

Joy and Confidence

Scripture: Hebrews 4:14-5:4 (CEB)

Date: March 19, 2021

Message: *Also, let's hold on to the confession since we have a great high priest who passed through the heavens, who is Jesus, God's Son; because we don't have a high priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses but instead one who was tempted in every way that we are, except without sin. Finally, let's draw near to the throne of favor with confidence so that we can receive mercy and find grace when we need help. Every high priest is taken from the people and put in charge of things that related to God for their sake, in order to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. The high priest is able to deal gently with the ignorant and those who are misled since he himself is prone to weakness. Because of his weakness, he must offer sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the people. No one takes this throne for themselves but takes it only when they are called by God, just like Aaron.*

Hebrews 4:14-5:4

Once upon a time when my children were small, there was no greater treat for them than going through the McDonalds drive through to get a Happy Meal. One no doubt hectic day, with cheers of joy from the backseat, I pulled up to the window to pay for two cheeseburger Happy Meals with cheese-only, girl toys, AND a large Diet Coke (for my frazzled self). The cashier responded, motioning toward the front of the restaurant, "that car paid for you."

"Wait, what?" I asked, completely confused. The cashier repeated herself, "The man in that car paid for your Happy Meals." I pulled my car ahead feeling both ashamed to accept the gift and elated and humbled by the act of kindness.

I didn't have the presence of mind, in the moment, to immediately return the favor and pay for the car behind me and that further embarrassed me. It didn't matter - my order was paid for and there was nothing I could do to change it. The car was already gone and I was still so dumbfounded that I could barely string two words together.

In Hebrews, the writer tells us that Jesus is merciful, faithful, (2:17) and crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of his death (2:9). With his death, he took all that shame and embarrassment so that we could "draw near to the throne of favor with confidence." (4:16) I didn't have confidence accepting the unexpected gift that day and there have been lots of days since that I've felt unworthy in one way or another.

But, I think the confidence to "draw near the throne of favor" comes from being elated and humbled by Jesus's act of kindness and sacrifice, not by any earthly sacrifice we might make. Friends, let joy fuel your confidence to draw nearer to Him and share your joy so that it might inspire others!

Prayer: Lord, please continue to remind us daily of Your little lessons we so often miss. Amen.

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