

Jesus' Prayer For Peter

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[0:00] Luke chapter 22, and we will be reading verse 14 through 34. Luke 22, 14. When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

And he said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.

After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying, This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.

[1:05] The son of man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him. They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

Also, a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. And Jesus said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who exercise authority over them call themselves benefactors.

But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. But who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves?

Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials, and I confer on you a kingdom, just as my father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Well, Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail, and when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

[2:28] But he replied, Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death. Jesus answered, I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times that you know me.

Well, what a people to have such a God to face whatever happens, as we've just sung and worshipped together. I wonder if you've noticed that some people have jobs where they're doing things that nobody really needs done for them.

We used to see more often this one job that I'm going to tell you about, and we don't see it so often, but it's still to be found, and especially in Japan, I'm told.

But I'm speaking of a department store elevator lady. The elevator door opens, you walk in, and there she is.

What floor would you like? Well, there's ten floors, and you want to go up to the eighth floor. And so she pushes the button with the eight on it. And up you go, it stops, the doors open, and you walk out.

[3:48] And that's her job. Now, if she was sick and absent one day, it's not like you would not be able to get to the eighth floor, because you could push the button eight for yourself, couldn't you?

And so I put this forward as a job that doesn't really need to be done for us. And some jobs are like that.

If that's your job, I'm just using it as a way of illustration. But I want to assure you that that's not true of the three jobs that our Lord Jesus Christ has.

His job is being a prophet, and is being a priest, and is being a king. That somehow we could get on just as well whether he showed up for us or not in those jobs that he has for us.

No, apart from him doing these three jobs, there is simply no salvation for anyone, anywhere.

These are things that we stand in desperate need of our Lord Jesus doing for us.

[4:58] And those who see their need most will be those who appreciate Christ and his jobs most.

And so I ask you, class, why do you need a prophet to teach you the will of God?

Because I am a traitor. And why do you need a priest? Because I am guilty. And how is Christ a priest?

He died for our sins and the deeds of God for us. Okay, that's our present study. The work of Christ as a priest, and we see it's two parts in that answer.

Dying for our sins, pleading with God for us. Last week we saw that having died for our sins, our high priest arose and ascended into heaven where he now ever lives to make intercession for us.

His work of sacrifice is over. His work of intercession is not. It's a saving work, we saw. It's a present work. It's a personal work.

[6:08] It's a comforting work. And it's an effective work. Now today we want to see a personal example of Jesus' work of intercession.

And it's Luke's account of the gospel that tells us about our Lord's prayer for Peter. One of his disciples. And though this prayer was offered before his sacrifice, before Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and while he's still on the earth, it still serves as a peek into his intercessory work that he now does for us in heaven.

Much like John chapter 17, that prayer of our Lord Jesus for his disciples, on this very night that we read of, serves as a foretaste of his prayers for his disciples now that he is in heaven.

And so we're going to see from Luke's account of Jesus' prayers for Peter that his prayers for Peter were not something that Peter could do without.

That Peter could not have gotten on without Jesus' prayers. And we'll see as well that we can no more do without his prayers any more than Peter.

[7:28] The situation is familiar. It was the night of Jesus' betrayal and arrest. He's eaten the last Passover with his disciples. He's instituted the Lord's Supper with them there in the upper room.

And before they come across the Kidron Valley into the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says to Peter, and it's our text for today, Luke 22, 31 and 32, We have two points this morning, two main points, Satan sifting and Jesus praying.

And a wonderful convergence of those two points. So first, Satan sifting. The text begins with a repetition of Simon, Simon, Simon, Simon.

The double use of his name is an attention grabber. Perhaps you parents do it sometimes with your own children. Once is not enough, but twice you lay hold of their attention.

Don't miss this. You need to hear this, son. And that's how Jesus arrests Simon. As to his danger. He's alerting him to his danger and the seriousness of this warning.

[9:04] And the warning is this. Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. He's putting Peter on notice of a coming severe trial, and he wants Peter to be aware of its source.

