



Message Transcript

Christ's Prevailing Priesthood

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Growing up, I watched sports my whole life and one thing that I noticed is as soon as a championship is won, not only do people go out and buy all the gear of that specific team. But sometime right after the victory, it could be minutes later. It could be hours later. Certainly within a day, people begin to ask this question. Yeah, they did it once, but can they do it again? Are they going to be able to repeat? Now, I grew up when I was in college in the 90s in Illinois, where the Chicago Bulls had a guy that played for them by the name of Michael Jordan. We invented the word repeat; we invented the word three-peat. We invented the word six-peat. And if he were still healthy and playing, we would've invented the word 30-peat because not only was that team special, but that team was especially special because Michael Jordan was on the team.

I reflect on my playing days and think I might have been able to be a member of that team. And they still would've won all those championships, even if they would've never played me because he was that good. As we take a look into the Word of God, and we're talking about, how important is it that this new priesthood continues to prevail. Last week, we took a look at why the priesthood of Jesus Christ is superior. And the reason it's superior is because of who he is and what God had established from all time long before he established the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood. He had established the order of the priesthood, according to Melchizedek. And last week we took a look at who Melchizedek was, the king of righteousness; the king of peace, the one who Abraham came back and tithed to, the one who has always been, and the one who will always be.

And the reason this is so important, especially for first century Jews who had been converted, is they began to ask the question like, Hey, who's going to be our priests now? We've been kicked out of our synagogue, who is going to be the one that atones for our sins on a regular basis? How do we know where to go? And the author of Hebrews is saying, don't you dare worry, because the priesthood of Jesus Christ is superior. Today, what he's going to expand upon is the reason the priesthood of Jesus' superiors because of Jesus himself, the great high priest. The reason it's going to prevail is because of who Jesus is. And you may say, well, how does that apply to me? Here's how it applies, because every single one of you came here today for different reasons. Some of you are in a season of rejoicing. It's just natural for you.

Perhaps you've got a new job, perhaps you've just got engaged. Perhaps your child just got married. Perhaps you have a new child or a new granddaughter or a new job. Something happened in your life. And you're saying, this is incredible. I'm just coming to give thanks to God. I'm rejoicing. Some of you come here in desperation. Some of you're wondering how you're going to make it through today. Some of you are saddened by the fact that this is Mother's Day and you've been a mother, but have lost a child, or you've always wanted to be a mother, but you're not quite married yet. Or you've recently miscarried and there's deep sadness in your heart. And some of you come here today because you just need a touch from God, because you feel distant from him. Some of you feel distant because you sense God's not around.

And some of you feel distant because you feel that your sin is keeping you from who he is. All of us come for different reasons, but all of us are coming because we

need a great high priest in our life that's ministering to us. All of us are looking for someone, a higher being that cares about us. And I'm here to tell you the Lord, Jesus Christ cares about you. That's what the author wants to point out. That's why this priesthood is so important, because whatever you need and whatever touch you need to have, the Lord, Jesus Christ is able to provide that touch for you. That's why you're here. And it's so important that you know that, I mean, even hardened atheists, when they go through desperate times or they're about to die, they'll call out in prayer to someone or something. I mean, we see it in the book of Jonah.

We see it in people's lives presently. Even the most hardened atheists, when they're really, really desperate, will start calling out to someone greater than themselves because God leads us to a place where all of us realize I need something from God. I need some help from God. And if you're here today and you say, Hey, I need a touch from the Lord. I have great news for you. The Lord wants you to know that he wants to extend his mercy and his grace to you. So I invite you to open up to Hebrews chapter seven. We're going to begin in verse 20 this morning. And really, as we've been coming out of the superior priesthood of who Jesus is. Now, we're going to take a look at his prevailing priesthood; one that's going to continue forever and forever, Amen.

He says this, "In as much as it was not without an oath, for they indeed became priests without an oath, but he, with an oath through the one who said to him, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind you are a priest forever. So much the more also

Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

The former priest on one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing but Jesus on the other hand, because he continues forever, holds his priesthood permanently. Therefore, he is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them, for it was fitting for us to have such a high priest; holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens who does not need daily, like high priests to offer up sacrifices first for his own sins. And then for the sins of the people, because this, he did once for all, when he offered up himself. For the law, appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the law appoints a son made perfect forever."

And here in this text, we're going to see the prevailing priesthood, the prevailing ministry of Jesus Christ, and why we can be assured that he is always available to us at any time that we need to call to him. I'm going to highlight three different aspects of that with two words each, just to highlight these words that bring out for you, why it's so important that Jesus Christ is still prevailing. And the first is this Christ priesthood prevails because he is promised and preferable. Jesus Christ is promised and he's preferable. Notice what he says in verse 20. It says, "And in as much as it was not without an oath." Now I looked up this word in English this week, in as much, I couldn't find it in a dictionary. I thought it was a redneck word or something, in as much as it was not without oath.

He's been talking about the superiority of Jesus as a priest. And he is really

saying in accordance with as much or to the same degree that, to the same way that, that's what he's talking about, by saying, he's now transitioning into talking about the person of the priesthood, Jesus Christ. And he says, "It was not without an oath, for they indeed became priests without an oath. But he, with an oath through the one who said the Lord is sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever." Now what's an oath? An oath is God's promise. It's his sworn affirmation that it's going to take place. It's his unbreakable word. Now, why did God need an oath? Everything in the Bible from Genesis 1:1 all the way through the end of Revelation, chapter 22, is God's word. And it's all true. And it's all perfect.

