

The Making of a High Priest

a sermon in the series
Hebrews: An Epistle of Encouragement

A sermon delivered Sunday Morning, February 25, 2001
at Oak Grove Baptist Church, Paducah, Ky.

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Hebrews 5:1-10

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

When considering the book of Hebrews and the arguments that the author presents for the superiority of Christ, we must eventually come to the subject of His priesthood. Written to Jews who had come from a background where the priesthood was critical to their standing with God, they would have realized the significance of the text. Often the argument would be lodged against these new Christians by their friends and relatives who were not Christians, "Why is your Christianity better than Judaism since you have no priesthood? You do not have an order of priests that offer sacrifices or pray and intercede for you. You have left a better religion for an inferior one." As a consequence, some of the Christians began to question, why is it that they did not have priests? Why is it that in their gatherings together they didn't have a priest to intercede for them and to make sacrifices? One of purposes of the writer of Hebrews was to explain to the persecuted church that they had a better religion than any practicing Jew. They, in fact, had not given up a priesthood. They had not relinquished an intercessor to mediate for them. All they had actually done in believing in Jesus was gain a better priesthood. Now, what does this have to do with us twenty-first century Christians who are not familiar with a priesthood?

When you pray and call out to God as you struggle with temptation, it is extremely important and encouraging that you have a superior priest and priesthood. For this reason we must learn as much as we can about how a priesthood worked. Once learning the in-and-outs of a priest,

we will find greater encouragement in Christ. How terrible to be bombarded with unbelieving notions that God cannot sympathize with what we agonize over. Theologically we know Jesus was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” but we are tempted to minimize His temptations as being far less than ours. It is appealing to believe He really didn’t struggle with sin since He never could be enticed by it. He never had any inclination towards it as we do; therefore, it was natural for Him to reject it. It would have been very unnatural for Him to have any enticement to sin. That is why when you pray, struggling over the flesh, wanting to submit to God, you pray with a sense that God has no understanding of what you are feeling. Something in you finds temptation enticing. You pray knowing God knows all things, but you don’t know how He could know what you are feeling in the struggle over sin. He didn’t have this corrupt flesh that we are saddled with. It is so difficult to see Christ identifying with it.

But not any more, if you will believe this text it will end the struggle with those thoughts ever again. We do not have to struggle with whether our Lord can identify with us even when we give in to temptation. I do not mean in the slightest that Christ personally knows what it is like to give in to temptation. But He can know what it is like for us to struggle over temptation, for He Himself knew the struggle of obedience.

It is well that we labor over the book of Hebrews. We ought to labor to study and rightly divide the Word of God. It is the man that will work in the text that “needeth not to be ashamed.” If you study this book of Hebrews to any degree you will find it will be work to wade through the old Levitical system and the comparison with the priesthood of Jesus. The first century audience would have been very familiar with the Levitical system. Today, may God give us grace to understand this labor intensive text because it really will lift you to a greater appreciation of your Savior and His ability to know your struggle with sin. This passage will become a fuel to your faith and help you fight the fight against unbelief.

The writer of Hebrews begins the fifth chapter by stating for us the qualifications of a high priest. He will also show us the training of a high priest and the service of the same.

What was necessary in order for a man under the Aaronic priesthood to become a high priest? In verse one it is stated, he must be a man.

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things [pertaining] to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. (Hebrews 5:1)

I must admit that doesn’t seem to be too hard a qualification. But the author is stressing this fact because angels could not be our high priest. Angels have no idea of what it’s like to walk under the veil of humanity. They have no concept of what it means to struggle as a man and to walk on this earth. The first qualification for a mediator between men and God is he must be a man. Jesus Christ fulfilled this qualification. There is no doubt of this in verse five.

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. (Hebrews 5:5)

This is an implicit reference to the humanity of Christ. And again, Hebrews chapter five, verse seven, in the first phrase the humanity of Christ is clearly testified of.

Who in the days of his flesh.

Now why would the Lord have to be a man to be our high priest? The answer is found in verse one, “He may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” It was the duty of the high priest to offer up the gifts that the people brought to the temple to give to God and to make sacrifices for sins. Our Lord Jesus put on the body and the soul of a man in order that He might offer our gifts unto God and make sacrifice for our sins. Man must sacrifice, for it is man that has sinned.

