

Hold Firmly to the Ascended Lord

Scripture Reading — Hebrews 4:14-16

Since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven . . . let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. — Hebrews 4:14

Jesus' ascension to heaven gives us confidence before God.

Sometimes we use exalted language to describe Jesus: he is Lord, and he is the Son of God. He is “the heaven-born Prince of Peace . . . the Sun of Righteousness,” as a Christmas hymn puts it. This is all true, and we rightly worship Jesus as the second person of the Trinity.

But the Bible also proclaims that the Son of God became one of us—a human being. Because he took on our human nature, Jesus is able to “empathize with our weaknesses.” Think of that! Jesus knows what it feels like, as a human, to be tempted by sin—“and yet he did not sin.” He understands what it is to suffer wrong from others. He grasps the weakness of physical exhaustion and pain. And now, all of that human experience rules at God's right hand in heaven!

The author of Hebrews reminds us that we do not pray to a distant, unfeeling God. Jesus is called a “priest,” someone who represents human interests before God. He has been where you are, and he represents that experience as the one who has paid the price for sin.

Are you experiencing temptation today? Are you suffering or feeling weak? Jesus knows what that is. Hold firmly to him and receive his mercy so that you can serve God confidently, no matter what your weakness is.

Prayer

Jesus, you are the one who “knows our every weakness.” Thank you that we can pray confidently, knowing that you hear and understand us. Give us the strength we need today. Amen.

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Printed on August 14, 2020