And it's always true. And it always bears what God wants it to bear. But you'll remember during Jesus' ministry, there were times where he said something like this, "Truly, truly I say to you," and then he would speak. It didn't mean that, Hey, everything else I say is deceptive or lying, but now I'm telling you the truth. Here's what he's saying, pay special attention to this. God is giving an oath about the priesthood. It doesn't mean that he had to give an oath, but he's promising an oath because to the former priesthood, he'd never made a promise. He never made an oath that it was going to be permanent. There's nowhere in God's word that the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood was going to last forever. We call it the Aaronic priesthood because Aaron was the first high priest. That's why it's the Aaronic priesthood or Levitical priesthood, because they had to come out of the Levitical tribe or the tribe of Levi.

But God never told them this is going to last forever. God never gave them an oath. It was always intended to be temporary. The way God set up the tabernacle; the

way God set up the temple, the way God set up the sacrificial system. It was good in that it showed that God was holy, in that it showed that God was righteous, and it showed that we as human beings were sinful, and that God took sin seriously, and there needed to be atonement for that. But everything we see in what God set up were just shadows and types of the coming person, Jesus Christ, who fulfilled perfectly what God had set up. God had never promised there would always be a priest. Now this is why this is important, because no matter what your religion is, no matter what your preferences are, we don't like those things to change.

And I'm not talking about Baptist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic. I'm not talking about denominations. I'm talking about what you think is true. Some of you hold onto the truth of God that says, "God helps those who help themselves." Anybody know what verse that is? It's not in the Bible. I mean, cleanliness is next to godliness. It's Mother's Day. I know my mom's listening. That's not in the Bible; it never was, right? We have these religious preferences that we like. We even begin to think that church should function a certain way with a certain style of worship and a certain style of liturgy. And we like to stand and kneel, or we like to have a band or we don't like to have a band, or we prefer Oregon music or piano music or a choir or no choir and all these kind of things, or here's how a pastor should dress.

He should be wearing a liturgical robe. He shouldn't wear a liturgical robe. We have all these religious practices that we think are important for everybody to have. God doesn't have nearly the practices you think he does, right? But we like to hold

onto this and the Jews in the first century, we're holding onto the fact that through the Aaronic priesthood, that's how our sins were atoned for. That's how they were covered. There were 84 high priests in Israel and myriads of other priests that are countless in every different city. And they're wondering now that they're not being let back into the synagogue, then where can I go to get my sin covered? And who's going to listen to me when I need forgiveness and where can I go to get help? And the writer of Hebrews has said, it's Jesus. Not only is this priesthood superior, but he himself is superior.

And he says, here's why he's superior. He's superior because he's promised God always had a plan for Jesus to be the high priest all the way before the law was even set up. When we see the order of the priesthood of Melchizedek, and then we see this oath coming from Psalm 110 verse four, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest," for how long? "Forever." Now, the only one who qualifies for forever is one who has always existed. And one who will always exist. And in God's word, we find there's only one who meets that qualification. And that's the Lord Jesus Christ. He always was. He always is. He always will be. And he showed that that, that's who he is when he rose from the dead, with his incredible credentials. And so God made an oath. He's letting the Jews of the first century who had turned to Christ, who are now being persecuted for their faith, who are now not being let back into the synagogue.

You don't need to worry. I made a promise, and the promise was my son, and my son will be for you. The great high priest. My son will be the one who you go to for

all of your needs. My son is the one who performs all those duties and performs them perfectly; it's my son. The old priesthood was simply a foreshadowing of God's one and only son. But why is that so important that we understand the word? We need to understand that when God makes an oath and God makes a promise in his word, these promises are true. Some of you don't realize how powerful this book is. Even some of you here that would agree with me that this book is an errant and there's no errors in it and there's no lies in it, and that it's all true, still have a hard time applying that to your life personally. So I just want to read to you some scriptures, Isaiah chapter 40 and verse eight, Isaiah 40 verse eight says, "The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our Lord stands forever."

Matthew 24:35, Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will never pass away." Isaiah 55, verse 11. So he says, "So my word be which goes forth from my mouth. It will not return to me empty without accomplishing what I desire and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it, my word never makes an error. My word is perfect." Hebrews chapter four in verse 12 says, "The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two edged sword. It penetrates to dividing both soul and spirit, joints and marrow, judges the attitudes and intentions of the heart." Even if you don't necessarily believe this book, if you read this book, this book will read you. This book is alive. This book has a way of cutting through all of you, your motivation, why you do what you do, how you do what you do.

This book reads you. I wish we could put on every Bible, something like a danger symbol, do not read. If you read this, this book will radically change your life and

everybody's life around you. That's how powerful the word is. Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is God breathed, useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. So the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Jesus said in John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth, your word is truth." Remember, Pontius Pilate asked Jesus before he sent them to be crucified. Well, what is truth? Your word is truth. Jesus is the embodiment of the written word. He is the word of God. He is truth. Everything about Jesus is true. When you read something in the Bible, you can take it to the bank because it's true.

Everything God says is true. Every promise that he makes is true. When he promised that his son is going to be a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek, guess what? Jesus Christ was intended to be and will always be the high priest, according to God's word forever and ever. Because that's what his word says. I mean, the more I study God's word, I've been studying it for 30 years and I listen to people say stuff, like, "It's just a manmade book. It's just made up. There's all sorts of errors." I know the person has never studied the Bible because the longer I study it, there's no way human beings could create this truth. That over 700 years before Jesus was born, it would be prophesied. He'd be born in Bethlehem, or that his garment, or that he'd be sold for 30 pieces of silver, or that soldiers would gamble for his garment, or that he'd ride in on a donkey, or the very words he would say while he was on the cross. It's in print for over 750 years before it even happened.

