

Mind the Gap

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[0:00] And if y'all would open up your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 2, verses 5 through 18, it's on page 1188 of your Pew Bible.

If you're new to Christ the King Church, we typically preach expositional sermons, which means we are preaching through books at a time, and we've just started preaching through the book of Hebrews.

Hear God's Word. Verse 5, chapter 2, For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking.

It has been testified somewhere, What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.

Now, in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him, but we see him, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

[1:19] For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies, and those who are being sanctified, those who are sanctified, all have one source.

That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, I will tell of your name to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise.

And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, behold, I and the children God has given me. Since, therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who, through fear of death, were subject to lifelong slavery.

For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Amen. Has anybody been to London?

[2:43] I see those hands. I have not. I want to be there. There is a lot of people in the tube, the subway system of London. There is tiled into the platform on the subway stations three words.

Mind the gap. There's this gap between the platform station and the train that comes in.

And it says mind the gap because you don't want to fall into the gap. You want to step onto the train. And so you have mind the gap.

So say the Brits. I think Americans would say don't fall in. When it comes to the book of Hebrews, mind the gap means don't fall away.

The book of Hebrews is one long exhortation to hold fast to Jesus. And we've got a gap to mind. It's not the gap in London subway stations.

[3:49] A little distance between a platform and a train. It's the gap of time between Christ's first coming and his second coming.

His first coming, Jesus lived a sinless, perfect life. He died on the cross for our sins. He was raised from the dead, ascended on high. And now he is exalted at the right hand of God, seated on his throne, carrying out his purposes.

That is his first coming. And his second coming is when he returns to make all things right as the judge of all. So we're living in between his first coming and his second coming.

We're in a gap. We're living in the already but not yet. And when you're living in the gap, you can lose sight of things.

Up until this point in the book of Hebrews, the author of Hebrews has been emphasizing that Jesus is totally God. His divine nature.

[4:52] He is the radiance of the glory of God. He is the exact imprint of his nature. And not only is he emphasizing the deity of Jesus, the Son, but he also aims us.

He shows us where he is right now. He is, in verse chapter 1, verse 3, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. In verse 8, but of the Son, he says, your throne, O God, is forever and ever in heaven.

Verse 13, surely at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Not only is he God, he is exalted, reigning on high.

But here we are. In between his first coming and his second coming. And even though he's on high and we know that.

It doesn't feel like it sometimes, does it? When you're looking at this world and you're like, that's not subjected to his reign right now.

[6:01] That's not subjected to his reign right now. This world can be such an utter mess. And so here we are, living in the gap. We know he's on high, but things don't look like it.

And that can give rise to some discouragement. Even start to subtly question, like, is this true? Is this worth it?

Do we press on? How do we mind the gap? And this morning, in Hebrews 2, 5 through 18, we're given three ways to mind the gap.

So that we don't drift, but draw near. We draw near to Jesus. We, first, we remember his cross and crown.

Second, we remember that his suffering has made us his siblings. And third, we remember he helps us as our high priest.

[7:05] And when we mind these things, when we remember these things, we're minding the gap. And it protects us from drift and helps us to draw near to the one who tasted death for us.

So let's look at these three ways we are to mind the gap. We're all living in the gap. In between his first coming and second coming.

So we remember his cross and his crown. Up until this point, as I've mentioned, the emphasis has been on the divine nature of Jesus.

That he's fully, fully God. And as totally God, he's enthroned on high right now. Exalted, surrounded by myriads of angels. Our brothers and sisters in the faith are with him in his presence.

And the writer of Hebrews has been making the point that Jesus is God and exalted by comparing him to angels. And to showing us that he's superior to angels.

[8:09] And these extended quotations from the Old Testament, chapter 1. We're going to see more here in chapter 2. They're to show us that Jesus is greater. But in this chapter, the author not only helps us to see the divine nature of Jesus and his exaltation.

He shows us the humanity of the Son. That he was fully man. And that he was humiliated. His humiliation.

He suffered. He endured the cross. He died as a man. Who experienced everything that we experienced for 33 years, yet without sin.

