

***THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS:  
5. “The Savior Who Knows How We Feel”  
Hebrews 2:14 – 18***

**Introduction:**

This morning we reengage in our study of the Letter to the Hebrew Christians. The author writes with deep love and passionate heart-cry to a people who were in danger of **Falling Away** from their **Faith Walk** with Jesus in life! The writer wants the reader to know the powerful truth that everything that matters in our salvation originates in the heart of God in heaven and is seen in and done by Jesus on our behalf.

As we study this great book **what God has on His heart for us at Cedar Grove is to fix our eyes on Jesus**, to remain rooted and founded in our need to **Know** His **Saving Works!** This is not just our initial salvation experience, which is being forgiven of sins and washed in the blood of Jesus. It is also being set free from the dominion of sin’s power to enslave us rooted in our fleshly, selfish desires of our self-interest.

The Hebrew author again and again points them back to the **Sufficiency** of the **Ministry** of Jesus Christ for us and our acceptance of His work on the Cross on our behalf as the foundation stone of our salvation. He has one primary truth on his heart and mind as he writes: What we do for God in works and deeds does not give us special standing with God, that is, human-works-righteousness! It is always a result of our having opened our hearts to receive the ministry of the Holy Spirit within us, making very personal what Jesus has done for us on the Cross!

**The proof of our salvation is that we are invaded by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. His nature takes up residence in our hearts.** His nature is holy, self-emptying, other-oriented love, a love that desires to know the heart and mind of God in Christ Jesus! Our good deeds are not proof of our salvation unless they are deeply **Rooted** in and **Compelled** by God’s **Love** poured out in our hearts and lives by the indwelling Holy Spirit!

John 14:18a – 21 *“Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”*

What these Christians were doing was walking the dangerous path of bringing their salvation experience into the human arena and what they had done and were doing for God. In doing so they put themselves on the shaky ground of **Human Religious Effort** to please God once we have been redeemed. It is as though they are saying to Jesus: “Thank you so much for saving me, Lord Jesus! Now I can pretty much take it from here!” That is precisely what these Hebrew Christians were doing and it broke our author’s heart to see the peril that awaited them.

It could lead them astray from the simplicity and the superiority of what Jesus had done and desired to do in them. They were becoming self-important, and had begun to supplement what Jesus did on the Cross. They were living “**Jesus And**” something else. In their case it was: Jesus and the prophets, Jesus and angels, Jesus and Moses, Jesus and the Law, Jesus and the Priesthood, Jesus and the sacrificial system.

Hebrews is written as a **Word of Encouragement**, an exhortation of the heart to the readers, pleading with them to remove the add-ons to what Jesus Christ had done, is doing, and will do through His “once-and-for-all” sacrifice for sins! **The author has some key points that he desperately wants his readers to know and understand, and he repeats them again and again so we won’t miss them:**

1. **He will brilliantly argue that who Jesus and is and what He has done for us is superior and sufficient to all add-ons!** He will use the Greek word “kraitton” rendered “better or superior” depending on the version you are reading thirteen times!

2. **He will seek to make application of the truth** he is expounding about who Jesus is and what He had done for the salvation of the believers. He does this by writing sixteen heads of “let us” which he precedes by or follows by the word, “therefore.”

- “Therefore let us be careful that we...”
- “Let us, therefore, make every effort...”
- “Therefore let us hold firmly to the faith...”
- “Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings...”
- “Therefore let us draw near to God...”

3. He will give the readers **seven progressively more intense warning passages in the book, clearly calling the readers to engage with the Holy Spirit to know, love, and follow Jesus carefully in life so they do not fall away into apostasy!** He begins with the warning not to drift away from the truth, and he will end with the seventh warning that they will not refuse the Lord Jesus who is speaking to them, thus turning away from their salvation by faith!