And there's over 300 of those. Moreover, I see every single word that when I practice it in my life is true. See what we got to realize is he is the promise. He is the

one who's preferable. I don't think we realize what we've been given in our great high priest. We've been given so many promises from his word that we can hold onto. This is not just a point to skip over and say, Jesus is the high priest because God promised he's the high priest. That's true. But here's a bigger question. How much do you believe this word, and what are you holding onto? What's God's promise that you're needing today in your life? What do you need to take before the throne? Because when we pray, that's why it's so important that we pray the word back to God because we can tell God. God, you said this, and I know that you're truthful, and I know that you'll bring it to pass because you say that your word will always come to pass.

That's why we need to pray without giving up. That's why we need to continue to prevail in prayer. There's some of you that are here today, your child's wayward, and it's not that your child's been wayward for a week or a month. Your child's been wayward for years and you've prayed for years, and you've called on all your neighbors to pray for your child, and you've wept and you're desperate and you're saddened. And here's what Jesus would say. Keep praying and don't give up. My word is true. My word will come true, right? There's some of you here today that are saddened; you're saddened by the fact that you haven't been able to get pregnant or you're saddened by the fact that you've lost a child or you're saddened by the fact that you don't have a job or you're saddened by the fact that you can't seem to make life work right now.

Well, what's God promising you? What are you holding onto? Where are you

going to get the strength that you need? So I thought I could take a little time this morning just to share a few promises from God's word, that may be helpful to some of you because I know they're helpful to me. I mean, when we see that Jesus, I mean, notice this in verse 22, "So much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant." The old covenant wasn't bad. God is the one that gave the old covenant. God's the one that showed him. Here's how your sin can be covered. Here's the seriousness of sin. Here's my holy... That's not bad. But what Jesus brought is better. It's so much better. It's like this, when I was in high school, my first car was a 1988 Delta 88 Oldsmobile, okay?

Those of you that were in the 80s, you know what I'm talking about. I mean, the front of the car started about right here, and then the back of the car with the trunk was about right here. And it was really, really wide. And it was a good starter car. I mean, it could go over grass. It could hit mailboxes, garbage cans, any number of things before I came to Christ. Okay. So, the purpose of the car was to get you from point A to point B. I mean, I was talking to my dad about this earlier this week. He told me that my high school football coach, who we're still friends with, told my dad this story the other day. And he asked me if I remembered it and I didn't. And he said, "I remember one time where Jeff took off out of the parking lot and he was going 50 miles an hour through the parking lot over speed bumps and everything," which I can believe that happened.

I just don't remember it. And he had said to me, I guess, "Hey Jeff, you're going 50 miles an hour in the parking lot over speed bumps." And I said to him, well, that's

what shock absorbers are for, which I could also see myself saying, but the point is that car could get you from point A to point B. But there's a better way. If somebody wanted to give me a new Lamborghini today, that could also get me from point A to point B, but it could get me there in much greater time and much greater style. Amen. When we talk about a better covenant, we're talking about what's under the hood and what's this better covenant? What's this new covenant? Jesus said, "This new covenant is in my blood, which is shed for you. And for many, for the forgiveness of sins."

What's this new covenant? This new covenant is Christ in you. The hope of glory. Under the old covenant, God covered over sins, waiting for the day that Jesus came. Under the new covenant, God cleanses you from the inside out, from all of your sins. So you don't have to walk around with guilt and shame ever again. The old covenant was rightly relating to God, so you could experience him. The new covenant is Christ in you. The hope of glory. That's good news, Amen.

That when a person turns from his or her sin called repentance, and they turn by faith to Jesus Christ, God imparts his holy spirit in your life to be with you forever, so that everywhere you go, there Jesus is. Friends, that's a better covenant. That's a better promise. That's what he talked about. Now, what are God's promises? I mean, what are you hanging onto this morning? Do you just read this book? I used to just read the book and ask people, well, what's a Hebrew? What's a Corinthian? What's a Philippian? I want to learn. I don't know anything about this book. And I've learned a lot of those things over the years, but now I read the book to say, God, what are you

saying to me about me? And what are you saying about my life and what are promises that you're making to me that I can hold onto?

Because Lord, I need you today. What about this? For some of you that need provision. Some of you're here, God are you going to provide for me? Can you provide for me? You know what the Word of God says? Here's what he tells you. Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." Not only is God willing to open his bank account for you, but he's willing to give you a blank check and sign his name. Like, what do you need? I'll give you everything you need. Now, you may not need the Lamborghini to get you from point A to point B. But what do you need? God says, I'll take care of you. Look at the birds in the air. Look at the lilies in the field.

Your heavenly father takes care of them. They don't labor. They don't sweat. And yet your heavenly father takes care of them. How much more will God take care of you? You don't need to worry about provision, but you tell God. You pray back to him, Lord, you promised me according to your glorious riches, you take care of me. I'm going to believe you for that. Or what about direction? Some of you are asking the question, what job should I take? Who should I date? Who should I marry? When should we start having kids? I mean, where should we go to church? I mean, what should we do for Mother's Day? I mean, there's all these different things that we can worry ourselves to death about. But proverb three verses five and six says this, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean, not on your own understanding in all your ways, acknowledge him and he'll make your path straight."

