

A Greater Help

JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews #3 - Pastor Gary Combs - October 15, 2023 - Hebrews 2:5-18

INTRO: Good morning church! We're continuing our series, "JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews." Our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far **greater than** the angels, just as the name God gave him is **greater than** their names.

Today, we'll be looking at Hebrews 2:5-18 in a sermon entitled, "A Greater Help." We all need help from time to time don't we?

Need: Yet, we often look for help in the wrong places or we refuse to ask for help because we don't want to show weakness (I'm talking especially to the men here). Perhaps we have to get a little older before we recognize that we need help. I remember a Beatles song that described this. Released in 1965, the lyrics went like...

Help! I need somebody	When I was younger so much younger than today
Help! Not just anybody	I never needed anybody's help in any way
Help! You know I need someone.	But now these days are gone, I'm not so self assured
Help!	Now I find I've changed my mind and opened up the doors

The Beatles lyric knew they needed help, but "not just anybody." There was an earlier musician that knew he needed help, but he knew exactly from whom. If you're familiar with Bach, you may know that at the bottom of his manuscripts, he wrote the initials, "S. D. G." *Soli Deo Gloria*, which means "glory to God alone." What you may not know is that at the top of his manuscripts he wrote, "JJ," for "Jesu Juva," which is Latin for "Jesus, help me! Bach knew who to call on for help!

Trans: That's what the sermon today is about... knowing that you can call on Jesus for help

BODY: In the book of Hebrews chapter 2, the author continued to show why Jesus is greater than all by showing why His help is greater. We can understand that there is no greater help than that which we find in Jesus. Why is there no greater help than Jesus? The text gives **four reasons** why there is no greater help than Jesus.

Read text: Hebrews 2:5-18 (ESV) ⁵ For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. ⁶ It has been testified somewhere, "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? ⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, ⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet." Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹² saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise." ¹³ And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Behold, I and the children God has given me." ¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

WHY THERE IS NO GREATER HELP THAN JESUS:

1. Because He alone restores us to God's purpose.

EXP: (5-9 - 14, 18) First, notice the phrase Jesus "is able to help" (18). Jesus is the only One who is truly "able to help." His help is greater than all others! But why? Because He became one of us and "partook of the same things" (14) that we face, like the frustrations of this life, of suffering, and ultimately of death. How? He destroyed the power of death by "tasting death for everyone" (9).

"**Help(s)**" (16, 18) (ἐπιλαμβάνομαι, *epilambanomai*) - 3x. metaph. to rescue one from peril, to help, to aid.

"**Subjected, subjection**" (5,8) (ὑποτάσσω, *hupotassō*) - 4x. to arrange under, to subordinate, to, put in subjection. A military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in under the command of a leader." Quoting Ps.8:4-6, the author uses David's contemplation of man's place in the universe, hearkening back to Gen 1:

Genesis 1:26 (ESV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

God never put His creation under the angels, but He did put it under man. Yet sin corrupted both the image of God in man and his dominion. Christ is the 2nd Adam, restoring all things to God's plan.

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“**World to come**” (5) (οἰκουμένη, *oikoumenē*) - the whole inhabited earth. “Not something reserved entirely for the future, even though it has a future dimension of rich and exciting significance. In Christ we have already entered God’s stupendous future.” (Brown, 54)

“**Son of man**” (6) (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, *huios anthrōpou*) - “Used by Christ himself, doubtless in order that he might intimate his Messiahship... the one who both furnished the pattern of the perfect man and acted on behalf of all mankind” (Strong’s). Prominent in Luke and in Daniel for Messiah.

“**Care for him**” (6) (ἐπισκέπτομαι, *episkeptomai*) - to look upon or after, have care for, provide for.

“**Little while**” (7,9) (βραχύς, *brachus*) - a little; of time, a short time, for a little while. LXX preferred the temporal meaning of Psalm 8. Luther thought this was Christ’s 3 days in the tomb (NAC: Hebrews, 207)

“**Control**” (8) (ἀνυπότακτος, *anupotaktos*) - not subject. “He left nothing that is not subject to him” (NASB).