The second qualification for a high priest was he must be compassionate. You would not want a hard-hearted priest mediating for you. When you have somebody mediating, you like them to be hard-hearted and tough-nosed when they are advocating your cause, when they are arguing for you. Surely you want them to be tenacious and unrelenting as they go to the party with whom you have odds with and they argue your case. But you don’t want them to be this way towards you. You want him to know what you’re experiencing, what you’re feeling, what you’re going through. He’s got to be able to identify. You certainly don’t want him going to God and saying, “God I understand why you’re upset with this numbskull, I understand why you’ve got problems with him.” No, you want a high priest that can identify with you and your frailties. Thus, the Bible tells us Christ also has fulfilled this qualification. Listen to verse eight.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)

Jesus suffered. And in verse fifteen of the fourth chapter we discovered that our Lord Jesus suffered in all points, in fact it says,

We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (Hebrews 4:15)

As you remember from last week, this verse means Christ not only knows what you’re going through, He can feel what you’re going through. So, Jesus is compassionate. There are some who will never approach Christ, because in their mind the concept of Christ is He is unable to understand them. They clearly see only His perfection. They are so blinded by God’s infinite holiness that they cannot see that He also is a compassionate mediator. But dear friend, He understands in all points what you are, and He has compassion for you.

The third and final qualification given by our author for a high priest is that God must call him. No man can dare assume this office on his own. In verse four of the text it says,

And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron. (Hebrews 5:4)

God called Aaron. Aaron didn't say, "I'm going to volunteer for the job of high priest. Sounds like a wonderful thing to do." No, God called him. In the fifth chapter, verse ten, of Hebrews we see that Jesus fulfilled this qualification also. He says of Christ,

Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. (Hebrews 5:10)

Christ was called by God His Father before the solar system was created, before one star in the sparkling night of stars was placed in the velvet black of heaven's night. He called God His Son to be a high priest for you and me.

I want us to move to that which is really the heart of what this message is all about, and that is the schooling of a high priest, or the training of a high priest. A high priest had to be trained. He didn't walk into the office knowing what he needed to do, there had to be training. In the Old Testament, we see how they were trained. By it we'll get some idea how Jesus was trained. In Numbers chapter three and verse four, we see an apprenticeship where the high priest would take his son, who was to follow in his footsteps and be the succeeding high priest, and he would mentor this young man. He would teach him by on the job training. In Numbers chapter three, verse four, we see that this was the precedent that Aaron established in the training of high priests with his own sons.

And Nadab and Abihu, died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father. (Numbers 3:4)

Aaron had two remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar. These two he mentored, disciplined and trained. He watched them labor for him in the tabernacle and minister unto God. This was the basic way in which the high priest would have been trained.

Christ was also trained to be high priest. We see in our text that there was an apprenticeship that Christ entered. God, the Father, took His Son and mentored Him in the ministry of a high priest. Again look at Hebrews chapter five and verse eight.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)

Jesus had to endure the schooling of a high priest. He had to be trained. The way He was trained was by learning how to be submissive to the Father in all things pertaining to "gifts and sacrifice for sin" (verse one).

This presents us two questions. The first question, how could Jesus learn obedience? He is God in the flesh. He was a man in whom "the fullness of the Godhead bodily" dwelt. Therefore God

does not need to be trained in obedience. Yet, we must remember that Jesus was also a man. He did not hold His divine attributes with a tight grip, although, He kept them and maintained them. Can we say that deity needs no lessons in obedience, but perhaps it was humanity that needed such lessons? Without doubt the passage is referring to His humanity, and as a man He had to learn obedience.

But here again our question still stands, how could Jesus learn obedience? It was His nature to be obedient. Jesus did not have the corruptness that you and I inherited from our parents. The Adamic nature was not in Him. Joseph, His earthly father, was a surrogate father and not a biological father. His true father was God in heaven; He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. In His conception He was preserved from inherited depravity so there was not one taint of corruption, not one molecule of depravity, not any seed of rebellion in Him. Not one drop. It was His nature to be obedient, because He was perfect and good in every way. Not only was He perfect and good, but He loved perfection and righteousness. He hated imperfection and all that is unrighteous. Even in His humanity how could Jesus learn obedience?