Matthew 6:33 says it like this, "Seek first, the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and what? "All these things will be added unto you." Does God provide direction? Absolutely. When we do what? Quit trusting ourselves and trust him. Lord, I want what you want. Lord, I want to do what you want me to do. Lord, open the right doors; close the other ones. I just want to please you. Will you help me? He'll say, yeah, I'll help you. I'll make your path straight. I'll get you there. What about some of you that come in here today and need hope? Feel desperate, despair, discouragement, all those different things. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For, I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord." That means God has a plan for all your lives. Did you know that? Plans to prosper you and give you hope and a good future. I mean, when you read the word and you take the word at face value and you believe this is God speaking, God has a purpose and a plan for you that's hopeful.

God has a future for you that's hopeful. That means your future days are always better than what you just experienced. That means where you're going is better. Especially for those of you that are discouraged, like, I don't see how it can get any worse. Here's what God would say, "Oh, it's going to get way better. You're just in a season right now. I know the plans I have for you. I'm a good father. I'll lead you to where you need to go." That's why the enemy's constantly lying in your ear and telling you it's over. You blew it. It's done. Nothing can happen now. No, no, no. Not according to my God, my God will take care of that. Or what about his presence? If you ever feel alone, feel abandoned. Feel like nobody else is going through what I'm

going through. Well, you're not alone.

The Bible says in Psalm 23:4, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," where are you? "You are with me." Your route and your staff comfort me. Friends, you are not alone today. Even in your loneliness, you're not alone. God is with you and he loves you. And he cares for you. Matthew 28:20 says, "I'll be with you always to the end of the age." Hebrews 13:5 says, "Never will I leave you or forsake you." It means no matter what you do, God's still pursuing you with his mercy and grace. Isn't that good news? Or what about help? Lord, help. I'm desperate. I just need you. I mean, these are some of the ones I've been hanging on to lately. Psalm chapter 46, verse one. Here's what he says, "God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble."

Who's going to help me? God. When's he going to help me? Presently. He's a present help in times of trouble. What about this? Psalm 27, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? When my enemies in camp against me, it is they that stumble and fall." I'm not worried. I would've despaired had I not believed I'd see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, or how about Psalm 121, "I lift my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from? Well, my help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth." The one who created everything out of nothing in six literal days is the one who is available to me right now to meet my needs. And if he can do all that, there's nothing that's too hard for him.

Because nothing is impossible for my God. Or how about deliverance? Some of

you that have struggled with the same sins over and over and you just can't seem to get over the hump. And you know, you're a believer and you ask yourself this question. Why do I continue to do that? And how come it doesn't go away? And is there any God that can help me? Oh, yeah. He can Psalm 50 verse 15 says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble. And I show rescue you and you will honor me." Call on me. I'll rescue you. I'll deliver you. I'll make it so that you honor me, because when I do that, you'll know that it was me that took it away. So call to me or what about trust? We could look at Joshua chapter one in verse nine, of not fearing.

Have I not told you to be strong and courageous, and you all know those, but how about Deuteronomy 31 verse eight, "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them for the Lord, your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you. He will not forsake you. The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you. He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake. You do not fear or be dismayed. What are you fearing? Fear is what leads us to make all the bad decisions in our life. Fear is what leads us and keeps us from being everything that God wants us to be. Some of us are consumed by fear. Fear of where the world's going. Fear of where our life's going. Fear of where our marriage is going. Fear of where our kids are going.

Fear of where our church is going. Fear, fear, fear, fear, fear. And when we live in fear, we make really bad decisions. And God reminds us, Hey, you don't need to fear. I'm here. I'm with you. I got this. This is not too hard for me. Or how about healing and forgiveness? Some of you need physical healing. Some of you just need to be cleansed and released. How about Psalm 103, where he says, "Bless the Lord, O

my soul. And all that is within me. Bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits who forgives all of our sins and heals all of our diseases who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with loving kindness and compassion, who satisfies your years with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." Or what about just confidence?

Confidence, Psalm 56 versus three and four. "When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise and God who I trust. I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?" Now, some of you, as you're watching me, I'm watching your eyes. And some of you are saying this, why are you just quoting scripture? I didn't come for that. I came for you to preach. Tell a story. That's why I'm doing this, because there's many people that come to church week in and week out that listen to a preacher that like hearing about the word, but don't know how to apply it to their life. And the reason that you're desperate is that the Word of God is not taking root in your heart. And God wants you to know whatever emotion you're dealing with. He's got a solution for.

Whatever problem you have, hang on to him. We don't need to worry, and fret, and stress. God's up in heaven saying I got this. I gave you my word. My word will always come true. That's what God wants you to know today. What are you stressed about? What are you fearing? What are you worried about? What are you concerned about? There's a scripture in God's word and probably a myriad of scripture in God's word that would say no need. I got this. It's not a big deal. And why is this so important? Because the enemy will lie to you and lie to you and lie to you and tell you

this book isn't true, or it may be true about your salvation, but nothing else. And God wants you to know today that not only is his word true, but he'll bring everything to pass, that this word says, that's why for me... Amen, let's give God praise for that.

That's why for me, the first Tuesday is the most important meeting of the month. Because for me, I can stand up here and preach, and I can teach you about God. And I hope it's helpful to you. And I hope it's helping you grow in your faith. But at the end of the day, the most important thing that you can do is for you personally, to seek the face of God and trust his word. And hear the Word of God, prayed over you, and hold onto that word. Even when everything you see looks just the opposite of what you're asking God for. That's when you know it's true. That's when you know God is at work. Reminds me of the story I've told it before about the lady that needed groceries, and she was down to her last provision, and every day in her house, she would pray. "Lord, thank you for providing for all of my needs. Lord, I just thank you that you're a good God. And I know that even though I don't have what I need, you're going to provide it. Thank you, Jesus."

