



CrossRoads Notes:

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Title: Throne of Grace

Theme: Principles to Enjoying the Grace of God

Series: Grasping the Foundational Truths of Prayer

Introduction: *Today's passage of Scripture lays the foundation for the confidence Christians may have in approaching the "Throne of Grace."* Christ being in heaven and without sin builds a full trust in the child of God. Christians who have Holy Spirit revelation and illumination on the truths found in today's message have the blessings of assistance in overcoming sin and guidance throughout their entire Christian walk.

Proposition: I would propose to you that true prayer is spiritual business from beginning to end, and when offered in Jesus' Name, according to God's will prayer is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

Interrogative Sentence: *What are three principles to enjoying the "Throne of Grace?"* It is imperative that we understand that 1.) The Throne is of a holy God. 2.) The Throne is of a Sovereign God and 3.) Know what the Throne of Grace is.

Transitional Sentence: *In approaching the Courts of God one must remember that it is the Throne of a holy God.* It should be approached in reverence. (Isaiah 6:4)

Isaiah's response while standing before the throne was, "Woe to me!... I am ruined!" (Isaiah 6:5) Isaiah began to confess his sin and the sins of his people. (Isaiah 6:5) Standing in God's light allowed Isaiah to see himself and the Israelites for who they really were.

Christians who spend a great deal of time in the light of God's Word. The Holy Spirit just comes upon them and reveals to them what is in their hearts. They confess and they receive a special grace from God as well as becoming broken hearted over what they see in their communities. (1 John 1: 7) The Greek word for purifies (*kathoriza*) means in a spiritual sense to purify from the pollution of and the guilt of sin.

That is exactly what happened to Isaiah in his vision and commission from God. After Isaiah's confession an angel took a live coal, which came from the altar where sin had been dealt with, which is symbolic of Christ's death. The angel touched the mouth of Isaiah and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." (Isaiah 6:7) Isaiah understood that the throne of God, the temple, representing the place of God presence was to be entered in reverence.

The angel of God touched the lips of Isaiah with a "live coal" from the altar which symbolized the place where the penalty of sin was paid by a substitute offered in the sinner's place. Dr. Kay suggests that this fire is "the Divine love."

John the Baptist has great news for us. In Matthew 3:11 he speaks of the future work of Christ to His church, "[Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

To the believer, the Holy Spirit as fire ministers warmth to the spiritual heart, bringing illumination and revelation that enable the child of God to obey. He purifies and cleanses the soul. Because the carnal nature of mankind survives the baptism of water, it takes the continued work of the Holy Spirit to assure a personal life of holiness.

North American Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in Louisville, Kentucky:

Charles Spurgeon wrote it well: "In prayer we are to come to the Throne of Grace in reverence. Rebels with unrepented sin in their hearts and those who will not leave their pride should not come before the Throne."

The Body of Christ is to approach the Throne of Grace with the heart of the Psalmist who wrote; "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offense way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting." (Psalm 139:24) Walking in this foundational truth allows Christians to enjoy the Throne of Grace and enables them to walk in reverent fear of the Lord, knowing that He is holy.

Christians need to grasp the truth revealed to the Apostle Peter as the Holy Spirit moved him to write to God's elect. (1 Peter 1:13-16)

Transitional Sentence: *The second principle to enjoying the Throne of Grace is to rest on the fact that it is the throne of a Sovereign God.* Psalm 103:19 in the New American Standard Bible says, "The Lord has established His throne in the heavens; And His sovereignty rules over all."

Sovereignty is a prerogative arising out of the perfection of the Supreme Being.

God is Spirit (John 4:24) and therefore a person, infinite, eternal, and immutable in His being. He is perfect as Creator and the Preserver of the universe and everything in it.

(Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:34-35)

In other words, the child of God who enjoys the Throne of Grace understands that He does not approach God saying, "What are you doing! Why don't you do it this way?" But rather saying, "Father, you are loving and you know best, therefore, give me the will to want your will and pray accordingly.

(1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 24:1;

From these passages of Scripture and many more we see what is plain. 1.) The sovereignty of God is universal. It extends over all His creatures from the highest to the lowest. 2.) God's sovereignty is absolute. There is no limit to be placed to His authority. 3.) It is immutable. It can neither be ignored nor rejected. It binds all creatures as inexorable. This means that prayers cannot bind God to our will, but we should desire to pray His that will be done.

The Word of God as a whole teaches us that His sovereignty is exercised, 1.) In establishing the laws, physical and moral, by which all creatures are to be governed. 2.) In determining the nature and powers of the different orders of created beings, and in assigning each its appropriate sphere. 3.) In appointing each individual his position and lot. It is the Lord who boxes the bounds of our habitation. Our times are in His hands. He determines when, where, and under what circumstances each individual of our race is to be born, live, and die. Nations, no less than individuals, are thus in the hands of God, who assigns them their heritage in the earth, controls their destiny. 4.) God does what He wills with His own. He gives to some riches, to others, honor; to others, health; while others are poor, unknown, or victims of disease. To some, the light of the gospel is sent; others are left in darkness. Some are brought through faith unto salvation; others perish in unbelief. (Systematic Theology, Hodge)

There are some people frightened by the sovereignty of God and other protest. Holy Spirit illuminated Christians rejoice with the apostle Paul who wrote about our spiritual blessings in Christ, "In Him we were chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will." (Ephesians 1: 11)

This key truth is found in observing our greatest example in prayer, Jesus. (Matthew 26:38; Luke 22:44)

Between those prayers of, "...if you are willing, take this cup from Me;" and "Yet not My will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42) our Lord came to understand that the way of the Cross was the only way to atone for the sins of the world. (Hebrews 9:22) Jesus clearly understood the sovereignty of His Father and submitted to God's

perfect will. The Bible says that Jesus' prayers were "...heard because of His reverent submission." (Hebrews 5:7) "Heard" (*eiskakouo*) means to have prayers heard favorably, to have the petitions granted or answered yes to.

