**Greater Than All - wk 5 – Don’t Throw in the Towel**

**Throwing in the towel – boxing. I give up! This is Hebrews.**

**- Written to Hebrews followers of Jesus thinking about leaving Jesus**

**- Quotes OT more than rest of NT - an encouragement and warning**

**Chap 1 - Divinity of Jesus – Jesus is Lord God of all creation**

**Chap 2 - Humanity of Jesus – Jesus fully God became fully human**

**Chap 3 - Perseverance in Jesus – Those who are truly His, endure**

**Chap 4 - Promise of Rest in Jesus – now and the kingdom to come**

**All using the OT scriptures to teach perseverance.**

**Hebrews 4:14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, (Ascension) Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.**

**Jesus is our High priest – the Great Mediator**

**Mentioned in chap 3 Jesus is our high priest mediator.**

**Jesus the high priest - “passed through the heavens”**

**Came from heaven & returned – sitting at the right hand of God!**

**Jesus the son of God – “the Son of God” (Hwee-os Theos)**

**Son of God (God in flesh) – unique access to the Father.**

1. **Jesus goes to the Father for us! Don’t give up!!**

**Since this is true - don’t walk back on what we know to be true!**

**1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. (Not a priest, saint, Mary or friend or spouse)**

**Jesus is our high priest and mediator – this is speaking their language. We might not get how significant this is.**

**The temple still standing (pic) - within a few yrs it would be destroyed (70AD). God saw fit to dismantle it, as it was not needed anymore. Center of devotion to God and the priesthood – mediators for God.**

**The writer says priests are no longer needed; Jesus is the high priest.**

**From the Father, back to the Father, has access to the Father.**

**Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, (Double negative = means we do have a high priest who is able to understand and relate to our weaknesses) but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Jesus never ever sinned)**

**God became man – and experienced every pain we would feel.**

1. **Jesus understands what you’re going through - Don’t give up!!**

**Everything? Really?**

**Only the one, who never gave into temptation – can truly know the full strength, fury, and force of temptation- yet endured!**

**When your child hurts – to be able to take it from them – to carry that burden – that suffering – that sickness – that death – God did = Jesus.**

**“sympathize with our weaknesses” What weakness? Temptation to give up – tempted in every way – yet never gave up.**

**Heb 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to (boldly approach) the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

1. **Jesus gives you access to the presence of God - Don’t give up!!**

**Jesus gives us access to the very throne of God because of the cross.**

**The enemy would say you are nothing, filthy and could never know God. He won’t listen to you! But this is just the opposite, in Christ we are righteous and can boldly approach the throne.**

**\*\* God became a man – so man could approach God (other religions)**

**What do we find in the presence of God? His hands of mercy!**

**“…that we may receive mercy and find grace…”**

* **We receive Mercy = not getting what we deserve (justice)**
* **Find Grace = getting what we don’t deserve (forgiveness)**

**Thru Christ as a result, we can boldly approach the throne.**

1. **Jesus gives power (mercy and grace) to endure - Don’t give up!!**

**The power and strength to endure and stand strong in the face of temptation to quit and give up! This is internal strength to carry on!**

**We can call out to Jesus – who understands every temptation, who faced every imaginable hardship - and give us strength!**

**“to help in time of need.” - there are times of need, persecution, trials, sickness, frustration, suffering, temptation - He is our help in time of need! Thru Jesus come to the throne receive mercy, find grace.**

**2 Corinthians 12:7b-9 Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. (God allows hardship for our growth) 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. (Paul was a man of faith and prayer yet – never got his healing) 9 But He (God) said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.**

**What is your hardship? What is your struggle?**

**Jesus says, “My grace is sufficient for you.”**

**Then the writer of Hebrews talks about our universal need for Jesus…**

**Heb 5:1 For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. (those chosen to be a temporary mediators) 2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.**

**Breastplate of priest: 12 stones engraved w/ names of the tribes of Israel, and on the shoulder straps, stones engraved w/ the names. The people were always on the heart & shoulders of the high priest**

**(Exodus 28:4-30) Meant to stir compassion in the high priest – one who bares the weight for people on his heart and shoulders.**

**\*Footnote - Spiritual leaders should be motivated by compassion.**

**But there is a problem (the priest – “himself is beset with weakness”) Every priest is beset with weakness (sin). They are unable to meet the need.**

