



# Boldly Approach God

Heb 4:14-16 Phil 4:4-9 Luke 11:9-13

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When Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday, one of the things that happened was that the curtain in the Temple in Jerusalem was torn in two (Matthew 27:51). That curtain separated the *holy place* from the *Holy of Holies*. The *Holy of Holies* signaled God's presence on earth. No one was allowed in the *Holy of Holies* throughout the entire Old Testament times except the high priest *once a year* on the Day of Atonement. He would bring the blood of a sacrifice with him to make "**atonement**" for the sins of the people. The curtain that hid the *Holy of Holies* reminded the people that their sin separated them from God.

When Jesus died on the cross, that Temple curtain was torn in two – it was split apart to show that the way to God's presence was now **OPEN** through the death of His Son! Jesus is the sacrifice who **makes atonement** for your sins; His blood **covers over your sins** and they are remembered no more. Your sins have been dealt with, they no longer separate you God. You are welcome in God's Presence. There is no curtain, nor anything else, that separates you from God! In Christ, you now have **direct and unlimited access** to the Father in Heaven!

This was all part of Jesus' work as your *Great High Priest*! His death was the sacrifice that God accepted on your behalf; His blood -- shed on the cross -- **made atonement** for you – it covered over your sins. In His Resurrection and Ascension, Jesus was installed as your *Great High Priest* who brings you into the very presence of God.

Let us then draw near to the **Throne of Grace** with confidence, that we may receive mercy and find **grace to help** in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

This is one of the most significant verses in the book of Hebrews; It is a theme that is repeated throughout the book. Because Jesus is your *Great High Priest* who has shed His blood for your sins, you can now **boldly approach God with confidence!** The curtain is torn down – you have *direct and unlimited access* to God!

The words that are used in this verse mean that you have *unrestricted and authorized access to God!!* No one in the Old Testament times could ever approach God like you can now in these New Testament times<sup>1</sup>! You have *unrestricted, unlimited, direct and authorized access to God* every moment of every day of your life. Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have been given access to the very **Throne of Grace** in Heaven above!

You can understand the **Throne of Grace** in two ways. The first is that it is the **throne of God Almighty**, the Maker of the heavens and the earth and everything in them. The Creator welcomes you into His presence; you know the Creator as your Father in Heaven! He knows every detail of your life and He cares about you as a Perfect Father! Remember how Martin Luther teaches it in the Small Catechism: *God would hereby tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may ask Him with all boldness and confidence, as children ask their dear father.* Your Father in Heaven welcomes you into His presence at anytime to talk about anything! When you think of the **Throne of Grace** as that of your Heavenly Father, the emphasis is on **His loving care** for you.

A second way to understand the **Throne of Grace** is that it is the **throne of the King of Heaven** who uses His mighty power to rule over all things for the benefit of His people. You are welcome in the presence of the King and can approach Him with any need at any time. He has promised to use

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<sup>1</sup> This even includes even Abraham, Moses, and David! No High Priest, no Prophet, no Judge, and no King ever had this kind of unrestricted and direct access to God in the Old Testament! But YOU DO through faith in Christ! It is an unbelievable gift that God has given to you!

His mighty power on your behalf and for your benefit: to bring joy to you, to answer prayer, and to make all things work for good in your life. You are welcomed in the presence of the King of Heaven! When you think of the **Throne of Grace** as that of the King of Heaven, the emphasis is on **His Mighty Power** at work in your life.

Because Jesus is your *Great High Priest* who has shed His blood for your sins, you can now boldly approach God with confidence! There is no fear: your sins are forgiven, your conscience is clean, and you belong to God. You have *unrestricted and unlimited access to your God and King in Heaven!* You have the same access to the Father in Heaven as Jesus does! The word picture is that Jesus, your *Great High Priest*, ushers you into the presence of God and to His **Throne of Grace** in Heaven. The image is that you are standing at the “*right hand of God the Father in Heaven*” along with Jesus! You have been given *unrestricted, unlimited, and unparalleled access to God* and you are invited to talk to Him boldly and bring your needs to Him.

When you boldly approach God’s **Throne of Grace**, He is there paying very careful attention to you. He hears your every word! He sees every tear; He understands every sigh; He knows every detail. Your **Heavenly Father**, with His **loving concern** for you; and the **King of Heaven** who uses His **mighty power** on your behalf, welcomes you into His presence and generously gives you grace, mercy, and the exact help you need!

There are two places where this *unrestricted, unlimited, and unparalleled access to God* happens in our lives. It happens in **worship** and it happens in **prayer**.

In **worship**, we as a congregation approach God and His **Throne of Grace together**. **Worship is pictured** as an audience with the **King of Heaven**, your **Heavenly Father**, where He speaks His Word to us, and we hear, believe, and obey it. In worship our **God, King** and **Father** forgives our

sins, cleanses our consciences with Living Water, gives us the Bread of Life to eat! In worship, our **God, King** and **Father** showers us with His mercy and grace so that we can live as His people. In response, we confess our faith, we sing His praises, we offer our prayers, we give our tithes and offerings, we love one another, and we confess the faith to our neighbor. As we **worship** here **on earth**, we approach our **God, King** and **Father** and His **Throne of Grace in Heaven** --- **together as a congregation.**

The second place where you experience this *unrestricted, unlimited, and unparalleled access to God* is in **prayer**. Prayer is not seen as God standing or sitting at your side here on earth listening to your prayer. Rather, prayer is pictured as you boldly and confidently approaching your **God, King** and **Father** **IN HEAVEN!** You draw near to His **Throne of Grace** with confidence! Jesus, your *Great High Priest* ushers you into God's Heavenly Holy of Holies! In prayer, you can speak freely, and openly, with the Lord your God, knowing that He cares; that He loves you; and that He will use His mighty power on your behalf. **You are most welcome in His presence!**

In both **worship** and **prayer**, it is like Heaven and Earth overlap. As we stand here on earth, in worship or in prayer, we are also standing before the **Throne of Grace** in Heaven. That is the **word picture** that the book of Hebrews creates for us. Heaven and Earth overlap in God's Presence! *You can draw near to the Throne of Grace with confidence, and receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Today may you take advantage of this access that you have to the Throne of Grace! Make worship and prayer high priorities in your life! Through Christ, your *Great High Priest*, you have *unrestricted, unlimited, and unparalleled access to God* in Heaven!

Amen