

In Time of Need

by Lehman Strauss

In times of need, we can come boldly to God's throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Topics: "Divine Assistance", "Throne Of Grace"

Description

Lehman Strauss preaches about the importance of seeking God's assistance in times of suffering and need, emphasizing the promise in Hebrews 4:16 to boldly approach the throne of grace for mercy and grace. This passage reveals a specific place, procedure, purpose, and Person to turn to when feeling overwhelmed, offering a tremendous promise of help and relief in desperate times.

Transcript

Sometimes in the vale of suffering we are emotionally, physically and spiritually down. We are in desperate need, feeling that we re unable to go on. It is then, more than ever, that we need to claim God's promise to assist us.

At one of those down times with Elsie, I realized with new clarity the truth of Hebrews 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

In the precious words of this passage, we are told of a place to go in time of need, a procedure to follow, the purpose for going, and the Person to whom we flee. This verse tells us what to do when we feel we're about to be overwhelmed, and it holds a tremendous promise.

Our sovereign Lord does not leave us to ourselves in a time of suffering. He does not leave us with no course of action, no place to turn. The invitation of Hebrews 4:16 is open to all who are in God's waiting room. If you are there, I urge you to accept it as it did one lonely night.

May 14, 1982, was not a good day for Elsie. Both physically and emotionally she was having one of those down days. I arrived home from the hospital about 8:30 that night, physically weary and emotionally drained. Watching her suffer and struggle for the past ten hours had gotten to me.

I sat in my favorite chair and slumped into a spell of self-pity, dwelling on my own sorrow. The tears flowed freely. The longer I sat there feeling sorry for myself, the more depressed I became. I felt myself slipping into a state of despondency. There was no drive or desire to do anything.

Very early that same morning, I had typed Hebrews 4:16 on a file card and taken it with me to the hospital. During the day I had read it to Elsie several times, and together we had come several times to God's throne of grace.

Now I was the one who had the need. The time had arrived for me to translate our verse into my own experience. The content of this chapter is the message God gave to me on the night of May 14, 1982.

"Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Is today a time of need for you? Here is a text which promises some very special help. Many of God's children have put it to the test and found that it works.

A Place

This verse tells us first of all that we have a place we can go in time of need. That place is God's throne of grace. This throne is unusual and different in that judgment does not issue from it. At a future time there will appear "a great white throne" from which God will judge all who have rejected His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But none of God's children will appear before that throne, for all who stand before Him in that day will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15). During the present dispensation of grace, however, God's throne is "the throne of grace."

Beloved Christian, are you acquainted with this place? When did you last appear before the throne of grace? Our text says, "Let us come." I have been to that place many times, sometimes on my knees, at other times when lying in bed, driving my automobile, walking, or traveling in a plane or train. I am thankful that I have a place where I can go in time of need.

I have just come from that blessed throne. The burden has been lifted. Right now there is a fresh awareness of God's grace and mercy in my life. At this moment I am not sitting in my favorite chair feeling sorry for myself; instead, I am at my desk writing this brief chapter on a great text in God's Word. Many times I have preached from this text, but today I can testify that it is blessedly true.

A Procedure

Our text then tells us that there is a procedure for coming to the throne of grace. We are to come "boldly." We dare not be brash or brazen, nor need we be bashful. We are urged to come "boldly." This word boldly means "confidently." We can speak freely and frankly to our Heavenly Father.

The high priest in Israel could enter the holy of holies only once a year, and then he had to stand silently before God. But something wonderful happened when Christ died on the cross. "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:51). The believer in Christ now has access to what was once the place of exclusion. The apostle Paul declared that all of God's justified ones "have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Romans 5:2).

We must never be shy about coming to this blessed place. We don't ever need to hesitate to tell God exactly what our need is. There are times when it is good for us to remain silent, but our time of need is not one of them. We are instructed to come boldly.

A Purpose

Hebrews 4:16 also teaches that there is a purpose for our coming to the throne of grace. And what is that purpose? ". . . that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Mercy is one of our primary needs because of our sins and failures. Our Heavenly Father is "the Father of mercies" (2 Corinthians 1:3), and He is "rich in mercy" (Ephesians 2:4). God's attitude toward those of His children who are in distress is one of mercy, pity, and compassion. In time of need we all appreciate someone who can empathize and sympathize with us. Will our loving God, who was merciful in saving us (Titus 3:5), be less merciful now that we are His children? Of course not!

Then let us go to Him with confidence and tell Him all about our need.

There are times when "we know not what we should pray for" (Romans 8:26). It is possible that you do not know what your needs are. But our Lord assures us that "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matthew 6:8). See also Matthew 6:32.

A further purpose for our coming to the throne of grace is "to find grace to help." Mercy is for those failures of the past and grace is for the present hour of need.

The apostle Paul appeared before the throne of grace when he was suffering from his thorn in the flesh. Three times he asked God to remove this infirmity. But that was not what he needed. If he was suffering pain at that moment, it was perfectly natural for him to pray for relief from the discomfort. But at that moment of need he received this assuring word from the Lord: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:9). The Lord did not heal Paul, nor did He remove his discomfort at that time. But it was there--at the throne of grace--that he discovered the infinite, inexhaustible resource of God's grace. There he found grace for timely help. And that grace is available to you and me. "Let us therefore come boldly." God's grace sustains me even as I write these words.

A Person

Then too, we learn from Hebrews 4:16 that a Person is waiting to meet and greet us at the throne of grace. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to redeem us from the guilt and penalty of our sins. Four times in this epistle to the Hebrews it is stated that He is at the right hand of the throne of God (1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). In another favorite portion of this same epistle, we are shown His three appearances: He did appear to redeem us (9:26); He now appears to represent us (9:24); and He will appear to reward us (9:28). The teaching in Hebrews about the continuing ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ is precious indeed. His work in redeeming us is completed. His work in representing us continues. The one Person who is capable of meeting our total needs is now at the right hand of the throne of God. Let us come to Christ. The Bible tells us of three ways He works in our behalf.

He meets our need through His prayers. In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul asked: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Romans 8:34). Christ is not condemning us; He is interceding for us. The author of Hebrews wrote, "He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). Therefore, let us come.

He meets our needs by His power. The throne of grace is the place of power, and our Lord Jesus Christ is the person of power. We see "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set

him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:19-20). Christ has an ability that knows no inability. Yes, He is able! He is able to save to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25). He is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24). He is able to help those who are tempted (Hebrews 2:18). He is able to subdue all things (Philippians 3:21).

He meets our needs through His priesthood. While it is true that priesthood is as old as man, let us never lose sight of the fact that it is an institution of God. In Old Testament times the ministry of the priest was to appear before God in behalf of the children of Israel. This divine provision was an expression of the gracious compassion and concern of a holy God for His children. The priest was the Father's consecrated link between Himself and His own.

None but the Son of God Himself would qualify to be the great High Priest over the house of God.

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; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:14-15)

Aaron's sons were priests; Aaron himself was a high priest; only the Lord Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest.

We know where He is--"passed into the heavens." We know who He is--"Jesus the Son of God." We know what He is--sinless. He is a sympathetic high priest. He does not sympathize with our sins but with our "infirmities." These infirmities are the sorrows, the sufferings, the sicknesses of this life. We know that our great High Priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

If you are in need, come to Him now. No problem is too tough, no petition too trifling, and no power too transcendent for Him to handle. Let there be no lack of confidence between you and your great High Priest. He knows you. He loves you. He is waiting now for you to come to Him in your time of need.

The truth of this text is working for me right now. It will work for you. Do not delay in coming to God's throne of grace.

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