

# Holding Fast our Confession

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well thanks for your welcome and it's a pleasure and a pleasure to be with you and we trust that God will bless his word to us as we worship him together today and God willing tomorrow as well. Begin our worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 65 in the Scottish Psalter on page 297.

Psalm 65 at the beginning of the psalm. And we're going to sing down to the end of the verse marked 5, the double verse marked 5. Psalm 65 at verse 1.

Praise waits for thee in Zion, Lord, to thee vows paid shall be, O thou that here art of prayer, all flesh shall come to thee. To the double verse marked 5 to God's praise.

Praise waits for thee in Zion, Lord. To thee vows paid shall be, O thou that here art of prayer, all flesh shall come to thee.

Any way it is I must confess, prevail against me do.

[ 1 : 3 6 ] The God's word of transgressions, then power shall we shall dwell.

Blessed is the Lord, to thee, all the other, God shall be, O thou that here art of prayer, all the other, God shall come to thee. Blessed is the man who that does choose and makes approach to thee, That beareth in thy courts, O Lord, may still thou forever be.

We surely shall be satisfied with thine abundant grace.

And in the goodness of thy hands, in all thy holy place.

O God of thy salvation, thou in thy righteousness.

[ 3 : 2 0 ] I give whom harks unto thou prayers, Thine us are dust as hells.

Therefore, ye exalt on the earth, and those of fire that we have on the sea their confidence.

O Lord, will praise them in. Let's join together in prayer.

Almighty and most gracious God, rejoice for these moments in which we can gather together to worship your name. Your word has reminded us that your people are a people who praise you.

A people who confess their sin. They come to you as the great God that you are. The God that washes away our sin. The God that gives to us clean hearts.

[ 4 : 5 5 ] The God that gives to us a sincere heart as we approach you. And at the outset of our time of worship, we recognize the great need that we have.

Of our sins being washed away. Of our hearts being sincere. And of us being set apart from everything that was on our minds up until this moment of worship.

Separating us from all of these things. And giving us to our hearts and minds that are clearly focused upon you. We bless you for this time of communion season.

We gather today in preparation for the Lord's Day. We give thanks to you for all of the different ways in which the Lord's Day is at the centre of your people's lives.

We give thanks to you for the rest of which it speaks. And we are thankful to you that the rest that is set before the people of God in your word.

[ 6 : 03 ] There's not a rest that they have but one day in the week. But that your people find rest in you every day of their lives. And we come to you this morning and this afternoon.

And we come to worship you conscious of the fact that so often that rest seems far from us. Conscious of the fact that so often that hearts are filled with so many other things.

That rob us of the peace of God. And we pray you today as we worship you. That you will give us truly to find the rest in you.

And that everything that troubles our hearts and minds would be taken far from us. And that we would know that you are the God who in Jesus Christ your Son is gentle and is lowly.

And gives rest to your people. And we pray oh Lord God your blessing to be upon all of us. As we gather together here today in preparation for your day.

[ 7 : 12 ] May you come and place your hand upon our shoulder. May you come and speak your word into our hearts. May you come and turn our attention to you.

And may you enable us to see your face. The beauty of it and the glory of it. As we see it in the face of Jesus Christ your Son. And that in that great intervention of yours.

That our hearts would be brought to the place. Where we wait with mouths opened and hearts opened. Waiting to receive from you.

Grant to us we pray that great privilege. Of seeing your beauty and designing it as the Psalms did. As that which was a priority in his life.

To dwell in the house of God. And to see your face. And to find shelter under the shadow of your wing. So cause us today we pray to see your light.

[ 8 : 13 ] To have your light shining upon us. And your light shining within us. And to have your Holy Spirit. With all of his power. And with all of his light.

Giving to us to be instructed from your word. Giving to us to see the great truths about your Son. As our Saviour. As our great High Priest.

As the one who loved us. And gave himself for us. And give us to be constantly. In awe of the great love. That you have shown to us in him.

And marvel at the loving heart that is yours. Which you have made known to us. In such a miraculous way. And we rejoice today. For every way in which you have made yourself known.

