

Hebrews 5:1-10 – A Calling and Coronation – Lesson Summary

If you've been around the church long enough you'll realize that we like to use "churchy" terms. Things like fellowship, accountability, checking our hearts, and discipleship are all terms that are less prevalent outside the church. Calling is another word unfamiliar to many outside the church. In the first 10 verses of Hebrews 5 the author addresses the priestly calling. He does so in order to emphasize the Lordship of Jesus Christ our High Priest. Essentially, he unfolds a picture of Jesus in which His calling ends in His coronation.

In order to prove that Jesus was called to be our ultimate High Priest the author of Hebrews makes direct comparisons between the OT priests and Jesus. He focuses on **three primary characteristics of a priest**. He considers their priestly **sacrifice**, priestly **compassion**, and priestly **calling** as he narrows the reader's focus to the priestly calling of Jesus to be the final sacrifice for our sin.

When we consider the OT sacrificial system we see that a priest's role was to make sacrifices for the sins of the people. He acted on their behalf. Sacrifices and offerings were a part of their priestly duties. A payment must be made for our sin and that payment was the shedding of an animal's blood. However, Jesus' priestly sacrifice came at the expense of His own life. It was His blood that was payment for our sin. Jesus acted on behalf of the people too and His sacrifice was a part of His priestly duties as well.

Priests were not simply called to make sacrifices however. They were also called to show compassion on the people. In vs.2-3 we see that the OT priests are to sympathize with the people. They are encouraged to remember that they relate to the people because they are sinners too. A priest's role is one of caring, understanding, and love in the midst of performing their sacrificial duties. Christ's priestly compassion was no different. Jesus earnestly prays on our behalf. He understands our temptation. He understands pain and suffering yet He has overcome them all. Jesus loves His people with the tender compassion of a priest. He's for His people. He's committed, sympathetic, and understanding. Do you know Jesus to be a compassionate priest? Do you believe that He can relate to our struggles and temptations?

The author makes one final comparison between Jesus and the OT priests when he addresses the priestly calling. Notice that the author is very clear on who it is that calls the priests. *Heb. 5:4* states that no man takes on the priestly calling on their own but are instead called by God. No OT priest earned their title, petitioned for their title, or even purchased their title. Instead, God gave it to them. It was God who called the priests to act on behalf of the people. So it is with Christ. Jesus didn't choose His title. He didn't simply decide that he would be the High Priest. Instead, He followed His Father's will and ended up taking on the role of priest in the lives of broken sinners. Rather than perform the sacrifice, Jesus became the sacrifice. Rather than requiring our blood to be spilled as payment for our sin, His blood was shed. And rather than allowing us to be overcome by the world, He entered this world as a man in order that He may conquer the brokenness of this world through His death and resurrection.

No other prophet, priest, or king ever held all three offices at once. Jesus, as a result of His life, death, and resurrection has become our Prophet, Priest, and King. He is our sacrificial, compassionate, and called Priest who has been crowned with glory because of answering God's call on His life. He is our Great High Priest, and because of that, we can "draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need". (*Heb. 4:16*) Is Jesus your High Priest? Do you approach Him with boldness knowing that His life was the final sacrifice for sin? Run to the Father through the shed blood of His Son, our Great High Priest. You will find forgiveness, mercy, and grace in His perfect and final sacrifice on the cross.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What were some of the characteristics necessary for a priest according to this passage? What was their purpose in the OT laws? How do these things point to Jesus?
- 2) It can be hard to believe that Jesus can relate to our struggles with temptation. What temptations do you believe He may have faced? What temptations are you facing?
- 3) Because Christ is our perfect High Priest how can we live differently? Do you believe that you can draw near to the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace in your times of need? What has that looked like in your life?