

INTRO

- When you're in trouble or stressed, who's the first person you reach out to—and why?

READ

Hebrews 4:14-5:10

REFLECT & RESPOND

Hebrews is a sermon that shows us that Jesus is superior to anything we might trust in. Today, we look at how Jesus is a better priest, the One who truly bridges the gap between us and God.

The Need for a Priest

Just as first-century believers were tempted to rely on old worship systems, we face modern “priest substitutes”—ways to cope with guilt, shame, or emptiness. These priest-like substitutes may help us cope with feelings of brokenness or missing something.

Q: What are some “modern-day priest substitutes” people rely on to deal with guilt, shame, or emptiness? Why do these substitutes ultimately fall short?

Hebrews directs us to Jesus and what He offers that none of these can.

Jesus, the Great High Priest

A key theme of Hebrews is Jesus as our Great High Priest, meaning “bridge builder” in Latin. Jesus, *fully* human and sinless, bridges the gap between us and God. Unlike Israel’s priests who must first atone for their sins, Jesus offers Himself once for all as the ultimate sacrifice.

Q: In what ways can Jesus be both the perfect and compassionate high priest we need?

Q: How can it help us to remember that Jesus understands and empathizes with what we

struggle with, especially when tempted to do things our own way?

Jesus Helps Us in Our Need

Jesus doesn’t just stand between us and God like the priests of old; he goes further by bringing us to God, granting us full access to His presence.

Q: What does it mean to you that Jesus “takes us to God” rather than merely standing between us?

Therefore, Hold Firm and Draw Near!

Heb 4:14-16 (cf. 10:19-23) exhorts us to do this based on Jesus being our better priest. Because of Jesus, God’s throne is a place of relationship, grace, and mercy for us instead of judgment.

Q: “Draw near” means coming to God honestly and confidently. Which of those is harder for you — honesty or confidence? Why?

You don’t need to find another priest—the One you need has already found you.

PRAY

- End your time by praying using these prompts:
 - **Thanksgiving:** Thank Jesus for being your perfect and compassionate High Priest.
 - **Confession:** Name the “other priests” you’ve turned to instead of Him.
 - **Dependence:** Ask God for strength to hold firm in faith this week.
 - **Intimacy:** Pray for a deeper desire to draw near to God’s throne of grace with honesty and confidence.