She was so confident. She used to open the windows because she knew her neighbor hated it when she prayed, and she wanted him to hear, and she would every day, just thank the Lord for her provision. Well, one day the guy next door got so mad. He's like, I'm just going to buy her groceries and put it on her doorstep for her, and so that's what he did. And as she was thanking the Lord that day, she heard a ring on the doorbell. She opened up and there were all the groceries and she started praising the Lord, saying, "Thank you, Jesus. I knew you would hear me. I knew that you would

provide for all my needs." To which the neighbor said, "No, no, no, you don't understand." He goes, "I bought those groceries. Your God didn't do anything." And she didn't miss a beat. She said, "My God is so good. Not only did he provide my groceries, but he had the devil pay the bill." Amen.

See, when we hang onto the Word of God, God can use any source. He's our source. He can use any resource to get us what we need. And we keep praying until we see the result. Pray and don't give up. And for some of us, I mean, when we realize this new covenant, we're super charged by his blood. His blood is perfect. His blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness, which means this. God does bring conviction of sin because he's holy and we're not. And that's good. But God doesn't expect us to live with guilt. Guilt is I know I've done wrong. Shame is I am wrong. And here's what God says, "Through my blood. You may have done wrong, but you're completely forgiven and you're not wrong. You're my child." Which means this, when you come to church because you are supercharged by the blood of Jesus Christ in and through your life, you are completely cleansed.

You are completely freed. You are completely welcome to bombard the throne of God with freedom and confidence. Is that good news or what? I mean, that's what this is all about. That's why he's telling these people that are looking to turn back to religion. Don't turn back. You can't get this anywhere else. You can only find this in Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ is promised and his covenant is preferable. Second is this, Christ's priesthood prevails because he is permanent and prayerful. Listen to what he says in verse 23 and 24, he's going to tell us some obvious things. He says,

"The former priest on the one hand existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing but Jesus on the other hand, because he continues forever holds his priesthood permanently." Now, this isn't rocket science. He was saying the reason there were so many priests in the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood is because they can only minister for so long because they died.

And when you die, it's very difficult to continue to minister. So somebody has to replace them. So that's why there were more priests under that order. But Jesus, because he continues forever. He doesn't need a replacement. We don't need an upgrade. He is the upgrade, he has always been. He always is. And he will always be, that's what he's talking about. So this priesthood of Jesus and every promise of God is yes and amen, because all of the promises of God are yes and amen in Christ Jesus. So we don't need to go looking for an upgrade. Not only is the current priesthood better than the former priesthood, but it's always going to be there. You can always count on this priesthood. You don't have to worry about this Jesus going on vacation. You don't have to worry about Jesus dying. Jesus Christ rose from the dead; he's as alive now as he's ever been.

And he will be alive for all eternity, forever and ever, amen and amen. That's the God who we serve. So when you're looking for what you need in your life, you need to know the permanence of Jesus. He's permanent. Now God, chooses to use gifts of other people. He raises up pastors and or priests or religious leaders, but they're only good for time and space. And they're only good so long as they proclaim the truth of God's word, to the extent that they proclaim the truth of God's word, they can be

helpful to God's people. And that's a good thing. God uses the gifts of people to do that. But I want you to understand something. Jesus is the one who is doing the work through that person. Now, let me tell you what I mean, what I mean is this, when you have somebody in your life, that's investing the things of God into you.

It's okay to be thankful for what they're doing in your life. If you have a pastor that presents the Word of God, and you're growing because of it, be thankful to God for the pastor that you have. If you have a small group leader or a men's leader or a woman's leader, a friend in your life, that's helped you grow. Be thankful for that. That's healthy. Paul had Barnabas in his life, encouraging him when he was a new believer. Timothy had Paul in his life, encouraging him. We see mentorship all throughout the Bible. Those are healthy things; what's unhealthy is when you think that your pastor or your spiritual leader is your source rather than a resource that God is using because the preacher, the pastor, the ministry leader, is just as dependent upon Jesus as you are, or they should be.

And they're only good to the extent that they're actually faithfully proclaiming the word. If they're not proclaiming the word, if they're not teaching you the Bible, if they're not teaching you how to walk with Christ, those people are a dime, a dozen. They're just spreading religion. They're not helping you grow in your faith. And here's what I mean. I've been in ministry now for about 30-plus years and in different parts of the country, when I get introduced as a pastor, different people mean different things when they say it. When I was first, a youth pastor outside Chicago in the Midwest, when I

would get introduced at a party or something like that, when I'd be with the kids in my youth group, and there'd be lots of kids there and things were getting a little out of hand, they would always introduce me.

And they would say something like this, "Hey, I want you to meet our pastor." And by that, here's what they meant. Don't swear anymore. Don't tell any stories of what we did last night. Don't say any bad things, because he's a pastor. He's not going to like that. So it was a warning to people to behave. When I lived in Texas and I got introduced as a pastor, it was like, Hey, here's our governor. We're so excited about him. We want him to come to our school. We want him to eat lunch with us. I mean, he's pretty special to us. When I moved to Denver, I remember the very first conversation I had when somebody asked me what I did for a living. And I told him I was a pastor and I could still see the look on his face. And had I told him, instead of saying, I'm a pastor. If I would've said, you know what? My wife and I just moved here from Mars.