In verses 5 through 9, what we have is a quoting of Psalm 8. And then in verses, at the second half of 8 and into 9, you have the writer of Hebrews showing how Jesus has fulfilled Psalm 8.

And what we're going to see is his cross and his crown. Psalm 8 is a psalm about God giving dominion to mankind in order for mankind to represent God on earth.

[9:37] To be fruitful and multiply. To be his vice regents. But we blew it. Instead of making it about God, we make it about ourselves.

And so in steps Jesus as the perfect man. The ultimate representative of humanity.

Because he's totally God and totally man. And so what we see in verse 7 from Psalm 8, we read this.

You, God, made him for a little while lower than the angels. Psalm 8. Would you now look at verse 9? But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus.

Do you see what's going on there? Psalm 8 fulfilled in Jesus. How did Jesus fulfill that? How was he for a little while made lower than the angels?

[10:43] Jesus walked the earth for 33 years. The son of God took on human flesh. Merry Christmas. Happy incarnation. And he walked this planet for 33 years.

Just a little while. Made lower than the angels. We're getting at the humanity of Jesus. His humiliation in the Philippians 2, 3 through 11 cents.

He became a servant. He took on flesh. And he died. He suffered death.

Because he was a human being. And his death isn't like our deaths. His death accomplished something.

He tasted death for us. For everyone who's living in the gap who would believe. The death is a way of talking about the cross.

[11:48] Jesus endured the cross. Totally God. Totally man. Tasting death for us as fulfillment of Psalm 8 as our representative.

The second half of verse 7 says, You have crowned him with glory and honor.

And if you look at the rest of verse 9, it says, Namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death. So that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

So not only was Jesus humiliated, became a man, suffered death, cross. He also, following the cross, was exalted.

Raised to the right hand. Crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death for us. He had to experience his cross in order for him to be crowned king on high.

[12:59] It's his exaltation. So in this passage, in Psalm 8, we're seeing both his cross, humiliation, and his crown. His exaltation. He is totally God and totally man.

It's necessary. He tasted death for us. And then comes the gap. Verse 8, we're Psalm 8. Putting everything in subjection under his feet.

We now go into the explanation. The writer says, Now in putting everything in subjection to him, and I believe the him is Jesus in this passage, in this verse.

He, God, the Father, left nothing outside his, the Son's, control. And at present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. We're living in the gap. We're living in between his death, resurrection, ascension, and exalted crowning, and his return.

It doesn't look like everything is subjection to him because it's not. But he is on high. So what do you do? When you're looking at this world and you just want to despair?

[14:10] Look at the end of verse 8. We do not yet see everything in subjection to him. When we see everything not in subjection to him, what do we do?

Look at verse 9. We see him. We set our eyes on Jesus. We set our eyes on the cross and the crown of our king.

And we realize that, hey, even though it may not feel like things are subjected to him, yet he is reigning on high. And we are one day closer to when all things will be subjected to him.

When his inaugurated reign culminates in fullness of peace on a new heavens and a new earth. So when we're living in the gap, you know how you mind the gap?

You remember his cross and his crown. You see things for the way they are, but you remember he's exalted on high. Cross, suffer death, crown, exalted on high.

[15:23] Enthroned on high. Which brings us to the second way we mind the gap. We remember his suffering made us his siblings.

This is an extraordinary passage. When you woke up this morning, were you thinking about what Jesus is speaking over you?

You may not know it if you're watching CNN or Fox on a regular basis. But Jesus is at work right now in the gap. He's on his throne.

He's carrying out his father's purposes and will. And when you are living in the gap and you're discouraged by what you see, you need to remember he suffered to make you his brother and his sister.

In verse 10 we read this. This is verses 10 through 13. For it was fitting that he, God the Father, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, bringing many sinners into salvation, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

[16:47] It was God's Father's will that God the Son would suffer to make us sons and daughters. It's extraordinary.

Now you might be reading that and you're like, hold on a second, Pastor Mike. Should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Time out. Time out. I thought Jesus was perfect. I thought that Jesus was morally perfect in character and conduct 24-7, 365 days a year for his 33 years.