He taught Joseph and Mary about obedience. When thinking He was lost, Joseph and Mary found Him in the temple at age twelve. They scolded Him, to which He replied, "I must be about my Father's business." As a child He was already on task and focused to do the will and plan of His Father in heaven. It seems that obedience was instinctual to Him and He need not learn it.

The second question I wish to ask concerning our Lord's training in becoming a high priest is, what is it that our Lord could learn about obedience that He did not already know? What is the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews telling us in verse eight? Many commentators and scholars have said that this means that Christ endured the hardship of being a man, the infirmities of His own body, the temptations, and the rigors of the cross. They say all of this was an act of submission, that it was not a learning situation at all. "Learned He obedience" are words implying submission to the Father's plan of redemption. But I'll be frank with you, that has never satisfied me. The writer is well aware of the Greek word for submission. He uses it in Hebrews chapter thirteen and verse seventeen. It is a form of the word "obedience" used in chapter five and verse eight.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17)

The problem is not with the words "obedience" or "submission." The cog in the gear is the word "learned." It is from the Greek word μαθημα which is from the Greek word μαθημα. This word and its forms are found twenty-five times in the New Testament and in each usage it means the same. It means to find out or to discover or to learn by experience. The word "disciple" is derived from this word, "learned." Clearly the intent of the writer is to suggest that Christ learned something that He had personally never experienced.

Verse seven shall be our tutor to help us understand how Jesus learned obedience.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; (Hebrews 5:7)

“Who in the days of his flesh,” what a remarkable terminology! It specifies exactly when His tutorship or His schooling to become a high priest occurred. It happened while He was on this earth in the days of His flesh and not while He was in glory with the Father in the eternal ages before.

The writer continues, “When He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.” Jesus was a man of prayer. The Bible tells us that often He was up early before anyone else, fellowshiping with His Father in prayer. He was a man of constant prayer. Not only was He a man of prayer, He was a man of fasting. Jesus cast out a demon that his disciples could not. When they asked Him why they could not exorcise the demon, He answered, “this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”

Although, we know Jesus was a person of prayer, the author is specifying a particular prayer of Christ. I believe that the writer is referring to our Lord’s praying in the garden of Gethsemane. The verse actually makes the specification, “offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death.”

What was He praying for? Why was there “strong crying”? Why were the tears flowing from His eyes? He was praying that the Father might spare Him the death that the Father had ordained for Him. In Matthew chapter twenty-six and verse thirty-eight, Matthew quotes Jesus, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” He was telling His disciples that He was so grieved in His heart that He could die. Jesus didn’t need nails to be riveted through His hands or his feet to die. He could have allowed His grief to run its course, and it would have caused His heart to stop beating in His chest. This is how sorrowful He was.

Was He sorrowful about the physical pain He was going to endure? No, that could not have been it, for far weaker men have faced death without fear. Weaker men than our Lord have entered into the battlefield with courage, and there they were left fallen in combat. Although, I know that He as a man would not relish the thought of pain, it was not this that brought Him such great sorrow. There’s something else here, something much more painful than even the physical death He knew He was going to endure.

The Bible says of our Lord that He was a man of sorrows. The brow that had once worn the crown of heaven is now furrowed with the sorrow of sin. Eyes that had flashed like fire are now pools of water streaming down His cheeks, pools of sorrow as He weeps for what He is about to endure. In Luke chapter twenty-two, verse forty-two, we find again the garden of Gethsemane prayer. Luke’s version of what Jesus prayed is recorded, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup

from me.” What was the cup? Don’t read that verse so quickly, study it. Let it take your heart and squeeze it a little bit. Don’t run through it. Meditate on it. What was the cup? The cup was every sin I had ever sinned or ever will sin, and along with mine, is the cup of your sin. Think of all your iniquities and place them in a cup. I don’t think there are enough cups in all the earth to hold them. And, yet, God bottled them up and He placed them in one cup that He would drink from, and He would drink down every single drop. It was the cup of our chastisement, the cup of our penalty of sin that He would drink. Surely the physical pangs of death were dreadful, but it was the death of separation from the Father that caused Him the greatest distress.

