

The Wednesday Word, Oct. 14, 2009: Touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities

Hebrews 4:15, For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;

What a statement! When we reverse it and put it in the positive it reads, “For we have a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” This is unspeakably good news. Who is this sympathetic high priest? He is Jesus our Savior. He’s the high priest who is fully and completely human, yet without sin. He alone is the one who has accomplished and finished the sacrificial work of the priesthood. It was Christ alone who went to the cross and accomplished the atonement. Now, we have one finished sacrifice---Calvary. We have one Priest---Christ Jesus. We have one confessional----the Throne of Grace!

And this same priest, the Lord Jesus, is touched, not just by our infirmities, but by the very feeling of them! When we have “dark nights of the soul” where can we go? The answer is, we have a High Priest who understands us and sympathizes with us in every sorrow and trial that life throws at us.

He is the High Priest who has our names written on His heart. He is the one who carries us by His great strength. This same Jesus, the eternal Word made flesh, sympathizes with us. But how can this be? How is it that this great high priest identifies with us? After all, He is the one who made the worlds. He is the radiance and brightness of God’s glory. He upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb 1:3).

So, how can He sympathize with us? How can He feel our pain? It’s because He was in “all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb 4:15).” Now that’s a stunning statement. The truth of the matter is this, no man ever suffered like Christ Jesus. He knows what it is like to be tempted and to suffer. Of course He endured the frustrations of human life and the temptations hurled at him by Satan, but these were not the worst of His sufferings. His greatest sufferings were at the cross, and no I don’t mean the pain of the nails and the thorns. These pains, horrific as they were, were not the worst part of His misery. The awful trauma for Christ was that there on the cross He became a curse for us. The Father in Heaven cursed Him. The wrath of righteousness fell on Him. At the cross, there was no verbal declaration from heaven, there was no voice declaring, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Instead of the voice of approval, there was the darkness and agony of awful judgment. Instead of a welcome there was rejection and banishment. He was cut off and excommunicated, not for His own sins, but for ours. He was without sin yet He suffered as if he were you and me. In this way He can fully identify with us. He bore our sins (1 Peter 2:24).

“Our fellow sufferer yet retains
A fellow feeling of our pains
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, his agonies and cries.”

He is our faithful high priest! He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Who would you rather have help you with your sin and failure, the man who has fallen into sin or the man who has successfully resisted every temptation to sin? In Christ we have a sympathetic High Priest who

was tempted, but never yielded to the temptations. On earth He was tempted in all things as we are. At the cross there was no temptation, but He endured the fellowship and consequences of our sin while remaining untainted and sinless. Our sins were reckoned to Him yet He Himself never sinned. However, as our Priest, He somehow experienced the lostness, horror and consequences of our sin. He remembers His earthly experience. He knows who we are and what we have done and He has paid for it! Go to him today, just as you are and bear your heart to him. He can be touched by the feeling of your infirmity!

He who for men their surety stood
And poured on earth His precious blood
Pursues in heaven His mighty plan
The Savior and the friend of man

Though now ascended up on high
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name
He knows the frailty of our frame

And that's the Gospel Truth!