“**At present**” (8) - The restoration has been inaugurated but not yet consummated by Christ. “Men and women were meant to have dominion over everything—but they have not. They are creatures who are frustrated by their circumstances, defeated by their temptations and surrounded by their own weaknesses. The ones who should be free are bound; the ones who should be rulers are slaves.” (William Barclay)

“**But we see Him...Jesus**” (9) - The author finally names Jesus. “But we see Jesus!”

“**Suffering**” (9-10) (πάθημα, *pathēma*) - a suffering, misfortune, calamity, evil, affliction.

“**Taste death**” (9) - He drank the bitter cup of death to the last drop. He did this for “everyone” (“all”).

ARG: The authority given to Jesus is greater than any other or anything else. (Therefore He is able to help)

Ephesians 1:21-22 (NLT) ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.

Christ’s reign and restoration of all things will one day be consummated, making all things new!

Revelation 21:1-5 (NKJV) Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. ...And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

ILL: In Mark Twain’s, *The Prince and the Pauper*, published in 1881, he tells the tale of two young boys who looked very much alike, but one of the boys lived in the king’s palace and the other lived in a shack. As the tale goes, one day the boys decided to switch places. Keeping it a secret, the prince put on the pauper’s ragged clothing and the pauper put on the royal garments of the prince. And for a while each boy lived in the other boy’s shoes. The pauper lived as a prince and the prince lived as a pauper.

APP: This is what Jesus did. He became a pauper, that we might become like princes. He became one of us that He might restore God’s purpose for us as His image bearers, reigning over His creation as His representatives. What Adam lost, Christ regained! See Jesus the great King!

2. Because He alone offers us God’s salvation.

EXP: (9-10, 15) Look at verse 15, circle “deliver” (15). Christ is our Deliverer and the “Founder” (10) of our salvation. Because He has destroyed the power of death, He delivers us from the fear of death and slavery.

“**Taste death**” (9) - He tasted death for everyone. He tasted it, then destroyed it.

“**Founder**” (10) (ἀρχηγός, *archēgos*) - Lit., “first leader,” pioneer, prince, captain, author, founder, champion

“**Salvation**” (10) (σωτηρία, *sōtēria*) - deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation,

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“Perfect” (10) (τελειόω, *teleiōō*) - to make perfect, complete, to accomplish, finish. Christ was already perfect in every way except the work of salvation. In this, He would have to suffer in order to complete it.

ARG: **Jesus is the only name by which we may be saved.**

Acts 4:12 (ESV) And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

ILL: David was Israel’s champion against the Philistines champion, the giant Goliath.

APP: Jesus is the “Founder,” the Champion of our salvation. He defeated sin, death, and the grave for us. He has even removed the “fear of death” from us, so that we can live fearlessly! See Jesus the great Champion!

3. Because He alone makes us members of **God’s family.**

EXP: (11-13, 16-17) Circle the word “brothers” (11,12,17 - 3x). Especially take note of “He is not ashamed to call them brothers” (11). Why? Because those who believe and follow Jesus are “sanctified” (11), “made holy,” by Him and adopted into God’s family.

“Sanctifies” (11) (ἀγιάζω, *hagiazō*) - to be or make holy, consecrate things to God, to purify.

“One source” (11) (ἐξ ἑνὸς, *ek enos*) - Lit., “out of one.” Refers to God the Father.

“Not ashamed” (11) (ἐπαισχύνομαι, *epaischunomai*) - to feel shame for something:—be ashamed.

“My brothers” (12) - Quoting David’s Messianic Psalm 22:22, which begins, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” It speaks of “pierced hands and feet” and men gambling for his garments.

“Children” (13, 14) - Quoting Isaiah 8:17-18, where the prophet spoke of “waiting for the Lord” and “sealing the testimony” until the appropriate time, which is the time of the coming Messiah, whom God will give His children. “Children God has given Me.” Who are these children, these brothers? They are...