There are two key texts in this great letter to the Hebrews we would do well to be very familiar with as we study it together:

Hebrews 4:14 – 16 *“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 10:19 – 22 *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is his body, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God*

*with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”*

Last week when we studied the text of Hebrews 2:5 – 13 we learned some wonderful things together about the ministry of Jesus as He came into the world to act on behalf of all humanity to redeem us, to take away our sins, and to give us the gift of new life. Let’s restate what we learned last week as bullet points then look at what Jesus has for us in the text in this week’s message:

- God created humanity to reign over creation with Him but we chose to follow the way of sin and self-interest, self-will and self-determination. Someone had to come to our rescue to give us the ability to reign in our own heart and soul first and then to reign in life.
- That someone was Jesus. The author writes that Jesus had to become a human being, to take on our humanity, to be fully human, to be tempted, to suffer, and to die!
- Jesus *“was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory it was fitting that God ... should make the author of the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.”*
- Only a perfect life ended undeservedly could put the wielder of death, Satan, forever in the wrong. When God the Father raised Jesus to life God the Father judged Satan as having stepped beyond his rightful place, and his rule and power were lost forever broken for all who believe by Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord!
- Notice the Hebrew author carefully protects that Jesus did not endure the Cross by His divinity, that is, by His divine power over death. Jesus endured the Cross and the suffering the same way you and I do, by the grace of God: ***“he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”***
- The undeserved **Grace** of God is **Experienced** in the human heart by **Faith**. God provides the gift and gives us the gift of faith but you and I are responsible to believe Him. For *“It is by grace you have been saved through faith – and this is not from yourselves it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8, 9

What the Hebrew author wanted his first century readers to know and you and me to know today is that Jesus Christ our Lord is uniquely qualified to be the one Intercessor who stands between God the Father and the human heart and soul.

Romans 8:34 *“Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

Hebrews 7:25 *“Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”*

### **I. Jesus Was Fully Human and Fully Divine Savior:**

Hebrews 2:14 – 16 *“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is the devil – and free*

*those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants."*

One of the most carefully protected truths of the entire Bible is the incarnation of Jesus Christ our Lord. The announcements of the incarnation of Jesus begin as early as Genesis 3, hours after the fall, when God says to Satan who has spoken through the serpent, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."*

Isaiah 7:14 *"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and you will call him Immanuel.'"*

John 1:14 *"The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth."*

The Scriptures teach us that human beings were created by God to walk in fellowship with God, to know Him and to reign on the earth with Him. Adam and Eve walked with God as sub-rulers in the Garden paradise of God, until Satan enticed them to embrace the path of sinful self-interest. The enticement was to eat that which was "good for food, pleasing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom." So Eve ate and gave some to Adam and he ate.

But it was **Poison** to their walk with God and **Destructive** to their relationship with each other. It immediately it introduced self-will and self-interest. The evil one now had the ground of indwelling sinfulness, selfishness, self-will, and self-interest in God's cherished man and woman. There had to be some human being who could and would live as a second representative person, this time refusing the message of sin and self-interest, and obeying the loving call of God to do His good, pleasing, and perfect will for His life.

This is what sent Jesus Christ our Lord into this world, the incarnate Son of God, the Second representative Human Being, Paul calls Jesus the "**Second Adam!**" Listen to these amazing excerpts as we read them together from Romans 5:12 – 21 as Paul contrasts the first Adam with Jesus the Second Adam:

*"Sin entered the world through the one man and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned... Death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses ... But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!"*

*"For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ... For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one many the many will be made righteous."*

Jesus took His perfect human body into the Garden of Gethsemane, and laid it before the Father God in agonizing prayer: *"Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but your will be done."* Jesus took the cup of the awful evil, vile sins of humanity and drank

it into Himself. He assumed our sins, self-will, self-interest, guilt, shame, iniquities, and put them to death for us on the Cross. The sins that are punished in His death are not His own. They are yours and mine!

Colossians 2:13 – 15 *“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross.”*

## **II. Full Identification Required to Be Both Merciful and Faithful High Priest:**

Hebrews 2:17 *“For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.”*

For Jesus to be the **Merciful** and **Faithful** High Priest before God Almighty for each of us, He must be able to feel what we feel, he must be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, what it is to be a human being. In order for Jesus to engage with us and to truly know what we are feeling He had to become one of us. Otherwise, He would be merely compassionate. He could never sympathize or empathize with us, words that denote actually feeling what we feel.

The truth is if you have never experienced severe nerve damage pain that you can never ever get away from 24 hours per day, you have no idea what a person who has that issue to deal with is walking in. You can be compassionate but you can't sympathize because you don't know how they feel.