That little while he lived lower than the angels. I thought he was perfect. I thought he satisfied God's commands fully in the life he lived. And he did. He did.

Every thought, every word, every feeling, every act, fully pleasing to God all the time. He was on the planet. Still is now. So what is being talked about here?

[17:54] If it's not his character, what are we talking about? We're talking about his mission. We're talking about his founding of salvation.

His accomplishing of our salvation. In order for him to accomplish our salvation, as the founder of our salvation, he needed to suffer. In order for him to suffer, he needed to be fully human.

He had to die. He had to suffer death. He had to taste death for everyone who would believe in him.

It was only through the suffering of the Son that God would bring many sons to glory. He would bring many sons. He would gather many sinners and adopt them into the family of faith.

Jesus had to suffer. That's why in verse 11 we read, for he who sanctifies, Jesus, and those who are sanctified, us, all have one source, God the Father.

[19:11] It's his will. We all share one heavenly Father. We are one family. Jesus suffered to make us his siblings.

And so when Jesus says this, verse 11, that's why he's not ashamed to call them brothers. The author of Hebrews is talking about Jesus and the way he thinks about you and me.

He's not ashamed to call you brother and sister. It's amazing. It's an understatement. Intentionally. He delights in calling you brother and sister because of what he's done for you to make you his brother and sister.

For the joy set before him, he endured the cross and that joy being gathering and bringing in the sons of glory in restoration and reconciliation to the Father, our salvation.

[20:15] He delights in what his death has accomplished. I don't know what you were thinking when he woke up this morning.

I don't know what you were thinking. What happens if you wake up tomorrow morning and the first thought that comes to your mind is that the son who suffered cross and was exalted crown, he's not ashamed of you.

He delights in you. In order to make that point, the writer of Hebrews then quotes two Old Testament passages.

And what's extraordinary about these two Old Testament passages is that the writer of Hebrews, he puts them in the mouth of Jesus. speaking of you and me.

Look at verse 11 again. That is why he's not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, so the author of Hebrews is saying, it's like what he's about to say is Jesus speaking of you and me.

[21:28] And the first thing he says is a quote from Psalm 22, 22. And you know Psalm 22 because when Jesus was on the cross and when he cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

That's Psalm 22, 1. And Psalm 22, 1 through 21 is a psalm about a righteous man suffering for God.

And then in verse 22, the psalm pivots and it goes from humiliation to exaltation and vindication.

And it's in verse 22 that the writer of Hebrews puts it in the mouth of Jesus about you and me.

Jesus is the I. I will tell of your, God the Father, your name to my brothers, us. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise.

The congregation is the heavenly gathering of God's blood bought. But it's Hebrews 12, 22 through 24. Right now, Jesus is in heaven and he's boasting of what he's done and saying, God the Father, I told your name to my brothers and sisters who are all around our throne right now.

[22:45] It's delight. It's joy. It's not ashamed of you. It's amazing that he's saying this. I was convinced that many of you needed to hear that this morning.

He's not ashamed of you. In the heavenly congregation, he's delighting in you. What he's done for you to bring you to glory.

It doesn't stop there. Because then we have another quote from Isaiah chapter 8, 17 and 18.

Again, the writer of Hebrews is putting these words in the mouth of Jesus. Jesus is fulfilling these. And he says, I, Jesus, will put my trust in him.

Isaiah 8, Isaiah's been experiencing some hardship and he is saying, I will put my trust in him and all these children that you've given me. We're going to put our trust in you too. And now, the writer of Hebrews is saying, Jesus is speaking that in fulfillment regarding us.

[24:01] Remember when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane and he says, not my will, but your will be done. In the midst of suffering, he put his trust in his Father. That's what he's saying.

That's what he's getting at. Jesus suffered faithfully to make you sons and daughters unto glory.

And then again, he says, behold, I and the children God has given me. He's saying that of us. He's saying, I trust God and these brothers and sisters that I tasted death for, they are going to trust you too.