**Heb 5:3 Because of this he (the priest) is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. (priests were imperfect and in need of mercy and grace - forgiveness – BTW - I need forgiveness as a pastor - unlike Jesus) 4 And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, (their position is an appointed office – chosen by God) just as Aaron was.**

**Who was Aaron? The fist appointed High priest of Moses**

**Aaron is first official appointed priest of Yahweh in scriptures.**

**This is the guy all the priests wanted to be like!**

* **He also needed a savior – Aaron needed Jesus!**

**5 So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him (God) who said to Him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; (Psalm 2:7 – incarnation of Jesus) 6 as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110:4)**

**Who was Melchizedek? Abraham came across him. Little known about him. (We meet him more in chap 7)**

**Mel is the first priest of Yahweh mentioned in scripture.**

**While Aaron is the first official priest – Mel was the original G.**

* **He also needed a savior – Mel needed Jesus!**

**\*\*We all need Jesus – even your pastor and priests.**

**We all need his mercy and grace!! Jesus does forever what they could only do for a day. Why? Because they sin again- and again- and again.**

**I can’t save you – neither a friend, spouse, boy/girlfriend, child…**

**\*\* God is Holy and our sin causes us to fall short of His presence**

**\* Jesus is the perfect sinless high priest who bears our names on his heart and shoulders – eternally!**

1. **Jesus is forever there in time of need- Don’t give up!! (Priest forever)**

**Forever on and before the throne – available. He won’t bail or run!**

**A forever King, and forever priest – forever giving mercy!**

**For Jesus has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you!” Heb 13:5**

**He does not come and go like a friend, spouse, parent, or pastor**

**Is he here? Yes. Is he there? Yes – through Jesus he can always be found! Omnipresent – you can’t run from God!**

**Heb 5:7 In the days of his flesh, (while on the earth in his humanity – He was not a ghost – while on the cross) Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him (the Father) who was able to save Him (Jesus) from death, (the resurrection) and He was heard because of his reverence. (Psalm 22)**

**In his humanity – he felt every blow to the face, every sting of that whip, every cut of the steal, every strike of the hammer – and he cried out in anguish and pain – He knows the pain and it was that pain that paid for our sin!**

1. **Jesus paid for our failures and sin - Don’t give up!!**

**You have not gone too far – done too much – caused too much pain. Jesus suffered and died and rose again – come to him and receive mercy and find grace. You have not gone too far!**

**Every sin, every shame, every regret – Jesus carried.**

**Isaiah 53:6 - the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

**Iniquity – absolute guilt and it’s punishment**

**But you don’t know what I’ve done… you’re right.**

**But God does and he offers mercy and grace just the same.**

**The writer – gets a little tricky to follow – has lead to false teaching**

**Heb 5:8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source (author) of eternal salvation to all who obey him, (btw - the greatest lessons are learned in times of suffering)**

**How can Jesus, who is God, and knows all things – learn obedience?**

**How can Jesus, who is God and perfect and holy – be made perfect?**

* **Jesus did not go from disobedience to obedience.**

**He experienced obedience. Remember Jesus experienced all the things. God obeys no one – all obey him. Yet in humility he experienced obedience as unto death.**

* **Jesus did not go from imperfect to perfect.**

**All he endured made him perfectly suited to be the author of salvation. Brought it to completion (perfected) and perfectly suited.**

1. **Jesus is the prefect author & source of salvation - Don’t give up!!**

**Jesus is not perfected – but he perfectly completed salvation.**

**Jesus is author, source, and the only way – He determined it.**

**Jesus perfect obedience gave us perfect salvation.**

**No one is better suited to help you and no one else can.**

**Heb 5:10 being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. (The mystery man Mel started it all… but Jesus was his author – Jesus was his source. More on this in chap 7) 11 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.**

**Even with all this – you can still miss the help and hope of Jesus.**

**This can be hard to follow – dull heart – spirit problems**

**Do you have ears to hear? (Spiritual ears)**

**We have a high priest (Jesus) who can relate to our struggles**

**We have a high priest (Jesus) who withstood all struggles**

**We have a high priest (Jesus) who can give you the strength to endure**

* **DON’T GIVE UP!!**

**We learn from Jesus and follow Jesus - Like Christ to the Father, we are to call out to Jesus in humility and faithfulness.**