This is exactly what occurred as He hung on the cross. Hear the cry of anguish as the separation occurs, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The agony of knowing that His death was going to be the condemnation from His Father tore at His heart before the soldier’s javelin pierced it. The one that He had eternally loved, and who had eternally loved Him would reject Him and despise Him. God, the Father, would turn Himself away from Him who hangs on the wooden beams. Placed on Christ was the curse of sin, the condemnation of it, and all of its consequences. The severest of sin’s consequences for the Christ was to have the Father whom He loved say to Him, “I hate you, and I despise you, and I reject you.” The grief in Gethsemane was so great that Luke records in Luke twenty-two and verse forty-four,

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:44)

The Lord Jesus knew that it was God who could spare Him this or at least bring Him through it. Hebrews chapter five and verse seven tells me that in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was praying to Him whom He knew could save Him from this death. Now the word “from” can mean either deliver Him from dying or through dying. Which does He mean?

As we read Luke’s record of Jesus’ prayer, “Lord if it be thy will that this cup pass before me” we find some clue. He asking for deliverance from what is about to occur. He did not want to be separated from His Father nor experience His displeasure. He feared that which you and I cannot even with sanctified imaginations consider. For the holy and innocent Lamb of God to be nailed to the cross and become associated with everything He despised is unfathomable. To be viewed by His father as something vile and putrid must have caused His holy soul to tremble to its foundation. To be represented as evil must have caused Him a pain of heart that we who are so unholy cannot imagine. And so I believe that He is praying, “God My Father, if Thou be willing remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.”

In verse seven it says Jesus “was heard in that he feared.” Once again commentators and translations have varied ideas of what this phrase means, “in that he feared.” Many do not think it means Jesus feared anything, but He was heard because He had a Godly fear. The New American Standard Bible reads, “And he was heard because of his piety.” They’ve taken the word “fear” and translated it to mean “piety.” The New International version renders this verse, “And he was heard because of his reverent submission.” It is not the work of translations to do the work of

interpreting, but in these cases, they are doing interpretation. They are not translating, because the Greek does not say, “because of his piety” or “of his reverent submission.” It means what it says, He was heard and thereby saved in that which He feared; in other words, that which He feared, God saved Him from.

I must refer you to one of the old reformers who will give us some insight in what this verse really means. John Calvin stated the translation of the word, “feared” and how it should really be understood in the following:

Some render the following words, “on account of his reverence” or fears but I wholly differ from them. In the first place he puts the word alone ejulaqei>av without the possessive “his”;

Calvin is saying that, in the Greek, the word “his” is not in the text. The Greek does not show possession. Translations must add the word “his” in order to show possession. Now maybe it’s a logical assumption that the translators have made, but the fact remains it is not there.

Calvin continues,

and then there is the preposition ajpo “from,” not ujper “on account of,” or any other signifying a cause or a reason.

In other words, Calvin is saying that if the writer of the text meant to say that Jesus was heard by God the Father because of His reverent submission, or His piety, or His godly fear, he should have used the Greek word ujper which means “on account of.” This word shows cause and effect. But the writer doesn’t use this word, instead he uses the word “from” which can be literally be interpreted, as I said a moment ago, “from” or “out of”. Calvin goes on to say that the Greek word used in verse seven for “fear” means for the most part “fear” or “anxiety”.

In summary Calvin says,

I doubt not but that the apostle means that Christ was heard from that which He feared, so that He was not overwhelmed by His evils or swallowed up by death. For in this contest the Son of God had to engage, not because he was tried by unbelief, the source of all our fears, but because he sustained as a man in our flesh the judgment of God, the terror of which could not have been overcome without an arduous effort.

I maintain that Calvin was right and that the writer of Hebrews is saying that Jesus went to the Father because He feared something. The question is what did He fear?

Here’s what He feared, He feared becoming considered sin and receiving the consequences of our sin which is separation from the Father.

How do we lowly creatures understand the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son? The best of illustrations serve us nothing in understanding. Whatever love you may have for your spouse or child cannot be a comparison to the eternal and infinite love each Person of the Godhead has for the other. Why should not Christ have feared such a separation? It is like trying to dissect your own being. It is like denying yourself of yourself. It is incomprehensible!