We're all going to trust you. Do you know this is a picture of solidarity. His suffering has made us his siblings and we're not going to drift away in the gap. We're going to draw near and hold fast and stand firm in the gap.

at the risk of diminishing the significance of this.

[25:11] Remember that movie, High School Musical? Zac Efron at the end with his dynamic white outfit. We're all in this together.

That's what this is getting at. We're all in this together because Christ's suffering as a man has made us his siblings.

He's not ashamed of you. Not ashamed. So when you're in the gap and you're seeing this world yet to be subjected to him and you may just start thinking maybe it's time to check out.

Maybe just to find an easier way. Nobody really needs to know that I'm a follower of Jesus.

Remember, his suffering has made you his siblings.

He was faithful in his sufferings and so we must be faithful in our sufferings for him in the gap.

We're all in this together.

[26:28] He's not ashamed of you. He shed his blood to unite you to himself under God.

Now imagine waking up tomorrow morning and the first thought that comes into your mind is that Jesus is not ashamed to call you brother, sister.

It's just another way of saying I am for you all the way to the end. The third way in which we mind the gap is that verses 14 through 18 we remember his help as our high priest.

He's willing to help. Living in the gap in between his first coming and his second coming, that's not easy. We have a lot of needs. He's got a lot of help.

He's able to help. He is willing to help. Look at all the help. Verse 16, for surely it's not angels that he helps but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Look at verse 18.

[27:39] At the end, he is able to help those who are being tempted. He offers help. There's two ways in this passage in which he helps us.

In the face of death and in the face of temptation. He is our help in the face of death. Verses 14 through 16. In verse 14, we have again this teaching that the son was completely human in all that he was yet without sin.

Verse 14, since therefore the children share in the flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things. Jesus took on flesh and blood because the people he needed to bring to God in glory were made of flesh and blood.

But we get afraid of death. We're afraid of our deaths.

We're afraid of other people's deaths. Part of living in the gap in between his first coming and second coming is all this death. It can wreak havoc in people's lives.

[28:51] And Jesus tasted death for us. In fact, the death he died puts death to death.

Let me help you see that. That through death, verse 14, he might destroy, better yet, dethrone the one who has the power of death that is the devil.

The devil, the enemy of our souls, who is not God's equal. Well, he exercises his power over death through deception and lies.

The condemning power of death is sin. It's the sting of death, 1 Corinthians 15, 56. And so what the devil loves to do is to accuse people of their sinfulness in order to rub your face in your death.

But the death that Jesus died killed sin. It removes sin. He dethrones the devil and the devil's power to make false accusations about your sin freeing you from death.

[30:21] Jesus dethroned the devil by removing sin. His death was propitiuous. The death that Jesus died, the death that Jesus tasted for everyone who believed, bore all of God's wrath, all of it, for all of your sin, so that there was no more wrath and you're completely forgiven of your sin.

So Jesus, through his death, removes this thing of death which is sin and he totally dethrones the devil in doing so. We learn in Mark 3 as well that Jesus, speaking of the devil, Jesus describes him as a strong man and he has come to bind the strong man and plunder his house.

Jesus is the great redemptive plunderer, you and me, bringing sons to glory. He came for us.

Revelation 13, the devil is kicked out of heaven, down to the earth, where he is now, awaiting the second death.

death, we know the truth of the devil. He's been dethroned by the death of Jesus and therefore we've been delivered from the fear of death.

We no longer live, Christian, Christian, you no longer need to live in fear of death. The sting has been removed. John Bunyan talks about death, pictures it in the pilgrim's progress as a final river that must be crossed and you will feel it go up above your head.

[31:58] and then instantaneously you will be at the gates of glory. Death doesn't have the final say. Jesus does.

He holds the keys to death, Revelation 1. He's the one who said, I am the resurrection and life. Whoever dies, yet shall he live if he believes in me.

He's dethroned the devil. He's delivered us from the fear of death. Christ's death has defeated death. Can I have an amen? Well, there's another way he helps.