We're actually aliens, and we're just learning to adapt and speak English. That was the look on his face and response. I don't even know what you're talking about. Is that a real job? Do you do something else? Did they pay you to do this? And I remember thinking at the time, Lord, thank you for bringing me to Denver. This city needs Jesus. Amen. And I love what God's called me to do, but I realize that I'm just one little cog in the kingdom wheel for one little generation. And I don't get to know how much longer I have the privilege of doing it. To the extent I can be helpful by teaching you the word, I'm grateful, but it's not pastor about kingdom.

It's about Jesus. When you hear me talk about wanting to fill more seats. When you hear me talk about wanting to do more stuff, it is not at all because I'm looking to be elevated. It is for certain, without doubt that I want Denver to be known as a city that glorifies Jesus Christ. And I want our church to be a leader in promoting the kingdom and the gospel of Jesus Christ to our city. So that when people hear about Denver, they don't come here for being in the mile-high city or the mountains of marijuana. They come here because Jesus Christ is being put on such an awesome display that they want to come and tangibly experience the presence of Christ. And as long as God gives me breath, my prayer is in my lifetime. We will see revival through his church in Denver and spread it around the world. Amen. That's what we're about.

And this is why we worship Jesus because he's permanent. He's the one we can hang onto forever. We have spiritual people in our lives that sometimes fail us. We have spiritual people in our lives that sometimes pass away. We have spiritual people in our life that sometimes move away. Jesus is going nowhere. He's immovable, he's a rock. He's your source. If you have him, you have everything that you need. And there's some sort of ripple effect that happens when God's people believe that. I'm not a big Marvel fan, but my son is, so I've seen about every single movie, even though I don't understand a 10th of them, but I know one of the characters in there is Thor. I know we look similar, but that wasn't me in the movie. But sometimes, you see the hammer that he has, and he puts the hammer down, and then it's not just like this hammer does something with the hammer.

I mean, the whole earth shakes and there's this radiation from it. And things go

out, when God's people come together and they say, we're not gathering for our pastor and we're not gathering for our neighbor. Jesus, we're gathering for you and Lord, we humbly present ourselves and we want you to use us any way that you possibly can. There's a ripple effect that goes out from the church. There's a ripple effect that advances the kingdom, and even the gates of hell cannot stop the power of the church because the church of Jesus Christ is unstoppable. Amen. That's what he's talking about. So there's a permanence to this, but I want you to check out this other word. I talked about. There's a prayerfulness to our priest. There's a prayerfulness to our priest. Verse 25 is one of my favorite verses in the entire New Testament. He's summing up. Now, this Jesus, who's our great high priest. He says, "Therefore, he is able also to save forever."

He is able to save for how long? Forever. Let me say it again. Say it with me. He is able to save...

Forever.

Some of you worry about your salvation. Some of you are concerned. Let me tell you on the authority of God's word, if you've turned from your sin and you place your faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ, you are his not only now, but you are his forever. And one day he's going to present you, faultless, with exceedingly great joy before his father in heaven. He's going to save you forever. Yeah, but what if I forget to confess my sin before I get hit by a car, have a tragic accident, or have a heart surgery that goes bad. He's going to save you forever because the work is not what you did to earn

heaven. The work is what Jesus Christ did on the cross, through his shed blood for you and his resurrection from the dead.

And if you've trusted him, you're his forever and ever, and ever, and ever, and ever. Amen.

Amen.

That's why the enemy lies to you. That's why the enemy says to you. Yeah, you were a Christian, but you're not now because if you were really a Christian, you wouldn't have acted like this and you wouldn't have done this. And you still wouldn't struggle with this, and how come you're not, and how come you still are. Because he knows that you belong to Jesus. And once you believe the word, things begin to change. I know I'm going to heaven. I'm 100% certain of that. And I know it has absolutely nothing to do with being a pastor or a preacher. I know it has everything to do that, I've turned for my sin. I place my entire eternity in the hands of the Lord, Jesus Christ, who died for me and rose from the dead.

And he's able to save me forever. Notice this, who does he save forever? Those who draw near to God through him. Now, Christianity gets a bad rep because people will say, "Well, you think Jesus is the only way." Yes. And the reason, I think that is because Jesus said that. He said, "I am the way the truth in the life. No one comes to the father except through me." So he is the only way. "Well, pastor Jeff, what about all those other religions out there? What about all those other people?" All of them can be saved through the person of Jesus Christ. If they come to him by faith because anyone

that comes to him, his word says he will never turn away. That means there's an exclusivity to how we get saved. And that the only way you can get saved is through Jesus.

But there's an inclusivity. And that anybody who wants to be saved through Jesus can be saved and saved to the full forever and ever, amen. That's the good news of the gospel. It's not about how good you are, how religious you are, what you're going to do to prove yourself to God. It's about believing that you're not good enough, that Jesus died for you in your place. Shed his blood, not only to cover your sins, but to cleanse you from the inside out. And he rose from the dead to give his very life to you through his holy spirit. So you can actually live now for him. I mean, isn't that good news?

I think I've said, isn't that good news in both services today about 25 times. Because it's great news, right? So he is able to save those forever who draw near to God through him, since what? He always lives to make intercession for them. What is Jesus doing in heaven right now? Well, he's ruling and reigning the universe, but he still has time always to pray for each and every one of you who know him, you may feel like I'm praying to God and I'm desperate. And Jesus' like, well, I'm praying too. Hey, even while you slept last night, even while you were driving into church unaware. Jesus was speaking to our heavenly Father on your behalf. How awesome is that? It should really come as no surprise to us, because Jesus in his earthly ministry spent hours praying in Mark chapter 135 says, "Very early in the morning while it was still dark. Jesus got up and went to solitary places where there he prayed."