Knowing that God is in full control and able to do all things according to His will, enables the child of God to run to the Throne of Grace and enjoy the sovereignty of God in His life. The Lord knows what is best for us and He will clean our hearts and prepare us for service to accomplish His will.

Transitional Sentence: *The Throne in heaven is where a holy God reigns and His sovereignty rules over all and 3.) It is a place where Christians find grace.*

"Grace" (*charis*) used in Hebrews 4:16 means "through the graces counsel of God." (Spiros Zodhiates) Dr. Jim Berg has a definition of grace that will help us apply God's grace in our lives. He writes, "God's grace is revealing His will to you and then enabling you to achieve it."

How does a child of God enjoy the counsel of God? (Psalm 119:105) The Word of God tells how to live a life of righteousness in a sin dark world system. The lamp of the spiritual heart is fed with the oil of the Holy Spirit. The Book of Ephesians tells us that the sword of the Holy Spirit is the Word of God. (Ephesians)

Let me give you some examples. The first grace God offers sinners is the revelation of their need to know Christ. Then He draws sinners to Christ. Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus said, "No one comes to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." (John 6:44)

The Father draws sinners through the Holy Spirit by bringing revelation of God's Word to a hard heart. (John 5:24; John 16:8)

If you know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, it is not because of the work of man, it is God drawing and enabling you to receive the Son of God into your spiritual heart and life. Accepting Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord opens the curtains to the Holy of holies, allowing you to have fellowship with a loving father. You may go before His Throne of Grace and give heartfelt petitions for the souls of family members, friends, and co-workers. God's Word gives this counsel, "...[He is] not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

A second blessing of walking in the counsel of God's Word is to enjoy the promises of having all our needs met by Him. (Matthew 6:33) If a person is pursuing God's will for them as directed through the written Word, he will see the Lord provide for his ordinary needs in life, such as food, clothing and shelter. (Matthew 6:31) (The Bible Exposition Commentary; The Bible Knowledge Commentary; Matthew Henry Commentary)

A third grace to enjoy from our heavenly Father is having the High Priest, Jesus Christ standing at the Throne interceding for us. The Book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus sits at the right hand of God in heaven. (Hebrews 8:1)

There is great significance in having Jesus as our High Priest, serving at the Throne of Grace. (Hebrews 2: 17-18) The Book of Hebrews tell us "...that we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin."

Our Lord knows our weakness (*asthenia*). That means He knows our incapacity or rather our limitations. This includes all weaknesses, moral and physical, which predispose a person to sin and facilitates the functions which birth forth sinful acts and meditations. This nature undermines our resistance to temptation and makes it impossible to get victory through our own strength. (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains; Word Studies in the New Testament; Wuest's Word Study)

"Sympathize" (*subpathesai*) means to have compassion upon, literally feel for and suffer within one's own heart with the person being tormented in his weaknesses.

Christians who are fully enjoying God's grace in finances have sought His Word and found the Biblical principles to stewardship. Christians who are enjoying God's grace through His wisdom have taken James seriously when he wrote; "If any man lacks wisdom, he should ask of God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." (James 1:5) There are many areas of life of which the Bible gives clear directions. Those who are enjoying the counsel of God are illuminated Christians that spend painstaking hours prayerfully studying the Bible.

In Closing: *We are to approach the Throne with reverence and in a true humble state, for the One who sits upon it is Holy. The Bible beckons Christians to be hungry for the holiness of God.* Know for a fact that God is Sovereign and He does all things as He pleases and He does all things well.

Christ, the Great High Priest, purchased Christians with His own blood and He is able to sympathize with us regarding every part our lives. God's grace is sufficient and the Lord longs to enable obedient Christians to walk in His counsel all the days of their lives.

Pastor Kavanaugh knew the power of the Throne of Grace. Once while visiting with an unsaved doctor he was challenged to give a reason for the hope that he had. The doctor said, "I find it hard to believe that an intelligent man like you believes in the Word of God."

Pastor Kavanaugh responded with this powerful teaching. "Suppose doctor, you had a disease that if not treated with medical intervention would cause you to surely die and someone gave you a drug that restored you back to good health. For twenty-five years you gave this same drug to others who had contacted this same disease which saved them from certain death. Those who were able to get the medicine survived and those who did not died."

"What if someone who had this dreaded disease refused to take this medicine when offered and then died. What would you think?" The doctor said "Well he was a fool!"

The pastor replied; "The dreaded disease of sin had me bound and I was surely living for the flesh, the pleasures of this world and listened often to the lies of the devil. I was surely headed for eternal death. Twenty-five years ago God's grace revealed to me that I was a sinner bound for the gates of hell. My life was in fact being directed by the disease of sin."

"God's grace revealed to me the Name of a Savior who died for my sins and offers to me forgiveness and a new fresh start with God. This grace has changed my life and purpose for living. This grace gives me counsel from the living God through what is revealed in the Bible. This grace knows my weaknesses and sympathizes with me in my struggles to overcome all that longs to destroy me. In His grace I find help in times of trouble and endurance to achieve all He calls me to do."

For those who will approach the "Thrown of Grace" there is forgiveness, cleansing, protection in God's sovereignty and grace that abounds for the enabling to live the abundant life promised in Christ.

Let us pray!