“Offspring of Abraham” (16) - Lit., “seed of Abraham.” Children of God by faith in Jesus:

Galatians 3:29 (ESV) if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

“Made like His brothers” (17) - The incarnation. “The Word became flesh.” - John 1:14

ARG: **We are adopted into God’s family through Jesus**

Ephesians 1:5 (NLT) God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

ILL: When Jesus was resurrected, He appeared to Mary Magdalene, who was weeping at His tomb. She didn’t recognize Him at first, thinking Him the gardener. But when He called her name, “Mary,” she recognized Him and fell at His feet. He told her not to cling to Him, but to “Go to my brothers...”

John 20:17 (ESV) Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my **brothers** and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

JD Greer says that he would’ve said, “Go tell those slack, cowardly, dolts that I resurrected just like I told them 100 times I would. That would be the “Gospel according to J.D.”

APP: But Jesus wasn’t ashamed to call them brothers. And He isn’t ashamed to call us brothers and sisters when we believe in Him. However, those who don’t acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior, who are ashamed of Him, He will also be ashamed of:

Luke 9:26 (ESV) For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Let us see Jesus, our elder Brother!

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4. Because He alone understands and represents us as God's mediator.

EXP: (17-18) Look at v.17. Jesus became like us, so that "he might become a merciful and faithful high priest." As the Son of man He understand us. As the Son of God he represents God to us. He is our Mediator.

"**Made like**" (17) (ὁμοιόω, *homoioō*) - to be made like, made the same. Christ's incarnation.

"**High Priest**" (17) (ἀρχιερεύς, *archiereus*) - first, chief priest, high priest. The only one who can enter the Holy of Holies. Yet Jesus is more. He is the great High Priest and Mediator.

"**Propitiation**" (17) (ἱλάσκομαι, *hilaskomai*) - to appease God's wrath towards our sin. An atoning sacrifice.

"**Tempted**" (18, 2x) (πειράζω, *peirazō*) - to test one maliciously, enticement to sin, to solicit to sin, to tempt.

"**Able to help**" (18) (βοηθέω, *boētheō*) - to help, succour, bring aid. "In Greek writings from Aeschylus and Herodotus; properly, to run to the cry (of those in danger)." (Thayers)

ARG: **There is only one Mediator between God and man.**

1 Timothy 2:5 (NIV) For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus

Jesus understands and sympathizes with us.

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

ILL: In the early days of our church, I didn't find any encouragement from other pastors. I'd go to their meetings and they talked about their buildings, their busyness and their golf games. But I was a church planter. We didn't have a building. And yeah, I was busy, but not with business meetings, but with set up and tear down and calls from the principle for leaving a dirty diaper in the band room garbage. I certainly didn't have time to play golf. Then, I found some other church planters. We started meeting together. There's something about the special encouragement that comes from others who have suffered and been tempted as you.

APP: I don't care what you're going through today. What you're facing. Jesus understands. And He is able to help. Let us see Jesus our Great High Priest and friend!

CONCLUSION: This is not a "what to do" or "how to" sermon. This is a "Behold, see Jesus" sermon. Because if you truly see Him, as our King, our Founder, our Brother and our Great High Priest and Friend, then you'll know where to go for help!

I opened talking about a Beatles's song, but I recently heard a better song about getting help. It's from a young artist named, Francesca Battistelli, called "Run To Jesus."

Hey, lonely, Hey, sad eyes, Hey, you who needs some sunshine
All you gotta do is open up the blinds
Hey, worry, Hey, heartache, Help is not that far away
Just open up your eyes
He'll be there, He'll be there every time
When you're all out of heart and out of hope
And you don't really know which way to go
Come on, come on, run to Jesus
If you're lost and you don't know where to start
It don't really matter where you are
Come on, come on, come on, yeah, run to Jesus, run to Jesus

Jesus is our refuge and strength, our very present help, our greatest help. Let's pray.