

Wednesday, June 17, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"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."

Hebrews 4: 14-16

Things have been pretty rough lately ... at least for those who have not had it rough before. For some, nothing has changed. Some people have had health and medical struggles for a long time – maybe even all their lives. Some people live in places where every day there is the potential of physical danger. It's those of us who have had it pretty good for the most part who are noticing the problems that have come into our lives in the past four months or so.

Jesus had it pretty rough too. He actually had it rougher than anyone ever has. Not only did He have to deal with constant threats to His safety, but then when He finally was crucified, God the Father unleashed all of His wrath on Him so that we would be spared His wrath. Jesus was a constant target of Satan's temptations as well. Satan desperately tried to get Jesus to slip up, even if only once, so that the plan of salvation would be obliterated. The passage above assures us that Jesus never once gave in to temptation, no matter how bad things got. And things got pretty bad for Him.

It is sometimes very tempting to give into our anger, frustrations, or grief during times like the one we are living in right now. It would be easy to "throw in the towel," so to speak, and begin to think and behave like the "world." But in the passage above, we are invited to "draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." In other words, we can come to the One who has been through it all, including "hell," and ask for strength to get us through. When we do that, Jesus says, "I know just how you feel. I've been through it myself." And He gives us the strength to get through the day.

Sometimes that's what our focus needs to be on ... just "the day." Don't worry about a year from now, or six months from now, or even a week from now. Just today! We approach the "throne of grace" through prayer and the study of His Word. That's how He strengthens us. He doesn't often just do it by "osmosis." It's not the belonging to a gym that gets you in shape, but the going to the gym and working out that gets you in shape. (Yeah, I know. Not a good example right now.) It's not the "being a Christian" that gets us through life. It's the drawing near to Jesus, our High Priest, that gives us the strength to endure, just as He did!

God's peace!
Pastor Jim