In the person of your Son. And we are thankful to you. For the way in which you bring your people. Your children on in their faith. The way in which you feed them. And teach them.

[ 9 : 09 ] And instruct them. So that day by day. They are growing in the grace. And in the knowledge. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And grant to us during these days of communion season.

To know what it is to love one another. To know what it is to love you. And to know what it is to grow up together in the Lord. And grow up towards that maturity.

Of which your word speaks. And the goal that you have. For all of your children. And they will grow into that maturity of faith. Bless any heart before you.

That may be downcast. That may be in any kind of darkness. Or any kind of doubting. We pray that you will rescue all such. That you will lift them up.

That you will encourage them. That you will help them to look away from themselves. And to look to you. And give them to know that their encouragement is in the Lord. And that your grace is sufficient for them.

[ 10 : 05 ] Bless every heart. We do pray. Bless any heart that may desire to. Know the assurance of your love. And the assurance of belonging to your kingdom. And to your family.

And encourage such in the Lord. Those who have your spirit in their hearts. May you bring them to the place where they understand that clearly. And where they are able to recognize.

That they are indeed the children of God. And know that cry. That your spirit stirs up in the hearts of your children. That cry of Abba Father. Reaching out to you.

And recognizing your love. And your care. And your provision. And the constancy of all of these things. So encourage every heart. We do pray. And bless the congregation during these days.

For their encouragement. Bless your servant over them. We give thanks to you for him. And for his ministry here. And for every way in which you have blessed him. And encouraged him so far.

[ 11 : 02 ] Continue to strengthen him day by day. We pray. And may this time of communion season. May a special time of encouragement. And of strengthening for him. As he continues to serve you. With your people here.

And bless all of the homes. Of the congregation. All the homes and the families. And all connected with them. May the blessing of almighty God. The power of your Holy Spirit.

And the love of Jesus Christ your son. So filter out. And reach out. To touch every heart and life and home. Around us here. For the glory of your name.

For the extension of your kingdom. And so those who are lost. Will come to be saved. And they will come to discover. The beauty of your salvation. Find the joy of having sins forgiven.

Forgiven. And to know. That you're indeed their God. Who is their saviour. Who is their shepherd. And who is their Lord. So bless the whole community. At this time of communion season.

[ 11 : 58 ] As we commit ourselves to you. We give thanks to you. For the whole church of Christ. In the world. We give thanks to you. For all of your people. Across all the nations. Of the world today.

For that you will encourage them also. That you will bless. And guide. And keep. And that you will protect. Especially those who may be in danger. Because of their faith. Who are persecuted. Because of their faithfulness to you.

Protect and keep all such. We pray. And bless them in the midst of. All kinds of danger. And give them to know your protection. And may their bright witness. Be the means of.

Bearing on the hearts of those. Who are perhaps their greatest enemies. To bring them to. Fall down at your feet. And to give their hearts to you. And their lives to you. In service we do pray.

We give thanks to you. That the power with which you saved your servant Paul. Is still the same power with which you are able to change. Hearts and lives. Here in this world.

[ 12 : 54 ] To give new direction. And to bring those who are your enemies. To be great servants of Jesus Christ. In the world in which we live. Bless our nation and our land. What chores and mercy would you pray.

In days of so much confusion. And so much lack of direction. We look to you to come. And to give wisdom. To give light. And to give. A turning around to you.

To acknowledge you as our God. To reach out to you. And to seek the direction that you can give. And give to us. As a nation. And as a society. And as a generation.

To love your word. And to love. Every way in which it. Or to speak into our lives. And to embrace its teaching. For our morality. And for our spirituality. And for every aspect of living.

May we hear your word. And rejoice in us. The revelation you have given to us. Of yourself. And so as we commit. These prayers to you. We ask you that you will hear us.

[ 13 : 51 ] In our prayers. That you will do for us. As you are able to do. Far and above. What we can ask. Or even think. Guide us. And go before us. And bless us. In the ongoing singing of your word.