Often when his disciples were looking for him, he was off praying. The night before he picked all of his disciples and called his 12 apostles to him. He spent the whole night praying. Before walking on water, he prayed. Before raising Lazarus, he prayed. In Gethsemane, he prayed. On the cross, he prayed. Even when prideful, Peter told him, "Hey, even if all fall away on a counting, you know I'll never fall away. Jesus, I'm the one disciple you can trust." Jesus said, "Hey, I'm going to tell you the truth. You're going to deny me three times," which is exactly what he did. But he said this, "Peter, Satan his desire to sift you like wheat, but I prayed for you." And to paraphrase of that prayer is, "When you come through this, I'm praying that your faith is restored."

Now here's what we can know about Jesus' prayers. All of them come true because Jesus is the word. And when he's praying the word and he's nudging the Father on your behalf, it's all good. And isn't it good to know you have an advocate to God, the Father? Isn't it good to know you have a mediator between us and God? Isn't it good to know that before you even confess your sin, Jesus is already nudging the father sin. I took care of that on the cross, don't even worry about that. I got that one? Isn't that good to know, that you can't screw up what you didn't earn in the first place, that you are free to live for God who lives, Jesus lives, to make intercession for you. He always lives to make intercession for you. He's always praying for you. And this just doesn't just mean which it does mean that he's going to be able to bring you to heaven and present you faultless before the Father, because he's interceding for you and making sure that happens.

It also means in this life he's interceding for you. He knows every single need that you have. He knows every desire of your heart and he's praying to his father for God's best to come through you. Friends, that gives me great hope today. I mean, even as we study the life of Jesus, there's only one time. There's really only one time that I see in the scriptures where we see something that seems out of character for Jesus. It doesn't seem to align with the Jesus we hear about; the meek and mild Jesus. The humble Jesus. We see Jesus get angry twice in his ministry once at the beginning and once at the end and he cleanses the temple and it wasn't a calm little scene where Jesus said, I pray that you get out of here for you are turning my father's house into a den of thieves, that's not what happened.

He grabbed a chord of three strands and he was whipping it around and he was overturning the money changers. He says, "Get out of my father's house. This house was to be a house of prayer, but you've turned it into a den of thieves. You've made this place a marketplace for yourself. You're trying to profit off religion. When what my dad wants is a relationship with his people. Stop it." That's what he was saying.

Paraphrase. He's angry. Why? Because he wanted the people to understand that what God wants more than anything is your heart. He wants you to seek him, but he also wants you to know while you're seeking him, he's also seeking the Father on your behalf. That's why he says, "If you abide in me and my word abides in you, you ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you." Why?

Because when you're seeking what God wants, when you're seeking what Jesus wants, Jesus is already talking to the Father about that. And when you align with what

Jesus is already praying, then God makes those things reality. That's why we can't just pray. Okay, Lord, I heard the word today. Provide for me, provide, provide, provide. I heard the word today, deliver me, deliver, deliver, deliver. It means this, Hey, Lord, if there's anything in my life, that's not right with you, bring it out. If there's anything I need to make right with someone else, bring it out. Lord, I want to have nothing between me and you so that when I ask you to be true to your word, that you'll operate your word in and through my life. That's what it means. When we come to God in humility, then we can also come to God with boldness.

One of the reasons why we have a hard time coming to him is because when we sin, the devil will lie to us and say, see, I'd wait a couple weeks before you ask God for anything because he's mad at you right now and let him calm down a little bit. And once he's calm, then you can come back and ask him for things. But these next two weeks in your life are going to be really miserable. I know you've been wanting to ask him about your marriage. Just, you're going to have to deal with that for two more weeks, because then God will listen to you as long as you don't screw up in the next two weeks.

Friends, that's a lie. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and shed his blood completely for you. His blood is accessible to you at any moment, at any time. Therefore, even when we are in sin, he says, "Come to me. All of you who are weary and heavy laden, I'll give you rest." Why? Because my blood still cleanses you from all of your sin. And I can still see you as righteous because of my blood, not because of

what you've done, but because of what I've done for you. Isn't that great news?

Jesus Christ is not only permanent, but he's prayerful. He's praying for you. And I'll give you another verse. It's not just this author of Hebrews. Paul says the same thing in Romans chapter eight and verse 34. If God says it in just one place in his word, it's true, but it's great when you can see it in other spots. He says in Romans 8:34 "Christ, Jesus is he who died. Yes, rather, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." One of Jesus' greatest high priestly ministries from now until he brings you into heaven is praying on your behalf to fulfill everything he put you on the earth to do and to bring you safely home. He's your anchor. He's your cornerstone. He's the one who you can trust. Friends, whatever you need today is found in the person and work of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Your friends may not be able to help you. They can be comforting sometimes. Your spouse may not be able to help you, although they can be comforting sometimes. Your kids may not be able to help you. The kids may not be able to help you. But Jesus Christ is there to help you. He's always there for you. He's permanent and he's perfect. Let me give you this last one. The reason his priesthood prevails is because he's perfect and he's personal. He's perfect and he's personal. Listen to his perfection; verse 26, "For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest; holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens." I mean, as he puts these five things together. He is really saying the same thing over and over and over again, from a different perspective. He's talking about the holiness of Jesus.

He said he's holy. Holy means, he's unlike us in character. He's sinless. He's

perfect. He's set apart. He's God, we're not. He's holy. If there's one word I could use to describe our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It's holy, he's unlike us. He's perfect. He's holy, holy, holy, holy, what else can we say about him? He's also innocent. It means not only is God, is he holy, but he's also free from evil and guile. It means he's not duplicitous. It means among men there's nothing in him that was ever kind of good and kind of not so good. He was never deceptive. He was never somewhat evil. He wasn't using trickery. He's innocent of all that. He's undefiled. That means he's untainted by sin. There's nothing disqualifying in him. There's nothing that prohibits his priesthood. There's not even a hint of anything that's inappropriate in Jesus.