Satan, he says. Satan, he says. Satan is the one doing this. That unseen enemy of yours is planning a vicious assault.

And the viciousness of his assault is seen in the image that he used. Satan is asked to sift you as wheat. Now that's what the farmer would do after he's brought his wheat into the threshing floor and spread it out there and had an ox pull a threshing sled over that wheat.

It would crush that wheat and squeeze it out from the hole. And now there's this pile of both wheat and chaff and foreign materials, stones and dirt, all lying there.

Well, it's got to be separated. So they would take a sieve in some cases and put the whole mess in there. And then they would start shaking. Back and forth.

[10:15] To and fro. Up and down. To separate the wheat from the chaff. And that's the imagery that Jesus uses to speak of how vicious this attack of Satan will be upon Peter.

The devil is going to shake you and turn you every way but loose, he says to Peter. Now, this is what Satan was planning for Peter and indeed all the disciples because the you here is plural. Satan has asked to sift you. You all. Speaking of all these disciples. And it would be this violent attack.

Well, what is this violent attack? Well, it's the whole ordeal of the betrayal of Jesus. The arrest of Jesus. The trial and mistreatment of Jesus.

His being beaten and whipped and being crucified. And the death of the Son of God, their Messiah. And all of it would unfold so quickly in the next hours.

[11 : 23] Jerking them from one scene to another. Back and forth. Just even causing them to wonder what is happening. And this would truly shake them to the core and try their faith.

But on top of this, these words refer especially to the further shaking that was in store for Peter. That would happen at the home of the high priest that very night. When Peter would be tempted to deny that he even knows Jesus.

This would be no small temptation. It would be a violent sifting and shaking from the evil one.

Now, let's be clear about Satan's aim in this sifting process. What is Satan's agenda here? What is he trying to do? Well, his aim is to destroy Peter's faith.

Nothing less than to out and out destroy his faith. And we see this from what Jesus prays for him in verse 32. He says, That's the thing he's got his eye on, Peter.

[12 : 33] Your faith. And after having studied faith for so many weeks in Hebrews 11. And having seen as we did. How crucial it is to the whole Christian life.

Is it any wonder that Satan would put his cross hairs on the faith of Peter? For faith is the jugular of the Christian life.

Cut this. And the life and the power of godliness is gone. And what is it precisely then that Satan wants to do with Peter's faith?

If he's attacking Peter's faith, what is it that he wants to do with it? Well, he wants to make it fail.

You see that. And fail not for a night or for a week.

But completely and finally to fail. To utterly fail. He's not out just to shake it up a bit. He's out to destroy it.

[13 : 31] Not just to make his faith flicker. But to extinguish it altogether. To snuff it out as you do a candle with a candle snuffer. Until there is nothing left of the fire.

He not only wants Peter to deny Christ three times. He wants him to go on denying Christ. Turning away from him completely. Following Christ no more. No more believing in him as his Messiah Savior.

That is his aim. It's to destroy Peter's faith. To have him turn out no better than Judas. Well, in order to make your faith fail, Jesus says to Peter, Satan has asked to sift you like wheat.

Satan. Now, Peter's no match for him. Peter's just a human being. Satan's a fallen angelic being with supernatural powers. He's not only stronger than Peter.

He's more crafty than Peter is discerning. And he knows Peter's weaknesses. He knows Peter's vulnerable times.

[14 : 40] He knows the buttons to push on Peter. And he's orchestrating a whole series of temptations that begin in the upper room already.

And that will continue for the next days. A series of temptations that are tailor-made to destroy Peter's faith.

And worst of all, Satan works incognito. He stays hidden. Behind the scenes. You can't see him.

Oh, Peter will see his instruments. Peter will see that maidservant asking him, Do you know Jesus? Didn't I see you? He'll see the soldiers.

But he'll fail to see Satan. Behind his instruments. Sifting. And tempting him. Even now, Satan was near at hand, though Peter did not see him.