And reading of it. And study of it together. Speak to our hearts. Would you pray. Hear us. And accept us. And have mercy. For we ask these things. For Jesus sake. Amen. Our second item of praise.

Is in St. Sam's. It's Psalm 110. It's on page 149. Psalm 110. On page 149.

And we're singing. At the beginning of the psalm. Down to the verse marked 5. Once more. Psalm 110.

At the beginning of the psalm. The Lord said to my Lord. Sit here at my right hand. Until I make your foes a stool. On which your feet may stand.

[ 14 : 52 ] Down to the verse marked 5. To God's praise. The Lord said to my Lord.

The Lord will make your foes a stool.

On which your feet may stand. The Lord will make your way.

The Lord will make your way. The Lord will make your way. The Lord will make your way. To the Lord will make your way.

The Lord will make your way.

[ 16 : 01 ] And honor it in holiness My will come like you And change and breathe the Lord With solemn purple sword Just like Melchizedek Take you up and be forevermore The Lord's hand, your right hand There he will ever stay He on his feet

O wrath will curse The kings who bow his way Let's turn together now to hear the word of God And we do so in the New Testament In the epistle to Hebrews And we're going to begin our reading in chapter 4 And verse number 11 Hebrews 4 And at verse number 11 Let us hear the word of God Let us therefore strive to enter that rest So that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience For the word of God is living and active Sharper than any two-edged sword Piercing to the division of soul and of spirit Of joints and of marrow

And discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart And no creature is hidden from his sight But all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him To whom we must give account Since then we have a great high priest Who has passed through the heavens Jesus the Son of God Let us hold fast our confession 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 Draw near to the throne of grace That we may receive mercy And find grace to help in time of need 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 He can deal gently with the ignorant And the wayward Since he himself is beset with weakness Because of this he is obliged

To offer sacrifices for his own sins Just as he does for those of the people And no one takes this honour for himself But only when called by God Just as Aaron was So also Christ did not exalt himself To be made a high priest But was appointed by him Who said to him You are my son Today I have begotten you As he says also In another place You are a priest forever After the order of Melchizedek In the days of his flesh Jesus offered up prayers and supplications With loud cries and tears To whom was he able to save him from death And he was heard because of his reverence Although he was a son He learnt obedience through what he suffered And being made perfect He became the source of eternal salvation To all who obey him Being designated By God A priest After the order Of Melchizedek Amen

There's God's word And we trust that he would bless to us That reading from it We're going to turn to priest God This time from Psalm number 9 And sing Psalms Psalm number 9a And at verse number 7 Psalm 9a at verse number 7 It's on page 9 We're singing down to the verse of Mark 12 The Lord forever reigns on high His throne for judgment stands He'll judge the world in righteousness With justice rule the lands From verse 7 to verse 12 To God's praise The Lord forever reigns on high His throne for judgment stands

[ 21 : 05 ] He'll judge the world in righteousness With justice rule the lands That Lord will be done I give this For those who I will pass And He will be a strong defense For those who are distressed I lost to know your name O Lord In you that trust will place

For you cannot abandon those His secure, gracious, precious, fears Sing praises to you That Lord is it Since I am on his throne Among the nations of the world Proclaim what He has done For the young angel of my soul

Remember, share the Lord The cry of the afflicted one He never will be born Let's turn together now to the letter to Hebrews And chapter number 4 And we can read at verse 14 Hebrews 4 and at verse 14 Since then we have a great high priest Who has passed through the heavens Jesus the Son of God Let us hold fast our confession And so on down to the end of the chapter And I'm sure there are no experiences

In the church of Jesus Christ That are unique to a particular part of it As we journey on as the people of God We find, we experience things Perhaps that we did not expect But things that we see in the word of God Are there as part of the way in which God has plotted And set out our path for us And when you read this letter to Hebrews It brings our attention to the way in which There are particular things That can be of concern to those Who are the children of God And he is writing in order to encourage them And just to summarize the reason That he is writing to them I think it's fair to say that There were three crises That they were experiencing And the first was the simple crisis That they weren't good at listening To what God was saying And we see that from chapter 2