Not even a hint of anything he ever did wrong. And he separated from sinners. And certainly he is in his moral separation. I mean, when he came to the earth, it wasn't like he was separated physically. If he was separated physically from sinners, he could not have come to earth because sinners were the only people he came for. But even when he was around sinners, he himself did not sin. His holiness could be in the presence of sinners and he could still remain holy, that's who he was. But he's also separated from sinners in the sense that now he is seated at the right hand of God, the Father, Almighty.

Soon to come back, and he's exalted above the heavens as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. That at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father. And let me just tell you this. If every old Testament prophecy is true about the coming of Christ, then every prophecy about what's about ready to come is still true as well. And I got news for

you. Jesus Christ is coming back to rule and reign on planet earth and he's coming soon.

And all the things that we concern ourselves with and all the things we worry about, won't even be a thought in our head when he gets here, because he promises to wipe every single wrong. And he promises to wipe every tear from your eye. He keeps all of your tears in a bottle. There's not one tear you've cried where God says, ah, I'm not listening. He remembers them all and he's going to make it right. But notice this, he's different than every other high priest. He said, who does not need daily like those high priests, to offer sacrifices first for his own sins. And then for the sins of the people, because this, he did once for all, when he offered up himself. The high priest, before they could forgive sins, they had to get right with God, before they could ask God to do something for others, right?

How could the priest forgive the sins of others when he was steeped in sin? So there was a whole ritual the priest had to do, putting blood on his ear and on his thumb and on his toe and doing all these things to get right. So that God would say, okay, you're covered. Now, you can ask for a blessing of them to be covered. Jesus never needed to ask for forgiveness of sins. Do you know why? Because he's sinless. He never sinned. God made him who had no sin to become sin for us. So that in him, we might become the righteousness of God. God put the sin of humanity on him and punished him for our sin. But Jesus Christ never sinned. He was sinless. He is sinless. So Jesus once and for all, right? Once and for all took all the penalty of sin from us.

He paid for it all once and for all. That's why you don't need to go every single day to a priest to get your sin covered. Because if you've repented and trusted Jesus, how many of your sins were forgiven? Oh, now think about this, 2000 years ago, none you were here. So when Jesus has died for all your sins, which sins did he die for? All the ones you'd ever commit, I'm covered in the blood. I'm cleansed by the blood. I'm thankful for the blood. I'm banking my eternity on the blood. "Christ died once for all the righteous, for the unrighteous to bring you to God," first Peter 3:18. And notice what he says, "For the law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of oath, which came after the law," that's after the law was given in Psalm 110, verse four, it came after the law.

"He appoints a son made perfect forever." That means Jesus has completed exactly what the father wanted him to do. Not only is he perfect, but he's personal. He's personal. Listen to me, God did not send a set of religious rules for you to keep. He did not send down a religious tradition for you to follow. God, the Father sent his son to be the savior of the world. There's no one he loved more than his son. He gave his only begotten son. He gave a relationship so that we who trust in the relationship with his son, then have relationship with the Father. Not by religious hoops, we're jumping through, not by religious practices that we practice, but because of God's gift of his son, to us who died in our place, and rose from the dead. He alone is our cornerstone. He alone is the one we bank our future on. It's his blood and his blood alone that was shed so that we could have life.

So here's the question for both the nonbeliever and the believer. And nonbeliever,

what I'm talking about, I'm not asking if you're a good person today. I'm not asking if you've tried, I'm not asking for philanthropic, and I'm not asking for what all your friends would say about you. Here's what I'm asking. Has there ever been a time in your life where you've turned from your sin and you've trusted the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, to be your great high priest? If not, do not harden your heart; make today the day. And the Christian, here's what I'm saying to you. Do you truly believe the Word of God? Do you believe you have a great high priest who when the curtain was torn, gave you access to the presence of God, continually, forever and ever. And that great high priest is interceding on your behalf, and that great high priest through his word, wants to offer you everything that the word has so that you can take it and receive it and claim it as your own, because that's the God you serve.

And any other lie that you're hearing in your head is just simply that. It's a lie from the enemy because he doesn't want you to know this. That the greatest joy you can ever have is trusting Jesus Christ as your Lord and the greatest life you can ever have is letting Jesus Christ live his life in and through you. And that's what this message is all about. That you serve a prevailing high priest, the one who was anchored into heaven; the one who's going to welcome you home. And the one who wants to answer and intercede for all your prayers on this side of heaven. Amen. Amen. Would you stand for me as we pray?

Father in heaven, we give you all the praise and honor for who you are. And Lord, we just ask right now for those who are here, who are saying, I'm ready to give

my life to Christ. I know I'm a sinner, then here's how you can pray. Lord, Jesus, I know I'm a sinner and I'm apart from you. But I believe you died on a cross, shedding your blood from me, and rose from the dead. Lord, right now I want to turn from my sin, and I want to place my faith squarely on you. Come into my life and be my Lord and Savior. And Lord, there's some of us here. We have all different myriads of needs. Lord, we just pray that as you're interceding for us, that we could intercede together for one another and that you would do a work in and through us. Lord, remind us that your word is true, and you always produce what you send it forth to do. God, we give you glory and our praise for all you're doing as we continue to worship your name in Jesus' name. Amen and Amen.