[15 : 39] Even now, Satan was plotting his apostasy, though Peter does not know it. Oh, but Jesus knows it. And that's our hope.

Jesus knows all about it. Satan is a chained lion. And can go no further than what God allows. He had to ask and receive permission to sift Peter.

Much like he had to do in Job's case, as we read in the book of Job. Jesus knows it. He knows all about Satan's plan. And he does something about it.

He not only warns Peter, he prays for Peter. He prays for Peter. Satan wants to shake you with temptation so that you'll quit believing on me.

But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. So we saw Satan sifting. We now see Jesus praying. I want you to notice how intensely personal is the work of our high priest praying for his people.

[16 : 45] We talked about it last week. But he says, I have prayed for you. And here the you is singular. I have prayed for you, Simon. Yes, I've prayed for the others.

John 17. You can read all the whole prayer for all of his disciples. But I have prayed for you, Simon. Calls him by name because he prays for him by name.

And there's comfort in this for us, that Jesus knows our name. And he knows everything that we're facing. So believers, there is a very real devil.

Who hates the sheep of Christ and seeks to steal and kill and destroy them. And we are no match for them, for him any more than Peter was.

But the Lord Jesus knows his rage. And he knows his craftiness firsthand. And he knows how blind and weak we are. And so he prays for us.

[17 : 46] Just as he did for his disciples in that prayer of John 17. Where twice he says, Father, protect them from the evil one. Yes, he prays for our protection from the evil one.

And he teaches us to pray. Deliver us from the evil one. He has the apostle Paul teach us that our struggle is never merely with flesh and blood.

Think about all your problems in life. How often are people behind it? And Peter says, oh, if that's all the further you see, you are short-sighted indeed.

No, our struggle is not with flesh and blood. But behind the scenes, there are powers of darkness. Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Satan and his host of fallen angels. And in every trial and trouble you face, Satan seeks your harm.

[18 : 53] He has his agenda. He has his purpose to pull you down, even as Christ has his to build you up. And though we're told this, yet because we can't see him, we're likely to forget about this unseen enemy of ours.

And so Jesus tells Peter about this enemy and warns him. And though we're not to be ignorant of Satan's desire, the reality is, or Satan's devices, the reality is that we often are ignorant of his devices.

We're often just like Peter right here. We really don't know all the things that he's cooking up to destroy our faith. I mean, just think for a moment.

How many temptations of Satan were you aware of right this past week? You say, yeah, I see his plan. He's out to trip me up.

He's out to pull me down. He's trying to destroy. How many? One in a hundred of his temptations?

[20 : 02] What we do see and know of his temptations are so few compared to all that he is doing against us. But here's our comfort.

Jesus knows every move he makes. He knows every desire and aim of Satan against us and prays for us accordingly. So we have a high priest, whoever lives in heaven, to make intercession for us personally.

I've prayed for you, Simon. Is that personal enough? For you. And that means he knows your thoughts and your weaknesses and your vulnerabilities and when you are most likely to fall and the plots of Satan against you.

And he's not a high priest that's unable to sympathize with us in our struggles and in our weakness. Why not? Because he became one of us. He was made like us in every way and he lived right where we live and he was tempted just as we are.

In every point, in every way like we are. So when he sees us being tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

[21 : 17] Hebrews 2 verse 18. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. And he knows exactly the mercy and grace that we need from him.

So how blessed to know that even when I am unaware of my danger, this high priest prays for me personally. Now having been told of his danger, Peter still doesn't get it, does he?

He tells Jesus, I'm ready to go with you to prison and to death. Verse 33. He's ever so sincere.

He really meant that. But he's so mistaken, isn't he? Jesus tells him further of his weakness that in just a few hours. It's not like a few years from now, this is good.

No, just in a few hours from Peter saying this, he would three times deny that he even knows Jesus. That his determined loyalty would wither that fast under the power of Satan's temptation.

[22 : 27] And still Peter doesn't get it, but replies, though all others should forsake you, I never will. You read that in the other gospel accounts. Never me.