What does this have to do with our Lord learning obedience through the things He suffered? Much in every way. I put forward an answer, which I am about to give you, believing it will stand the test of being true to the text, for I think this is what the text is stating. It was natural for Jesus to be repulsed by sin and have nothing to do with it. It was His nature to reject sin, to turn from sin, to run from it, and to hate it. He could have no toleration for it. That's His nature.

Could Jesus so easily go against His nature? No more than a leopard can remove his spots. It would have been far easier for a man to change the color of his skin than for Jesus to go against His nature. It was not in the nature of Christ to want to have any identification with sin. That's why the writer calls this fear. It was a godly fear because it was a fear of sin. It was unnatural for Jesus to embrace sin and to be associated with it. And here's where verse eight and seven are connected, the test of obedience for Christ was to do that which was unnatural for Him to do. It was unnatural for Jesus to be associated with sin because everything in His nature told Him to reject sin. Therefore, the test for Christ must have been, would He be obedient to the Father in submitting to the suffering of sin to redeem sinners? Would the Lord Jesus obey God and do that which was unnatural for Him to do, embrace sin and the consequences of it?

Christ, in order to submit to the Father's will, had to learn to do that which was so contrary to His holy being, He had to be associated with sin. That is why He cried out to the Father, and God heard Him and delivered Him through that fear. God the Father delivered Him of that fear, to do that which was unnatural and to cleave unto sin. It's natural for the sinner to disobey and live by the impulses of the flesh. Why? It's his nature to do that, and it's in the believer's flesh to rebel. Think back to the last struggle you had with temptation, it might be just a few moments ago. You were wrestling there in your pew with ungodly thoughts. When was the last time you really struggled with sin? Do you remember? Wasn't there a natural enticement to you native to your flesh? Certainly, hence the struggle.

Now, we thank God that He has put a new nature within us, a nature that loves righteousness and despises unrighteousness. But let us not for one moment kid ourselves into thinking that there is not war to be waged against the flesh. The Apostle Paul tells us so much in Galatians chapter five and verse seventeen.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Galatians 5:17)

The flesh vies for dominance, and only by submission to the Holy Spirit do we defeat the natural tendencies of the flesh. It is unnatural for the flesh to relinquish control and desire the help of

God. That will never happen. We must by the Spirit in us dominate and enslave the flesh and its evil tendencies. Anger is more natural to the flesh than forgiveness. We often battle against lust because within our person there are these natural desires that are unrighteous and must be dominated.

It was natural for Jesus, being perfect, to reject sin and to run from it. The Father was asking Him to do something that was unnatural for Him and that was to embrace sin. Jesus cried in the garden, "Father, I don't know what this is like; I've never been here before." God had never been in this position before or ever since. Everything in Him craves to destroy sin, and now the Father is asking Christ to embrace it. Verse eight says, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." He learned to do what was unnatural to Him, just like you and I have to do every time we're tempted. We must learn to submit to what the Father wants, even if it doesn't feel natural. And that's what Jesus did, and He did it for me, for you. He drank your cup. He drank it, and He suffered for it, and His Father rejected Him, because He loves you.

Some may respond and say that I am advocating that the old nature of man still lives in the believer. No, I am not advocating such. I take the Apostle Paul's words in Romans chapter six to mean that the old man was crucified. He has been put to death and cannot be resurrected. However, the flesh that we carry with us until the grave yet lives. We have experienced a great divorce from its reign over us but it still lives. The spiritual or inner man also lives, and therefore, the believer desires and loves what God loves. It is natural to the new man, which Christ has created, to obey and submit to God. But, ah, dear one, don't ever be lured into thinking that temptation has no enticement to you. Do not be deceived and believe that there is not an enemy within that is not natural to you. There is, and it is the flesh with its evil desires and propensities to self-will.

I must use what time remains for me to go to our third and final lesson on the schooling of our High Priest. In the text of Hebrews chapter five, verses one through ten, Jesus is demonstrating for us dependence upon the Father. Jesus was in a predicament He had never been in before. He must embrace sin if He is to do the Father's will and fulfill all righteousness. That was not natural for Him. Because it was not natural to Him and in Him to embrace sin, He must depend upon the Father for strength to get Him through this. The Bible says with cries, and tears, and supplications, and loud voice of wailing, He cried unto His Father who could save Him. It also says He was heard.