The truth is if you have never lost a loved one, your spouse through an untimely death, through a disease that has taken them away from you too soon, you have no idea how the person is feeling who is walking in their wife's or husband's death. If you have never been deserted by your spouse or your parent in life you have no idea how the deserted spouse or child feels who has to live with the shame and the guilt of not knowing why he or she no longer wanted me.

The same is true of the Lord God Almighty. In order for the Lord to be a merciful and faithful high priest over the house of God, Jesus had to become a human being. He had to be human in every way so He knows and understands what it is like to be in human **Circumstances** and human **Limitations!**

Jesus was raised in a home where his mother was pregnant before she was married to Joseph, and people called his legitimacy into question. He had to take over the carpenter shop and care for his family when his dad died. He knew demanding customers and too much expense and too little money at the end of the month. His own brothers rejected His mission at first. He faced fierce opposition from the religious establishment in Jerusalem. He was betrayed by a friend. He was lied about and negatively criticized. He was falsely accused of crimes He did not commit. He suffered a horrible beating with a Roman Scourge and He died a death He did not deserve.

Jesus knows what it is to be human and to live with our humanity in every way so He can be fully identified with our **Weaknesses** and our **Sorrows** when we come to Him and pour out our souls before Him in prayer!

### **III. The Savior Who Suffered the Full Range of Human Temptation:**

Hebrews 2:18 *“Because he himself suffered when he was tempted he is able to help those who are being tempted.”*

There are two things that are very important to remember about the temptation we all face in life, as a part of our human existence.

The first thing to remember about temptation: What our enemy the Devil or Satan is attempting to do is to get us to think we are **Isolated** and **Alone**, that what is happening to us is **Uncommon**, and the only course of action we have left is to take the path of expressing our self-interest, self-will, and sin.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians in I Corinthians 10:13 *“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”*

The second thing to remember about temptation is that all temptations are aimed at getting us to express our sinful self-interest, to meet our own needs in selfish and sinful ways. The Lord Jesus went through an incredible ordeal of temptation to express sinful self-interest early in His earthly ministry. He was led by the Holy Spirit out into the desert where He fasted for forty days and nights. He was weak and hungry. His flesh was screaming at Him. The devil came and tempted Him to express His self-interest, to sin in three different ways, each of which you and I will face today:

First, he tempted Jesus to satisfy His enormous hunger needs in a flashy-razzle-dazzle use of His divine power over nature. Jesus refused quoting the Word of God back to Satan, *“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

Second, he tempted Jesus to be the worldly showman Messiah, to use His divine power to show the world how magnificent He was, throw yourself down from the Temple as the world watches you. God will give you angelic protection. Again Jesus refused, quoting to Him, *“It is written do not put the Lord your God to the test.”*

Third, he tempted Jesus to be the greatest being in the whole world, to have the splendor of the whole world at His feet, because the devil controlled it, if He would simply worship Satan. Again Jesus refused and quoted Scripture, *“Away from me Satan! It is written, Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only!”*

What you and I must remember is what our Hebrew author is carefully protecting for us. Jesus was a human being who was without sin, and He remained that way through the temptation the enemy brought to Him in the desert. Jesus defeated the enemy’s wicked temptations to Him to express self-interest not as God, but as a man. As the angels attended to Him and He ate Jesus cried out! At last a man has defeated Satan. At last a second Adam has come. This is the Savior who can minister to you and to me tenderly when we struggle and our self-interest screams at us!

**THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS:**  
**5. "The Savior Who Know How We Feel"**  
Hebrews 2:14 – 18

**Introduction:**

We're studying the Book of Hebrews! The author writes with deep love and heart-cry to people who were in danger of **F**\_\_\_\_\_ **A**\_\_\_\_\_ from their faith walk with Jesus.

As we study this great work, the Lord wants us all to fix our eyes on Jesus, to stay rooted and founded in in our need to **K**\_\_\_\_\_ His **S**\_\_\_\_\_ **W**\_\_\_\_\_.

He points the readers to the **S**\_\_\_\_\_ of the **M**\_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.  
Our good deeds must be rooted in the Holy Spirit pouring out His love into our hearts. It's always about being **C**\_\_\_\_\_ to obey Him by **L**\_\_\_\_\_. John 14:18a-21

When we reduce our salvation to what we are doing we get on the shaky ground of **H**\_\_\_\_\_  
**R**\_\_\_\_\_ effort!