And verse 1 for example They are asked to pay closer attention To what they have heard That is the crisis of not listening To what God is saying And in many ways That is the source of every other crisis That unless we listen to what God is saying Then our lives will be chaotic We won't understand what God requires And we won't understand how to live our lives There is a hearing or listening crisis And there is also a faith crisis And because they weren't listening to God We see that they were in danger Of falling away Because of their unbelieving hearts There was a faith crisis And along with that There was a worship crisis They kept falling back Into the traditions of the Old Testament And losing sight of what Jesus Had done for them There were these three crises

[ 26 : 16 ] And I would suggest As we go to look at this passage today That these are three things That trouble us as the people of God In every age of the church in the world And as we journey on through it We're not good at listening We're not good at living by faith And that leads us to a crisis In the way that we worship God Because we lose sight of the Lord Jesus And what does the writer do In order to address these crises Well interestingly He doesn't start to address them And to look at what they're like And what they should be doing Instead he turns their attention To the supremacy of Jesus Christ The Son of God And this whole first section of this letter Is taken up With drawing their attention To who Jesus is

And to what he has done And he does that In different ways By focusing in On the different names And titles that he gives To the Lord Jesus Through this letter And I want As if we may And if God wills That during our time together That we'll focus in On some of these names So that we'll learn The way in which he's spoken To their crises And the way in which he wished To encourage them And here we have The name of the high priest And so today we want to Think of our fears And Jesus as the sympathetic High priest I want to notice first of all That there is a provision And that's very simple At the beginning of verse 14 Since then we have We have a possession We have something That we need to remind ourselves of

As we journey on through faith And here we have A great high priest They were struggling with their worship They were looking back to The priests of the Old Testament And the writer here Wants to focus their minds And upon God's provision Of somebody who's much greater And somebody who's much higher Than all of the priests Of the Old Testament There's a superiority That belongs to Jesus As the high priest Above everyone else And when he draws attention To that He wants them to understand That he's not aloof Or separate from them That is the key thing That he must be One of themselves And that's exactly What he says At the beginning of chapter 5 He's chosen from among men Here they were Struggling in the world Struggling with their faith Struggling how to live

As the people of God And their attention is drawn To this great high priest Who was chosen from among themselves And to draw their attention To focus completely On who he is He reminds them that In verse 14 That he is Jesus The son of God We look back to chapter 3 And the beginning of that chapter And Moses was faithful In God's house But Jesus is high priest He is a son Over God's house And because he is The son of God Over God's house He has more honour And glory Than the house itself The high priest That they have Is no one less Than the son of God Who came into the world Who was birthed into it In Bethlehem When he was born To the virgin Mary

He is Jesus But he is also The son of God And as the one Who is over the house Of God He is saying to them That you are God's house If you remain faithful And if you remain steadfast They have A great high priest And today God wants us To understand That God has given to us This son of his To become one of ourselves The wonder of Jesus coming to Sit in the synagogue As you and I Are sitting here today That the son of God Comes from glory To sit Along with Sinful people And speak to them The word of God And we are asked today Not to To lose sight of that Unless we Keep that before our minds That Jesus is Emmanuel God with us And that he is here As God's high priest

[ 31 : 20 ] Then Our faith will waver Then we will Cease to be steadfast We will lose our confidence We will lose our steadfastness Our faith will begin To wither away We need to recognise God's provision Of a high priest In his son Jesus Christ Christ And of course Anyone who is Who is a high priest Is there for a purpose And Jesus The high priest He is appointed In verse 1 Of chapter 5 To act on behalf of men In relation to God He is obligated In verse 3 To offer sacrifices For sin Their relationship Is one with The living God This living God Has a living word And it's powerful And fearful And frightening

It discerns The thoughts And intentions Of the heart It's a word That exposes Our sinfulness That awakens Our consciences To a sense of guilt Before God That's the nature Of the word of God It penetrates It pulls back The cover It exposes What we are In here A sinner Should deserve The wrath Of God And here God's high priest Jesus The son of God He is appointed To act On our behalf And to do so In the Towards God Things To do so In regard To a relationship With God And as they And as we Come Before the word Of God With the powerful Way in which It digs into The depths Of our beings And gives us A mirror To see The sinfulness Of our hearts