In Luke chapter twenty-two, after the garden prayer Luke records that an angel was sent to Jesus and ministered unto Him. The Father heard the cry of His Son and gave Him supernatural strength. He was heard. What a lesson this teaches you and me! Every time we are tempted to do that which is natural to our humanity, we must depend upon our Father for strength in order to do that which is unnatural to the flesh. Why, it is nothing else but "Desperate Dependence upon God."

Finally, the writer of Hebrews shows us the service of a high priest. First, He shows us the sacrifice that a high priest must offer on behalf of the people he represents. In verse one the writer

states that the high priest was used to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin. In verse nine, the author writes that Jesus was made perfect

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Hebrews 5:9)

What was Christ made perfect in? He was made perfect in His learning to obey and submit to the Father in the area of becoming sin's judgment. Therefore as High Priest, He sacrificed His own life. He was His own sacrifice.

We also see in verse nine, the sanctifying of the High Priest. The word "perfected" could literally, and should, be translated "sanctify." Jesus was already perfect. But here the writer is referring to the sanctifying of the high priest. Before the high priest could ever occupy the office, he had to be set apart and anointed. The anointing was a sanctifying, a setting apart for the task of offering up sacrifice.

Oh, Beloved, Jesus was sanctified in the offering of Himself up to God. Our Lord says as much the night of His betrayal in John chapter seventeen, verse nineteen.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. (John 17:19)

He was going to go to the cross, and die, and be obedient unto the Father in all things, and in that He was sanctified, set apart as our High Priest.

Again in the ninth verse of Hebrews five the author writes that there is salvation through our High Priest. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation." Jesus is the author of salvation. It starts with, is originated in, and carried through by Jesus Christ. Dear sinner friend, listen to me. You need not add one thing to what Jesus has done for you. He originated it, He invented it, and He has finished it for you. Come to Christ today and enjoy the fruits of His labor; that which He has authored is freely offered to you today. Oh, I'm thankful today that God authored my salvation and not I. For I might have left out a critical chapter, if I had authored it. I might have left out the key passage that unlocks the whole. But with Christ I have no such fears. Jesus wrote it and finished it, and it's complete.

The salvation from our High Priest is eternal. "He became the author of eternal salvation." Our salvation is lasting. He did not save us temporarily. Our peace is not temporary. It is based upon an eternal salvation. Jesus has not started something that He cannot finish. Would you be free today? Never to be burdened with your sins ever again. Come to a Savior who offers a salvation that's forever. How do I contain my emotions? If I get beside myself, you'll just have to bear with me, for this is good news.

It is good news that we have such a High Priest as we do in Christ. Dear friend, you need not any longer struggle with whether or not God can sympathize with your struggles. You should not anymore agonize if He, Christ, truly knows what it means to be tempted with something. He knows what it means to be tempted. He knows what it means to struggle over obedience. He knows what it means to submit to the Father and the battle of the heart over such submission.

When you pray and the whispers of Satan suggest that God could have no idea of what you are going through, tell him he is a liar and you will not listen to his madness. Stand on the Word of God that tells us that Christ as a Son, “learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” Remember this word and drive your eternal stake of faith into it. Never has one before Jesus or since Him suffered as He. Your struggles are but “light afflictions” compared to the weight of sin that was placed upon His holy heart.

Finally, dear sinner, you have one that can deal sympathetically with you. He is an advocate that is compassionate and has dealt with the terrible blow of judgment against sin. If you would only trust and rely in His sacrifice for sin, then you could rest in the fact that there remains no other sacrifice. There remains nothing for you to do but to rest in His finished work of sacrifice. If you dare trust Him, then He is the author of eternal salvation to you. He knows the pain of sin better than you. Why will you continue to carry the weight of your sin any longer? He will plead your case before the Father of Mercy and will mediate your eternity. Why go any longer bearing the burden of trying to appease one whom you can never satisfy. Trust in a high priest that has never lost a soul for which He has interceded. Amen.