He helps us in the face of temptation, verses 17 through 18. He's able to help those who are being tempted, verse 18. And it begs the question, tempted to what?

What kind of temptation? It could be the temptation to fear death, but I think the better explanation is something that he's just talked to us about in Hebrews 2, 1 through 4.

[33:12] to not drift. The temptation is to drift, to fall into the gap, to be kind of as an exercise of unbelief in Jesus, just to check out and fall away.

That's the temptation. temptation. And he can help us when tempted that way. And I'm guessing everyone in the room, when you look at this messed up world, despite all of its beauty from time to time, you can be discouraged.

We have help in time of need. In verse 17, again, we have another reference to the Jesus taking on humanity. Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, every respect, yet without sin.

Fully human. Totally God, totally man, in one person. And that uniquely qualifies him to be our high priest.

This is the first time in the book of Hebrews that the writer of Hebrews drops high priest language. It's going to show up 17 times in the book. It is the unique contribution of this book of Hebrews to the entire New Testament canon.

[34:39] No other writer in the New Testament talks about Jesus as our high priest. It's only the writer of Hebrews and it is glorious. A high priest is a go-between. A go-between God and a go-between man.

And the high priests of old were sinners. And so they had to make sacrifice for themselves before they could make sacrifice for men. Not Jesus, not the Son, who's totally God and totally man. He is the perfect high priest because he's totally God and totally man. It's amazing. He's our great high priest.

And because he's our great high priest, he made propitiation for the sins of us as people. Not only is he the living, exalted high priest, he himself was also the once and for all sacrifice for our sins.

Cross, crown. That one-time sacrifice that our high priest made satisfied all of God's wrath for your sin.

[35:55] So that there was no more been forgiven in full. he's not ashamed to call you brothers, sisters. He gave his life for you.

And you know what? He gets us. We have a high priest who gets us. Verse 18, for because he himself has suffered when tempted.

He gets us. For 33 years, he lived on this planet and experienced everything that we experience yet without sin. He gets us. He gets us. And that's why he's so effective at helping us even when we're being tempted to drift in the gap.

what do we do? What do you do when you realize I'm being tempted right now?

Either I'm living in fear of my own death or the death of somebody else or I'm just wondering if this whole thing is worth it. What do you do? You go to the one who can help.

[37:03] You don't turn from Jesus in those moments. You don't drift from him. You turn to Jesus in those moments and you draw near to him in those moments.

That's where you will find help. In the very one that you're wondering is worth it, you turn to him and you're just honest. Oh God, I'm fearing my death today.

Oh God, I'm wondering if I should just operate an excavator for the rest of my life. He turned to Jesus.

If you would just let your eyes scroll over to chapter 4 verses 15 and 16. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin let us then with confidence propitiation draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time between his first coming and his second coming when things don't look subjected to him.

Time of need. Be honest with him brother. Be honest with him sister. He's not ashamed of you.

We're living in between the first coming and the second coming of Jesus.

[38:39] We know all things have been subjected to him but it doesn't look like it. It doesn't feel like it.

We've got to mind the gap. in order to mind the gap and avoid drift and avoid falling away into the gap we look to Jesus.

We remember his cross and his crown we remember his suffering made us his siblings and we remember his help as our high priest all throughout this passage in each section there's a suffering reference.

death. And the only way he could suffer death was by being fully human. And so we mind the gap by remembering that Jesus is totally God totally man he is on his throne and we are one day closer to him bringing all things together.

what a savior what a king what a high priest what a hope let's pray.

[40:07] Thank you Jesus for becoming a man for suffering the way you did for us.

Thank you for enduring the cross to make us your brothers and sisters to bring many sons and daughters to glory.

Thank you God that you have not left us in the gap by ourselves but the Holy Spirit is with us drawing our gaze to Jesus again and again.

Lord Jesus thank you so much for being our living help in time of need and we know it. God would you unite us?

would you bring solidarity to us among us around our crucified and exalted king Jesus and that we would hold fast to him all the way to the end because you are so worthy.

[41:26] it's in your name we pray Jesus amen. Amen.