Here is God's Provision Jesus Is Obligated He has A particular Ministry And his Ministry Is to Offer Sacrifices For sin That's why He came That's what The prophet Said In chapter 53 of Isaiah When he Makes his Soul An offering For sin He is The sin Bearer The son Of God The sin Bearer Who has Come to Deal with The issues That belong To God And the Relationship Towards God And through His Offering His Sacrifice The sacrifice Of himself We are Reconciled To God Through him And as The one Who has Finished

That ministry Who has Completed the Work that God has Given to Him He is Now Passed Through Into the Heavens He is No longer Sitting in The synagogue He is no Longer Walking the Streets of Jerusalem He is no Longer At the Sea of Galilee He has Been Crucified On Calvary's Cross The whole Weight of God's Wrath upon Him Because of The guilt Of your Sin and Of mine And he Died On calvary's Cross They came With their Swords but He was Already Dead But now He is Passed Through Into The Heavens He has Gone Through The Curtain To that Invisible Place Where we Cannot See him Anymore But despite

The fact That we Don't See him Anymore We are Asked Today To Consider Who He is As God's Provision And if He is Invisible To Our Eyes Physically He is Not Invisible To Our Faith And the Word of God Gives To us Clarity On the Way in Which we Are to See the Invisible Christ In the Light of The Revelation Of God's Word About Him And in The Light of The Work That he Worked The Words That he Spoke And the Life That he Lived And Now He has Gone To be Seated At the Right Hand Of God's Throne To be Enthroned By God He's Passed Into The Heavens And we Read And sang About that In Psalm 110 He has Gone To his Place Of Glory But in

[ 36 : 23 ] His Place Of Glory He Hasn't Forgotten Them And it's So Important For Them To Remember That And so Important For us To Remember The Same Thing That he Is Able To Have Compassion On the Ignorant That he Is Gentle Towards Those Who are His Children That his Gentleness Flows Down To us From From His Throne Into The World In which We live Into Our Personal Experience Because He's Gone From The World Doesn't Mean To Say That He's Forgotten Us He Can Deal Gently With The Ignorant And The Wayward Jesus

Is Gentle And Lowly Of Heart And Isaiah We read That The Brewed He Will Not Break And The Smoking And Smouldering Flax He Will Not Quench The Provision Of A Great High Priest Who Has Gone Into Heaven And Who Has Not Forgotten To Be Gentle With Us And Today Perhaps Our Greatest Sense Of Experience Is That Jesus Is Distant From Us That He Has No Interest In Us And That Because Because Of The Distance He Is Not Going To Change Anything That's Going On In My Life It Seems That's The Conclusion They Were Coming To Because He's Gone He's

No Longer Interested And He No Longer Understands Experience In This Hostile World In Which They Lived God's Provision How Does Your Own Faith Work Is It Always An Inward Looking Thing Is It Always Looking At What You Find In Your Heart And Because You're Looking At What You Find In Your Heart Is Your Faith Doing The Opposite Of What It Should Be Doing Is It Sucking You Down Into A Lost Sense Of The Love Of God A Lost Sense Of The Presence Of God And A Lost Sense Of The Gentleness Of Jesus Who Is Your Saviour High Priest How Does Your Faith Work What Does Your Faith Look At Does Your Faith Look At What You Accomplish

Yourself And Because You Can Never Accomplish What God Requires Of You That Therefore Also You Are Down Cast You Are In Darkness You See No Freedom You See No Possible Way Out Of Where You Are You Are You're Trapped By Your Failure To Realize And To To To To Recognize God's Provision Of Jesus As Your High Priest Who Gave His Life As An Offering For Your Sin God's Provision The First Attention Grabbing Thing That We Lay Hold Of Who Jesus Is Of Where He Is And How And Why He Has Got There The Provision Secondly There Is A Proclamation What's

