according to the course of this world, according to the spirit of the power of the air, that now worketh among the children of disobedience." That's where we were, in the kingdom of darkness, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him," you know him. Why? Why do we know him? How did he come about? Because the Savior who died on the cross promised that he would not leave us comfortless but he said, "I will go back to the Father and I will pray the Father and he will send the Holy Spirit to you."

I want to tell you, you don't have to do anything to get the Holy Spirit. Christ has done it all. You don't get the Holy Spirit, though, until you come to know Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the one that will regenerate you and give you new life, and the Holy Spirit will bring to you the knowledge of who Jesus Christ is. Now there are those who will teach and think you've got to have a second blessing, you've got to go out and you've got to be baptized a second time, or you've got to pray through in order to get the second work of the Holy Spirit so you can get baptized in the Holy Spirit. Their doctrine is all wrong. It's all by the free gift of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. He will send us the Holy Spirit.

Look at Acts 2:38, "Peter said unto them," that's those who had been quickened by the Holy Spirit of God. When they said to him, "What must we do?" Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for," or because of, "the remission of sins," and he says this, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." That's how it comes about. Why? Because the work of Christ on the cross.

He regenerates us. He seals you, preserves you. That's the witness of the Holy Spirit. Those of you who know anything about canning, you know how important the seal is. It preserves you and it also identifies you. If you put a seal, a document on a piece of paper and you put a seal on that, that gives the confirmation that this, you go to a notary and a notary signs this and says, "This is that person. This is their signature." And then they put their seal on that, that makes it official. The Holy Spirit of God is the one that makes you know you're Christ's.

I want you to look at Galatians 4. Turn with me to Galatians 4:4, it says, "when the fulness of the time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," note what purpose this is, Galatians 4, that he might "redeem them that were under the law," I'm reading verse 5, "that we might receive," note, would you, verse 5, "that we might receive the adoption of sons." We're going to be adopted into God's heavenly family. We're going to experience that. Verse 6, "And because ye are sons," by regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,

crying, Abba, Father." The reason why you can say, "Our Father, which is in heaven," the reason why you can bow your knee to the Lord and say, "Heavenly Father," it's because the Holy Spirit came to your heart and said, "You are mine," and you cried, "Abba, Father." Verse 7, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." That's the seal and the work of the Holy Spirit to confirm to you that you're one of God's children.

He teaches us. He teaches us. In 1 Corinthians Paul says God made him to be unto us wisdom, the wisdom of God. Now you don't have it in your heart and mind right now, you've got part of it maybe, a little bit of it, but do you know what the work of the Holy Spirit is? It's to teach you the will of God, what God's purpose is in life, how God came about saving you. He's to teach you. Our Lord said in John 16, "when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear," that's from the Father, "he shall speak: and he will shew you things to come." Things to come. The work of the Holy Spirit is to teach us and to guide us into all truth. Ephesians 4, Paul says that we might be perfect, want you to be perfect, that means complete. We'll talk about that in a minute.

He gives us the witness of the Holy Spirit. He gives us a blessed hope. Do you have a hope in Christ Jesus? Yes, I'm looking for the Lord to come. Why? Why do you have a hope? Why do you have a conviction and belief? When I say "hope," I'm not talking about wishful thinking, I'm talking about an assurance. Why do you have that assurance? Because God has written in your heart by the Holy Spirit of God, "You are mine." And the Lord said, "I'm going away but I'll come again, that where I am, there you may be also." And you don't know all about where he is, you have some idea, but you do know this: he who died for you on the cross of Calvary, he made a promise that he's going to come again and you have that blessed hope and assurance and you're looking forward to it one day to happen. Why? Because Christ gave you the Holy Spirit as a witness to you in your heart.

And here's something you don't think about maybe, he gave us his church. Think about that. Jesus Christ loves his children, his people. He went away. He's in heaven today. He's there at the right hand of God the Father. We're down here in this old sin-cursed earth. We're struggling through this world that we live in. We're pilgrims and strangers. Yes, we have the Holy Spirit of God but I'll tell you one thing, buddy, it's hard when you're swimming upstream all by yourself. But what if a boat comes along, a rowboat comes along and they say, "Hop in. We'll help you oar." And you get in the boat and you get in with some people who are going the same direction and they're oaring the boat, helping you to oar the boat? They encourage you. That's what church is all about, it's where God will teach you and encourage you. God's family has a home. What is that home? It's a New Testament church where the Lord has established it and today it's on the earth, and it has never gone out existence. It's always been here and the saints of God have found refuge and encouragement in the house of God with God's people because he gave us his church for the perfecting of the saints.

And he gave us his word. This morning at the breakfast table, I picked up this book and read from Psalms about Jesus Christ, the majesty of the Lord. His throne is established forever and ever. Oh, what encouragement to read those precious words in the book of Psalms. What if we didn't have this book? What if you didn't have it? This old sin-cursed world, you can't believe anything and everybody are liars and everything is changing. Who can you believe? The Lord and I can believe his word and trust his word. "I change not. Forever, O Lord, is thy throne established in heaven. Heaven and earth may pass away but my word cannot pass away." God has preserved his word. Listen folks, there are people who are trying to destroy it and still trying to destroy it, and there are people who are trying to pervert it and trying every way in the world to get you not to read it, but read the word of God. Quit listening to the false views on television and read the word of God and you will be encouraged, you will be helped, you will be blessed because Jesus Christ loved you, died for you, and redeemed you, and he has preserved his word for you. Read it. God's word will bless you and encourage you.

So he succors us. He knows what we're going through. He understands and he is sympathetic towards you, and his sympathy never runs out. No matter how many times you have to go to the throne of grace, you'll find him to be a sympathizing high priest. May God bless his word to our hearts.

Our Father, I come to you here this morning hour, thank you for our Savior, our Redeemer who is our great high priest and who is a sympathizing Savior. Not only has he died for us but as our high priest he is able to succor us, to help us.