

LET US THEREFORE COME BOLDLY UNTO THE THRONE OF GRACE

TEXT: HEBREWS 4:12-16

Introduction:

1. All throughout the Bible we find exhortations to pray, and we see another one in our text tonight (Heb. 4:16).
2. Spurgeon said the words, “Throne of Grace,” are “a gem in a golden setting. True prayer is an approach of the soul by the Spirit of God to the throne of God. It is not the utterance of words, it is not alone the feeling of desires, but it is the advance of the desires *to God*, the spiritual approach of our nature towards the Lord our God. True prayer is not a mere mental exercise, nor a vocal performance, but it is deeper far than that—it is spiritual commerce with the Creator of heaven and earth. God is a Spirit unseen of mortal eye, and only to be perceived by the inner man; our spirit within us, begotten by the Holy Ghost at our regeneration, discerns the Great Spirit, communes with him, prefers to him its requests, and receives from him answers of peace. It is a spiritual business from beginning to end; and its aim and object end not with man, but reach to God himself.”

I. COME BOLDLY: BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD TELLS US

1. We saw two weeks ago that “the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful” (Hebrews 4:12).
2. One of the great doctrines in the Word of God is the doctrine of prayer.
3. David said, “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:17).
4. Daniel 6:10 tells us that “when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.”
5. The apostle Paul said, “Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17).
6. One of our Lord’s disciples came to Him and said, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).
7. And of course, our greatest teacher is the Lord Jesus, who said, “that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).
8. The Bible teaches us all we need to know about prayer.

- It should be according to the will of God. “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us” (I John 5:14).
- It should be in Jesus’ name. Our Lord said, “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it” (John 14:14). The great evangelist, RA Torrey, said: But what is it to pray in the name of Christ?

Many explanations have been attempted that to ordinary minds do not explain. But there is nothing mystical or mysterious about this expression. If one will go through the Bible and examine all the passages in which the expression “in My name” or “in His name” or synonymous expressions are used, he will find that it means just about what it does in modern usage. If I go to a bank and hand in a check with my name signed to it, I ask of that bank IN MY OWN NAME. If I have money deposited in that bank, the check will be cashed; if not, it will not be. If, however, I go to a bank with somebody else’s name signed to the check, I am asking IN HIS NAME, and it does not matter whether I have money in that bank or any other, if the person whose name is signed to the check has money there, the check will be cashed.

If, for example, I should go to the First National Bank of Chicago, and present a check which I had signed for \$50.00, the paying teller would say to me:

“Why, Mr. Torrey, we cannot cash that. You have no money in this bank.”

But if I should go to the First National Bank with a check for \$5,000.00 made payable to me, and signed by one of the large depositors in that bank, they would not ask whether I had money in that bank or in any bank, but would honor the check at once.

So it is when I go to the bank of heaven, when I go to God in prayer. I have nothing deposited there, I have absolutely no credit there, and if I go in my own name I will get absolutely nothing; but Jesus Christ has unlimited credit in heaven, and He has granted to me the privilege of going to the bank with His name on my checks, and when I thus go, my prayers will be honored to any extent.

- We are to pray with importunity (cf. Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8). Remember the Syrophenician woman in Matthew 15 and Mark 7. Our Lord said to her, “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt” (Matthew 15:28).
- We are to pray in the Spirit. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” Jude 20 says, “praying in the Holy Ghost.”

- James 5:16 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James uses Elijah as an example of a righteous man who prayed and his prayers were answered.
9. We have only scratched the surface of this great subject but we must move along.

II. COME BOLDLY: BECAUSE WE HAVE A GREAT HIGH PRIEST (4:14-16).

1. The priesthood of Christ is one of the great themes of this epistle (cf. 3:1; 5:10).
2. Christ is our “great high priest.” Aaron was never given that title, nor was Melchizedek.
3. Aaron was the first high priest, but was never called a great high priest.
4. Melchizedek, the king of Salem, is identified in Genesis 14:18 as “the priest of the most high God,” but never the “great high priest.”
5. The Hebrew recipients of this epistle were accustomed to approaching God through their high priest, a Levite. The sacrifices were offered in the tabernacle, and then later on, in the temple.
6. But our Lord was not from the tribe of Levi. He did not serve as a priest during His earthly ministry. Our Lord is descended from Judah, the kingly line. This is developed later on (cf. 7:11-14).
7. Our Lord occupies a threefold office: prophet, priest, and king.
 - A. He was a prophet, speaking for God, when He came down to earth. The LORD told Moses, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deut. 18:18).
 - B. Christ is now our great high priest (Heb. 4:14).
 - C. Christ is coming back to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. The angel Gabriel said to Mary, “the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:32, 33).
8. Since Christ is now our great high priest, the Aaronic priesthood has been abolished. All priests today are unscriptural.
9. Our great high priest has “passed into the heavens” (4:14). According to Scripture, there are three heavens:

- A. The atmospheric heavens. Genesis 1:8 says, “And God called the firmament Heaven.”
 - B. Where the planets and stars are. Deuteronomy 4:19 says, “And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven...”
 - C. In II Corinthians 12:2, the apostle Paul refers to “the third heaven.” This is where the throne of God is located.
10. Our Lord ascended into heaven, and He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father interceding for us (cf. 1:3; 7:25).
 11. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (4:15). We can boldly approach the throne of grace because our great high priest is full of sympathy and tender compassion for His people.
 12. Hebrews 2:17 says the Lord Jesus Christ is “a merciful and faithful high priest.” He is Man, as well as God. And as man, He has in all points been tempted like us, yet He is “without sin.”
 13. Our Lord said to the Jewish religious leaders, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” (John 8:46).
 14. Our Lord also said, “For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing (no inbred sin) in me” (John 14:30).
 15. Second Corinthians 5:21 says Christ “knew no sin.”
 16. First Peter 2:22 says, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”
 17. First John 3:5 says, “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”
 18. Our Lord was “tempted like as we are” (4:15), yet His temptations were entirely from without. Ours are from both within and without.
 19. E. Schuyler English said our Lord’s temptations “proved His matchless worth, declared His holiness, and testified to His deity.”

III. COME BOLDLY: SO THAT WE CAN OBTAIN MERCY AND FIND GRACE

1. It is the throne of grace, not the throne of law.
2. I am always meeting people who think they are saved by keeping the law. James 2:10 says, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

3. Galatians 3:10 says, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”
4. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8, 9).
5. To the lost sinner, it is the throne of judgment, but to the born again believer it is “the throne of grace.”

CONCLUSION:

1. Adolph Saphir was born in Hungary in a well-respected Jewish family. His father, Israel Saphir, was a prominent figure in the Jewish community there. As a direct result of the Scottish mission to the Jews, the whole family accepted the gospel, believed that Jesus is the promised Messiah, and were all baptized in 1843.
2. Adolph Saphir was 12 years old at the time. He went on to become a pastor and author, and wrote a number of books, including an excellent commentary on the epistle to the Hebrews.
3. Adolph Saphir wrote, “We come in faith as sinners. Then shall we obtain mercy; and we always need mercy, to wash our feet: to restore to us the joy of salvation, to heal our backslidings, and bind up our wounds. We shall obtain help in every time of need. For God may suffer Satan and the world, want and suffering, to go against us; but He always causes all things to work together for our good. He permits the time of need, that we may call upon Him, and, being delivered by Him, may glorify His name.”