The Point Of Saying Something Unless The Bible Applies It To Us And For Those Who Are Questioning The Interest Of Jesus In Them There Is A Proclamation That Is Bound To Silence Them And To Recognize The Kind Of Saviour They Have In The High Priest Jesus The Son Of God The Proclamation In Verse Fifteen For We Do Not Have A Priest Who Is Unable To There Is A Double Negative That Is To Drive Home This Important Point Especially To Those Who Are Objecting To The Absence Of The Lord Jesus We Do Not Have A High Priest Who Is Unable To Sympathize With Our Weaknesses To Be Able To Do Something To Have The

[ 41 : 25 ] Capacity God Requires So Much Of Us That By Our Tat So but here is a reminder to us that Jesus as our high priest that he is able to do this certain thing that he has the capacity and the power and the ability as well as the desire and he has the capacity to sympathize with our weaknesses the heart of Jesus the son of God on God's throne is able to sympathize he is able to move toward us with a sense of feeling of love and of care and of compassion the basic idea behind the word is the way in which there is a bond between her mother and her child and no matter where that child goes or is there is always that bond there is always that desire and that prayer and that longing to do everything possible for the child and anything that happens to the child it affects the mother in her own heart there is a sense in which what the child goes through not only creates an echo in her heart but it is transmitted in such a way as to touch her in her heart so the child's pain is the mother's pain and there is something of that here that the Jesus who is at God's right hand that whatever you and I are going through in the world because of the way in which he loves and he has compassion and he has an interest in his people because of that what happens to you touches his heart in heaven don't let us ever lose sight of the fact that there is that marvelous connection as well as communication between the people of God and Jesus their Savior he is able to sympathize and that very image reminds us that sympathy is not empathy that sympathy is understanding someone's suffering and feeling for them because of what they are going through but empathy is experiencing another's feelings and this that is it not wonderful today that as far as Jesus is concerned our Savior and our High Priest he experiences and has experienced the same thing as ourselves that makes such a great difference what an answer to the objection he is not here and he cannot help us the truth is that in the relationship with the Lord Jesus he is moved by what they are going through because he has gone through it and because he has gone through it he is able to bring about active help he is able to bring about change he is able to do the thing that will lift them up that will encourage them that will strengthen them



and particularly with regard to our weaknesses oh my how much we are so often overcome by our weaknesses how often we say we can't do it how often we say we can't go there how often we use our weaknesses as an excuse for not doing and here we have the Lord Jesus and he empathizes with us in our weaknesses it's that sense of the weakness that belongs to who we are and this reminds us of the way in which Jesus became one of ourselves he's taken from among men he's one of ourselves and he has had the same weaknesses and I know you might be saying of course he did not of course he didn't have your sin and mine how could he possibly have the same weaknesses but the weakness is with regard to our obedience to God the weaknesses in the area of our responsibility to God it's that sense of weakness that is there in the light of the will of God that tempts us to sin against God by not remaining faithful and loyal to him he is able to empathize in our weaknesses and today we are encouraged we are perhaps strongly at times we elevate the sacrament of the Lord's supper to such a level that we place it out of our reach and we do so because of the sense of our weaknesses and we make the provision of God unreachable with the excuse of our weaknesses and these weaknesses leave us that we are disobedient to God's command in that area and disobedient to God's command in every other area of our lives the weakness it's not that we shouldn't have weakness it's how we deal with that weakness that's the issue but here

Jesus is the one who has empathy who's able to bring active help because in that same verse who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin Jesus was tempted he was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted a temptation that was unique to him that we will never go through but nevertheless Jesus was tempted all the days of his life with everything trying to stop his progress and doing the will of God and perhaps the high point of that testing is Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane take this cup away from me my humanity my humanness my weakness

I cannot cope with doing the will of God take this cup away from me did he know weakness yes what did he do with that weakness he committed himself to God not my will but yours be done he was tested at every step of his experience his journey through the world tempted to not do the will of God tempted to not remain loyal to God tempted not to finish the work that God had given him to do in every respect as we are and the encouragement as well as the distinction and the uniqueness the encouragement is yet without sin and do note that he had no sin in himself of course he did not he was holy and harmless and undefined he was separate from sinners he was without sin in that sense and it's something that need not be said but it's without sin with regard to the outcome of temptation life the design of the temptation is that he would fall into sin that he would be disobedient to