Though everybody else should forsake you. Oh, when we talk like that, we're in trouble, aren't we? We're never closer to a fall than when we think that we're standing.

Fine. Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he falls. And so we see our friend Peter here. Pitching for a fall. Pride goes before a fall. Yet how out of touch we can be too with our own weakness and Satan's power. But here's our comfort to know that even when, especially when we underestimate our weakness, Jesus knows it and prays accordingly for us.

Well, they enter the garden of Gethsemane. And because of the fierceness of Satan's coming sifting, Peter is told again, watch and pray so that you do not enter into temptation.

[23:41] For the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Peter, watch. Peter, pray. But he didn't feel his danger. And he was tired, we're told.

And so he slept, as the others did, when he should have been praying. And are we much different? How differently we would pray if we knew how close we were to losing our faith.

How differently we'd pray if we knew just how powerful Satan's temptations are, that they would cause our faith to fail. And yet when Peter was sleeping, Jesus was praying.

And praise be to Jesus that when, through neglect, we are not praying, he is. And he never slumbers or sleeps in his watch care over his people, in his prayerful, loving watch care over us. And now Peter's in the courtyard of the house of the high priest. The arrest has taken place. The betrayal, the arrest.

[24:46] Now Jesus is being tried inside and Peter's outside in the courtyard. And again, Peter sees the maidservant. He sees the soldiers.

But he doesn't see Satan behind them. Nor does he see his own weakness and even danger of temptation yet. And so he's just, he who just a few hours before felt so much love and loyalty to Christ that he'd rather die for Christ than deny him, now does deny him three times, saying, I don't know the man.

Even calling down curses, may God curse me if I do know him. Our strongest love for Christ can wither that fast into sinful compromise and denial of Jesus.

We can walk out of a communion service where we have had fresh faith to look upon our Savior's love and we're melted and we feel like I would do anything for this Savior. And Monday morning, with an opportunity at the water cooler, we can deny that we know him.

We can fail to stand for him and his truth. J.C. Ryle comments, Men little know what they will do till the time of temptation actually comes.

[26:11] Peter thought he'd stand. He did anything but stand. Down, down, down he goes. And yet, even while he was sinning, Jesus' prayers for him were heard in heaven.

There again is our high priestly work of Christ. And as the words of denial were still tumbling out of Peter's mouth, a rooster crowed. And at that point, Jesus turned from where he was and looked at Peter.

And then the words of Jesus came rushing into Peter's memory. And he remembered what Jesus had said he would do before the rooster crowed. And he went out and he wept bitterly.

And then he repented of his sin. And his faith in the Lord Jesus was restored and revived. And he went on to serve Christ in his church for the rest of his life.

Even being put to death for the Savior. But why? That's the question of this sermon. Why? Why was his great fall followed by a great recovery?

[27:28] You know, the chart of the Christian life is like this, isn't it? But why is it that when Peter falls, there is an uptick?

Why is there recovery for each of his fall? Why is there this recovery for this fall? Why is it not followed by yet another denial of Christ? And another and another until he altogether forsakes Christ and follows him no more.

And his faith utterly fails. That's what Satan was aiming at. Why didn't it happen? Why does Peter's fall not in like Judas's fall? Another disciple. Was it because of Peter's strong determination and loyal commitment?

No, we saw just how far that got him. The answer is in Jesus. But I. But I.

Satan desires to make your faith fail. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. In other words, the answer is the prayers of Jesus.

[28:35] And that's the reason for Peter's recovery. Standing between Peter and total apostasy are the powerful prayers of Jesus for him and his faith not to fail.

Left to himself, he would have gone on denying Christ. And his faith would have utterly failed him. And that's why we said last week, and I reiterate it this week, that Christ's intercessory work of

praying for his people is a saving work.

It's part of our salvation. It's not something unnecessary.

It's not some job that we really don't need done that we can do as well for ourselves, whether he shows up or not. No, if Jesus doesn't pray for Peter, he's gone.