These Hebrew Christians were becoming self-important, supplementing what Jesus did for them on the Cross: A "**J**\_\_\_\_\_ **A**\_\_\_\_\_" something else mentality.

The author writes as a **W**\_\_\_\_\_ of **E**\_\_\_\_\_ and exhortation to his readers to follow Jesus.

There are three key points he wants the reader to know and understand and he makes them repeatedly in this letter:

1. What Jesus has done is superior to the add-ons, the word kreitton...
2. He will seek to make application of the truth he shares with his words "let us" and "therefore"...
3. He will give them seven progressively intense warnings against apostasy...

There are two great texts in the Book of Hebrews we will want to be familiar with as we study it: Hebrews 4:14 – 16 and 10:19 – 22

What we learned last week...

Jesus is uniquely qualified to be the Great Intercessor for human beings, Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25  
**I. Jesus was the Fully Human and Fully Divine Savior:** Hebrews 2:14 – 16

One of the most carefully guarded truths of Scripture is the incarnation of Jesus. Isaiah 7:14 and John 1:14

The Scriptures talk about "representative" Adams: The first and second Adam called to walk with God and reign on earth with Him.

The first Adam was in the Garden with Eve. They were enticed and ate the forbidden fruit that was **P**\_\_\_\_\_ to their walk with God and each other. The evil one now had ground of "self-will" in the human heart.

That is what sent Jesus into the world as **S**\_\_\_\_\_ **A**\_\_\_\_\_. Paul to the Romans in Romans 5:12 – 21 selected ... Jesus in the Garden prayer ... Colossians 2:13 – 15

**II. Full Identification Required to Be Merciful and Faithful High Priest:** Hebrews 2:17

For Jesus to be both our **M**\_\_\_\_\_ and **F**\_\_\_\_\_ High Priest He must become fully human so He can actually feel what we feel and know what human weaknesses and drives feel like!

The vast difference between compassion and empathy or sympathy.

Jesus had to know what it was like to walk in human **C**\_\_\_\_\_ with human limitations!

Jesus knows what it is to be human, to live with **W**\_\_\_\_\_ and feel the weight of our **S**\_\_\_\_\_ so when we come to Him in prayer we know we are coming to one who can fully identify!

### **III. The Savior Who Suffered the Full Range of Human Temptations:**

Hebrews 2:18

There are two things about being tempted and enticed to sin that are very important for us to know.

First the enemy wants us to believe we are totally **I**\_\_\_\_\_ and **A**\_\_\_\_\_ that what is happening to us is totally **U**\_\_\_\_\_.

I Corinthians 10:13

Second all temptations are aimed at getting us to express our sinful, self-interest, to meet our own needs in selfish and sinful ways. Look at the three temptations of Jesus. Matthew 4:1 – 11

Jesus defeated the enemy as a man, not by His divinity: The Second Adam!

### Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups

1. The author of Hebrews is concerned his readers will fall away from walking with Jesus by faith. What are some things people can do that will prevent them from falling away from their faith in Jesus?
2. What is the central motivating factor for acts of obedience? What is wrong with obedience motivated only by duty?
3. Why do you think people tend to make their/our salvation experience with Jesus about “Jesus and something else?”
4. Why is Jesus our Lord uniquely qualified to be our Intercessor praying for us at the Father’s right hand in heaven?
5. Why do the Scriptures carefully protect the incarnation event of Jesus Christ our Lord becoming a human being?
6. Why was it necessary for Jesus to become a human being, to take on our humanity in totality, in order for Him to be our merciful and faithful High Priest?
7. What is the difference between feeling compassion and being empathic and sympathetic?
8. How was Jesus tempted in all ways exactly as we are? Why is this so important for us to know?
9. Read together aloud Matthew 4:1 - 11 and discuss insights you have from the temptations Jesus endured for us all and defeated.
10. Read together aloud Romans 5:12 – 21 and discuss insights you have regarding the first and second Adams as representative men.
11. How are you personally facing and defeating temptation in your life? Why is it so important to know the Scriptural promises regarding spiritual victory?