God but in every occasion in which he was tempted and tested the outcome always was that he remained loyal and he remained obedient and he did the will of God the proclamation the marvel of this great high priest that he feels for you and for me today that his distance does not mean that his interest has not stopped he knew the power of temptation more than anyone but remained loyal to it C.S. Lewis says this once the wind of temptation gets strong enough the man lies down giving in that soul like us when the temptation gets too strong we quit and faith ceases to operate and we lose sight of who we are and thus not knowing what it would have been like ten minutes later we don't know the power of temptation because we give in to it

[ 51 : 58 ] Jesus never lay down he endured all our temptations and testings without ever giving in therefore he knows the strength of temptation better than any of us only he truly knows the cost he remained loyal he was without sin there's the proclamation of who he is and right in in the centre of that proclamation is that he is also an example to us and an encouragement to us how often do you and I simply lie down we've been so used to to storms in this year since the turn of this year and we shelter in our homes and it's not wise to go out into the storm and of course it's not but what about the storm of temptation how does our faith deal with that do we crumble do we do we stay in the shelter of unbelief instead of striding out in in the strength and grace of God remaining loyal to him that was his example the proclamation and from there we come finally to the prescription what does this mean for them how are they going to apply this well first of all they are going to remain loyal and faithful that's where at the end of verse 14 let us hold fast our confession to take possession of something and to simply not let it go and the taking possession is something that they have a right to do it is something that God has given to them and they are coming to faith in the

Lord Jesus that they have the confession they agree with the word of God and the testimony of the word of God the testimony of the word of God about Jesus and whatever God says about Jesus they agree they say the same words it's that confession of assent and consent and of agreement it's that not what happens when we come to faith in the Lord Jesus the word of God is alive to us and everything that God says about himself and about ourselves and about the Lord Jesus yes we agree with that we're persuaded to embrace all of that and in that moment of our coming to know the Lord it's so simple and so natural and so persuasive we cannot think and couldn't think of doing anything else but embracing and agreeing and seeing together with God all that God has said about his son as our saviour but the challenge comes as we journey on in life as you compare today where you are to where you were when you came to know the

Lord Jesus to compare today where you are with regard to your confession and to embrace all that the Bible says about the Lord Jesus as your saviour it may be slipping through your fingers and different things that have happened down through the years have caused you to slip through your fingers and God is saying to you today in this prescription for your life he is saying to you to hold on fast to it grasp it anew grasp it as if your life depended upon it which it does Jesus is the son of God over the house of God you are God's house if you hold fast his confession we need today to lay hold truly of our confession which becomes our profession of our faith in the

Lord Jesus and to hold it tightly in our hearts and to relearn the importance of shutting everything else out and to relearn the importance of ensuring that nothing can open my grip or my grasp of my confession that it is absolutely precious as it is absolutely true and that because of that I will proclaim the name of the Lord I will profess my faith in the Lord Jesus hold fast your confession because if you are God's house Jesus is a son over his house who commands honour and respect and your trust in him the prescription of faithfulness and perhaps today renewed faithfulness igniting anew that sense of the fire of

God's love in your heart and embracing Jesus Christ as your saviour brought before you in the word of God and with that confession of faithfulness there is confidence sometimes we think we dare not be confident before God but yet when we read the word of God he demands us to be confident in him he tells us that we have the right to be confident and that's exactly what he is saying to us here and to the hearers of this letter let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace to have complete confidence in approaching