He's gone forever. Never to follow Jesus again. He will fall away. His faith will utterly fail.

[29 : 43] But I have prayed for you that it will not fail. And so Jesus is able to do what? To save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Christ because he always lives to intercede for them.

Why will they be saved to the uttermost? Because he always lives to pray for them. Why is Peter saved to the uttermost? Because Jesus lives to pray for him. And it's no different for you and for me, brothers and sisters.

What do we owe to the prayers of the Lord Jesus for us? Nothing less than your salvation. Than your safe arrival in heaven. Your every recovery after every fall.

Why don't you just keep falling? You know people do. You know that. You know some of them. And they're nowhere following Christ. They just kept falling and walked right away from. They apostatized.

They turned away. Their faith failed. Why doesn't your faith fail? Don't say because I mean it and they didn't. Don't say because I'm determined and they aren't.

[30 : 48] Hear what Jesus says. Because I pray for you. I'm praying for you. That your faith will not fail.

What do you owe to the prayers of Jesus? You're persevering another day in the way of faith. The way of repentance. The way of holiness. The way of obedience to Christ. You owe it all to Jesus' prayer.

How is it that you're still on the road to heaven? After all these years. And all of the devil's hatred and malice. And persecution and sifting of you. How is it that you've not become another casualty. To Satan's aim to snuff out faith. Just this. That you have an almighty savior and friend. At the right hand of God. Who never stops praying for you. What good news for us.

He's daily securing supplies of grace for us. And so how many ways of escape have opened up to you. In the midst of your temptations.

[31 : 46] And your sifting. And your shaking. Suddenly there was the way of escape. In answer to Jesus' prayers. How many times when your faith was weak.

And your desire for sin was strong. That you were distracted. From the temptation. In answer to Jesus' prayers. In other times when the opportunity for sin was present.

Yet there was strength to resist and say no. In answer to Jesus' prayers. For you. How many times once we've fallen. And our strength has failed.

That recovering grace was present. And a spirit of true sorrow and repentance was given. And faith to look again to Christ.

And him crucified to cleanse me from my sin. All in answer to his prayers for me. You see. He was doing that for you this week brother.

[32 : 46] And the week before sister. This is what he's doing in heaven for you. That's why you're still a Christian. That's why your faith hasn't utterly failed.

And you haven't shipwrecked the faith. That's why though a righteous man falls seven times. Yet he always arises. Because Jesus prays.

That our faith not fail. Oh we need to realize that. That without the prayers of Jesus. Peter's faith would have completely died out.

And so would ours. To where we would no longer believe in Jesus. Oh we still might have a historical faith. Yes I believe he exists. But we would not have a saving faith.

That attaches us personally to him. We wouldn't have a faith. That purifies the heart. A faith that overcomes the world. A faith that works by love.

[33 : 42] A faith that draws from our Lord Jesus. Every needed grace. In this life. No that faith would be snuffed out. But our high priest does not snuff out a smoldering wick.

The scriptures say. Instead he blows upon it. He blows it into a flame. And then he feeds it with oil. So that it never goes out. So that between Satan and our faith failing.

Stands the powerful prayers of Jesus. There's Satan. And he's sifting you. And what is he intending? He's intending for your faith to fail. What stands between you and falling away?

Completely. The prayers of Jesus. Boy that's something to give us hope. For the new year. Not my strength. And how good I've been for the last so many years.

That I sure hope to make it through another year. Of temptation and trials. And still be following Jesus. January 1, 2016. Now. My hope.

[34 : 42] Is built on Jesus. And his sacrifice. And his. Prayers. For me. Drink that in for your encouragement. That even now he's praying for you.

And think. How that after Peter had fallen. The Lord looked at him. He goes out and he weeps bitterly. And he remembers what the Lord had said. Can you imagine the encouragement Peter drew.

From the fact that Jesus. Was praying for him. That his faith would not utterly fail. He just had a major failure of faith.

What an encouragement. That even when we have fallen into sin. That we know that Jesus prayers. Are prevailing for us in heaven. It's important for us to know that.

And notice how confident Jesus is. That his prayers will be heard and answered. For Peter. He says. But I have prayed for you Simon. That your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back.

[35 : 46] Strengthen your brothers. You see how he speaks of it as a certainty. It's not if. You turn back. It's when you turn back. Absolutely certain.

That this fallen disciple. Is going to. Recover. Turn back to Christ. How can he be so sure. How can Jesus be so sure. That it's not if. But when. Peter's recovery is certain. Because Jesus prayers are effective.

That's the answer. Peter's recovery is certain. Because Jesus prayers. Are 100% effective. You realize.

As we said last week. That he has purchased with his own blood. Everything he asked for. So what's he asking for. That Peter's faith may not fail. He purchased that.

[36 : 43] With his sacrifice. That he once made on Calvary's cross. And now he pleads. Before the throne. And that's why his father. Cannot say to him no. No.

He cannot say no. But must give grace. For Peter's. Persevering. Faith. As we sang. More happy. But not more secure.

The glorified spirits. In heaven. Why. Why are we as secure. As those that have already. Made it to heaven. Why is it as certain.

That. That we will be there. As sure as they are there. Because the same Jesus. Who prayed for them. And got them home to heaven. Is now praying for us.

It's certain. When. You recover. Strengthen. Your brothers. And of course. It all happened to Peter.

[37 : 39] Just as Jesus said it would. His faith is kept from. Failing ultimately. And as a broken man. He turns back to Christ. And then gives the rest of his life.

To strengthening his brothers. You can read all about his. Strengthening his brothers. In the book of Acts. And in the two epistles. That he wrote to his brethren. In first Peter. And second Peter.

And we mark it all down. To the prayers of Jesus. Thwarting the devil's purposes. In Peter's shaking and fall. And instead working it all together.

For good. Peter's good. And the good of his brethren. As my friend. Arden Hodgins. Has said of Peter.

He did not come out of this fall. Breaking even. He came out. Ahead. You know sometimes we fall. And we think. Oh if I could just be back.

[38 : 35] To where I was. That's not the way it was. Was it? Peter fell. But when he came back. It wasn't just to break even. He came out ahead. Peter comes out of this fall.

More humble. And more aware. Of his own weakness. And therefore. More able. To deal gently. And sympathize with others.

In their weaknesses. He comes out of this fall. Less self-confident. And more dependent. Upon the Lord Jesus. He comes out. With a greater awareness.

Of how much he needs. The Lord Jesus. And he comes out. Of this fall. More watchful. And prayerful. Against Satan's temptations.

In other words. He's a better man. For having fallen. A better man. Ahead. Of where he was before. What power. Is there. In the prayers of Jesus.

[39 : 30] For his own. It enables us. To triumph. Over Satan. Even when we fall. It brings good. Out of evil. And strength. Out of Satan.

Shaking. And it's this. Strengthened. Peter. Then. This. This chastened. And now. Strengthened. Peter. Peter. Who in turn. Then. Warns. And strengthens.

His brothers. Goes to them. And encourages them. Says to them. In first. Peter. Five. Eight. And nine. Your enemy. Your enemy.

The devil. Prowls around. Like a roaring lion. Seeking. Whom he may devour. Resist him. Standing. Firm. In.

The faith. Oh let me tell you brother. I thought I was standing. And I fell. You need to resist him.

[40 : 25] Standing. Firm. In the faith. Don't lean on your own. Strength. Look to Jesus. Trust in him. And you will find strength. In your temptation. He's strengthening.

His brethren. Even as Jesus said. He would. And though Peter is. Obviously a special. Apostle of Jesus. With a special ministry.

Given to him. I want to challenge you. With this very lesson. For all of us. If the Lord has recovered you. Out of any sin. You too. Are to have.

A ministry. Of strengthening. Others. Your brothers. Your sisters. That out of your experience. Of your fall. You might not only learn.

And become stronger yourself. But you might be able. To come alongside. Of your brothers and sisters. And to strengthen. Them. As well. To.

[41 : 20] Remind them. Of the dangers. Of self-dependence. Of the neglect. Of prayer. Of not looking. To Jesus. Not watching. Against sin.

You can go to them. When they have fallen. And encourage them. To return to the Lord. Who is full of grace. And ready to forgive. What a gracious master he is.

Let me tell you. When I fell. And I came back. He received me. With open arms. And so you see. You. And I.

Can minister. To our brethren. After our fall. So what do we owe. To the prayers of Jesus. In heaven. Our great high priest. Our very salvation. Our perseverance. To the end.

Our protection. Our purity. Our strength. Our recovery. Our ongoing usefulness. In this world. It depends on Jesus' prayers. And the Bible.

[42 : 20] Applies this truth. In this way. To us. Since. We have. Such a great high priest. Let us. Therefore.

Come. To the throne of grace. With confidence. That we may receive mercy. We might find mercy. And receive grace. To help us. In our time of need. Hebrews 4.

14. Through 16. It's the Bible's. Own application. Of this. This. Doctrine. Of Jesus. Our great high priest. He's there in heaven. For us. What.

What should that mean. For us. That should. That should get us. Going off. Into the throne of grace. Do you mean. That. That Jesus. Christ. Who is full of grace. Sits upon the throne of grace.

And he's there. For us. Well then. Go to him. And go to him. With confidence. And go and ask. For all the grace. That you need. He's there for you.

[43 : 17] He has just what you need. Oh what an encouragement. To us then. To make use of him. Oh what a sad thing. To have such a great high priest.

So loaded with grace. And the throne of grace. And. And we don't. Make use of him. And we don't come and say. Oh Lord Jesus. Hold me up. Or I will fall. Help me in this trouble.

Not to fall. But to honor you. And to. To please you. Come to him. He is that great high priest. And he's there for you. But maybe he's not your great high priest.

You see. For you to get a place in the prayers of Jesus. You must come to God through him. You must come. Repudiating your past life. And saying. I have gone astray.

I've gone my own way. But God I am returning to you. Please forgive me of my sins. For Jesus sake. Because of what Jesus did. Receive me. And Jesus is able to save to the uttermost.

[44 : 18] All that come to God through him. That's why he lives. He ever lives. To make intercession. For all who will come to God through him. Have you come to God through Christ?

Are you trying to come in your own name. In your own good works? No. That's what you turn your back on. And you come to God through Christ. He's the high priest.

He's the only way you can have any business with God. You've got to come through the one mediator. Jesus. You're mediating high priest. And if you do. He will forgive you your sins.

And you will have a place in the prayers of Jesus. And enjoy every benefit of his salvation. That he dispenses to his people.

So may we face this coming year. With the confidence in our great high priest. That he lives for us. He prays for us. And even when we're unaware of our danger. And our self-confidence.

[45 : 18] And what Satan's cooking up for us. That he knows. And he prays. So let's come to him. Let's not live another day without conscious dependence upon our Lord Jesus.

Let's pray. We thank you Father in heaven for your word. And how it sets before us. The wonders of Christ. Our mediator.

That he indeed is the only way to you. And how as a high priest. That he made the ultimate sacrifice for sin in his own blood. And how he now pleads the merits of his blood before your throne.

We thank you that we have it not only in doctrinal form. But we have it in personal form. And we have it in the life of another man. Of like passions as we are.

Like Peter. And that we can look into a great fall in his life. And see the difference that the prayers of Jesus made for him. And we can take hope.

[46 : 20] And put all of our confidence in this Savior. That he indeed saves his people from their sins. So we thank you Lord Jesus for praying for us.

Keep us dependent. Keep us ever coming to this throne of grace. And gather others today. To come and receive grace. Promised in the gospel.

To all who turn and come to you. We ask in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.