

Connection to Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Jesus, our great high priest, has given us the ability to come before the throne of grace with confidence. Yet, our confidence comes because of what He has done, not what we might now do. For some, that confidence becomes arrogance, and they try to abuse any authority given by God.

Introduction/Opening:

Illustration: Relate a story from a time when you overstepped your bounds, which ultimately caused a problem. Perhaps someone entrusted you to do something, but you went beyond their wishes, and your added effort created additional challenges in the long run. Ideally, this situation would be due to *your* perception that you knew more about the situation than the person who did the asking. Near the conclusion of the message provide the rest of the story.

Alternative:

Begin with a short reminder of the story from Mark 10:35-45 regarding the request from James and John to be seated at Christ's right and left in glory. (This isn't the focal passage; the intent is to highlight the request, Jesus' response, and their insistence they are able to drink from the cup.) Near the conclusion of the message, provide the rest of the story.

Moses didn't enter the promised land because of his sin. Yet, in Hebrews 4:16, we see a contrast – that you and I can now draw near the throne of grace, despite our sin, because of what Jesus has done for us. Yet we must understand our limits.

Note: In teaching this text, it will be necessary to give a brief background on the consecration of Aaron (the first high priest) and his sons. In addition, Leviticus 9 speaks of the various offerings. More or less time can be spent on this portion depending on the time available. As simply as can be defined, the offerings mentioned are:

- SIN – atone for specific sins where no restitution was possible
- BURNT – propitiate for sin in general – allow unholy people to come before a holy God
- SIN/BURNT – offerer consumes none because WE cannot offer anything to God.
- GRAIN – not animal – so no blood, and no remission of sins. It was about faith. Grain offering is often associated with the Burnt offering. The Burnt offering allowed people to come before the Lord, yet we know that we please Him by faith (Hebrews 11.6).
- PEACE – this was not to make peace with God (BURNT), but to enjoy peace with God

Outline

1. The people saw the glory of God. (Leviticus 9:22-23)
 - Aaron made the offerings, and God responded to his obedience.
 - The glory of God appeared as Aaron and Moses came out from the Tent of Meeting.

2. The people were in awe of the glory of God. (Leviticus 9:24)
 - The people fell on their faces out of reverence to God.
 - The people saw a reminder of God's glory each time Moses came out from the Tent of Meeting (with a veil covering his face, see also 2 Corinthians 4:12-18)
3. Some people will attempt to manipulate God's glory for their own. (Leviticus 10:1-3)
 - These two men had just witnessed the glory of God and now wanted to invoke it for themselves. Their confidence in God had turned to arrogance in themselves.
4. All people should realize there is a difference between the holy and the common. (Leviticus 10:10-11)
 - If something is holy, it is likely not common. The difference is a matter of life and death. We are to teach others this difference as well. (see Matthew 28:19-20)

Illustration: Present the rest of the story used in the introduction, focusing on how it ended. Or, if using the account of James and John, point to how Jesus concluded the discussion in Mark 10:45.

Conclusion

Many people want to approach God on their terms, not His. We may approach the throne of grace with boldness if we're followers of Jesus because He has already shown us the way (the Way). But, we still must remember it's the throne of God we're approaching, not ours.

The reality is, we often try to do more for God than He asks, though He wants to do more through us than we can possibly imagine.

We must ask ourselves these questions:

- Are you doing what you know He wants you to do? If so, do it boldly, with confidence.
- Are you doing the things you think He wants you to do? If so, do it boldly, continually seeking where He is leading.
- Are you doing what you hope He wants you to do? Proceed cautiously. Ask Him for clarity. Seek the counsel of others of others who are boldly living out their faith.
- Are you doing what you want Him to allow you to do? Stop! Don't be like Nadab and Abihu who tried to misuse God's power for their benefit. Ask God for a fresh start and prepare yourself to follow.

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