[ 58 : 42 ] God and for the readers of this letter they would understand confidence as the freedom of full citizens to speak and to live and to have liberty wherever they went in the Roman Empire and here the writer is asking them as he is asking ourselves to have confidence to have complete freedom to exercise our right as the children of God who belong to the house of Jesus to exercise our right by drawing near to the throne of grace by striding in our minds and in our faith to that place which perhaps we have distanced ourselves from the throne of grace the throne on which Jesus is sitting at God's right hand the throne that he has made himself a throne of grace and the throne that he continues to ensure that it is a throne of grace that from the throne of grace there flows continually a sense of God stooping down toward us a sense of God providing for our means out of his heartfelt concern a sense of God helping the helpless grace is that not what we need to encourage us today to give us confidence who is

God on his throne who is Jesus on his throne he is the God and he is the savior his hearts are full of grace and full of feeling for you and for me as those who are helpless and having in that sense of grace not only appreciating our helplessness but having in that grace everything which will supply our needs everything which will help us in our weakness having confidence to draw near prayers at the very center of our lives and they are called upon here to have that confidence to come and pray to the throne of grace and there to pour out their hearts to him grace is poured into his lips and he will pour grace down upon them to have confidence how hard it is sometimes to simply accept the freedom that we have as the children of

God the freedom to speak to him the freedom to come to him and the freedom to give expression to all of our needs in his presence at his throne where Jesus is the priest on his throne where he is there as the one who intercedes for us there is the confession and the confidence and there is the promise we have the promise that if we do all that God commands us to do that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need receive mercy the goodness of God the God who is merciful and gracious who is full of steadfast love and if we take the mercy of God as the steadfast love of

God in the Old Testament which it is then it speaks to us of God's commitment to keep his relationship with his people alive and how exciting is that that there is this promise that my relationship with God which at time seems to be failing that when I come into the throne room of God pouring out my heart tomb in prayer I see his commitment to make sure the very thing I fear most simply cannot happen not because of my commitment but because of his commitment to me and there is a thrill in rediscovering that that we cannot find anywhere else that when we're far from God when we're drifting from him that he comes and that he secures and restores and repairs because of the love with which he loved us at first that it is a love that will never let us go and that sense of mercy is accompanied with grace to help in time of need

I can do all things said Paul through Christ my grace is sufficient for you said God to Paul grace to help in time of need right now this moment as we pray in our hearts in the light of who Jesus is in the light of what God has done in the light of who we are and where we are as we pray here is the promise help and grace the people of God who had faith later on chapter number 11 in verse 34 they were made strong out of weakness they were mighty in the strength of God and so today we think of our fear and we think of Jesus as this sympathetic high priest and the miss of all of our fears let God's provision of him speak into our lives let's look at him let's see the kind of life that he lived in his devotion to God and let's remember that his interest in us as precious as it is to us his interest in us is far more than we will ever begin to understand but today we can rediscover that sense of preciousness by coming to him by trusting in him and by receiving his help and by having the strength to profess his name the strength to show the world that we love our saviour and that strength to go on living for him having learned the lessons and moving on from the crisis to live a life of confidence in the grace of

[ 65 : 49 ] God may God bless his word to us let us pray most gracious God we do give thanks to you that everything that we have need of today you have provided for us and we are thankful to you also for the exclusive way in which you have shown to us and all that you have provided for us is in your son the Lord Jesus and we pray that you will bless our hearts today under your word that you will speak into our hearts and lives that you will encourage us from your truth that you will guide us and go before us and prepare us for the Lord's day and in your will as we sit at your table we will be encouraged in our hearts to know that you are with us that you are our help that you are the one who gives grace and that you will never leave us or forsake us hear our prayer and accept us for Jesus sake Amen including Psalm 116 in the Scottish Psalter and at verse number 9

Psalm 116 on page 396 and we're singing at verse number 9 I in the land of those that live will walk the Lord before I did believe therefore I speak I was afflicted sore from verse 9 to the verse Mark 16 to God's praise verse 10 I in the hands of those that lived will Lord the Lord before I did believe therefore I speak I was afflicted sore I said when

I was in my highest thine all men liars be what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me I love salvation salvation we bear on God's name with thy hope I have made my vows now to the Lord before his people love he and in

God's life this is his saints death I serve Lord and Lord am I I serve and truth thine and make son my hands they did stand time the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen