

Hold On, Help is On the Way - Part 2

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[0 : 00] So today we will turn now back to our Christmas series. Hold on, help is on the way. Part two. And I think we'll see.

So let's pray. Father, thank you. What joy it is to celebrate the birth of your son. Truly for us, for us every day. Every day we breathe on this side of heaven is Christmas for us.

Truly. But thank you that we get to celebrate with the nation, the world, the birth of Jesus. And thank you that we can do it in a way that honors you.

So Lord, bless us now as we continue to reflect on why he was made like us. Why? Why did you send him in this way?

So will you bless your word now to our hearts and grant your servants speech, clarity, guide me, Lord, as I seek to know how much of this to give today. Lord, I pray for your leading.

[1 : 06] But most of all, may Jesus be glorified and may your people hear from you. And may our lives be changed because we have been in the presence of God, heard your word, and our hearts respond.

Oh God, may your word not fall on deaf ears. In Jesus' name. Amen. Hebrews chapter 2.

I'm going to read from verse 14 once again, but our text really is verses 17 and maybe 18. 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.

Here's our passage. 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.

[2 : 21] For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. That is the word of the Lord.

Amen. Amen. Amen. You may be seated. Wow. Thank you again, praise team.

Thank you so much. You know, every so often I do something that's weird. Every so often.

And this time I decided to look up the word help in the dictionary. To me that's weird because we all know what help means, right?

But I wanted to look it up. I wanted to see what the experts say about the word help. Here's what I find. Westerners. Westerners. To give or provide what is necessary.

[3 : 22] To accomplish a task or satisfy a need. Contribute strength or means to. Render assistance to.

Cooperate effectively with. And then these are more synonyms, I guess. Aid, assist, to save, rescue, sucker, to make easier or less difficult.

To contribute to. Facilitate. To give aid. To be of service or advantage. That's a lot for one little word.

It's only four letters, right? But this is what the eternal son of God did for us at Christmas. When he was born Jesus of Nazareth.

He provided what was necessary. He satisfied our need. He contributes strength. He renders assistance.

[4 : 34] He aids us. He saves us. He rescues us. He makes some things easier or less difficult.

He facilitates. He has been of service. Wow. Wow. You ever think of it that way?

And this is what he's still doing for the children of God today. It wasn't just a Christmas thing. He's still doing this. But here's the question I got to ask you.

Is it? Do you need help? I mean, I know you're all nodding. But do you really need help?

Okay, let's put it this way. Are you living like you need help? Okay. Remember last time. Made like us.

[5 : 42] The son of God is made like us. He becomes one of us. He becomes human. We call him Yeshua, Jesus, right? And we looked last time that this was done so that he could, one, defeat the devil, deliver us from the fear of death.

And he does this because we are children of God, children of Abraham, but also, more importantly, children of God. All right? Now, I got two more things.

There are two more things, two more reasons why he's made like us in our text. First thing, the son of God was made like us to help us by representing us.

You needed some representation. I'm told, now, some of you, a few of you might be lawyers, I'm told you should never go to court without a lawyer. I've seen people do that.

I remember somebody came to me years ago, and she wanted to, she was trying, she was talking to me about whether she should bring a lawyer to court with her because there was some kind of custody battle or whatever.

[6 : 48] And she was telling me how the judges had been favorable to her in the past. They've been really kind to her. And she was going back to court. And I said to her, please get a lawyer.

I think I even mentioned your name. All right? I said, call our, listen, get a, don't, no, don't. You know, she didn't listen to me. And when she went to court without representation, she lost.

You see, when you, we need representation. Sometimes you just need someone to go in your place to represent you because they know more about what's happening than you do.

And they can do it right because they know you, they know your situation, but they also, if it's a lawyer, know the law. They know the rules. Jesus is our representation.

He not only identifies with us in our weakness, he is also like us to be our high priest. This is a big topic.

[7 : 56] So that's why I'm saying I'm not sure. You see how far I get. Verse 17, where he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

He's our high priest. Now, keep in mind, the Jewish high priest was the lead priest. Hebrew speaks of Aaron, Moses' brother, who was the first high priest of Israel.

If you have a Bible, just turn over to chapter 5. I'm not sure that's up there on the screen. It might be chapter 5, verses 1 through 4. If it's on the screen, amen. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God.

Represent, right? To offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He, that high priest, can deal gently with the ignorant and waver since he himself is beset with weakness.

Because of this, he's obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins, just as he does for the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

[9 : 03] 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. And you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Now listen, we can't go into all of that detail, but the idea here is that Aaron was the first high priest.

He represents the people. Jesus comes along, and he's the better Aaron. He fulfills the high priesthood, and now he represents us as his people.

Now let's talk about the high priesthood for a minute. He was only allowed to go into the presence of God in the temple once a year. He went into what was called the most holy place, the holy of holies, behind the last curtain, into this tiny little room.

And in that place, in that most holy place, was a kind of small chest. Anybody by the size of this? Get really close.

[10 : 11] A small chest. But in that chest, well, of course, the chest was overlaid with pure gold. And inside the chest was the Ten Commandments, the stone tablets.

We also know a couple other things were in there. A jar of manna, remembrance, and Aaron's rod. Okay? Very important items that God used. But most importantly, inside the ark, this gold chest, were the Ten Commandments, the law of God given through Moses.

Now, do we have that picture? Let's see if this thing works. Oh, you can't see it. Can we get lights here? Can we dim the lights here?

Can't do that? We can't do that. I don't know if you can see it. I'm bummed. Okay, show me the next one. You can see it? You can see it? Okay, good. Those are the priests carrying the ark. They had to carry it on poles. You couldn't touch it. You had to carry it on poles. Okay? Now, here's a more close-up view. Now, I want to see if this works. Can you see that red thing flashing around? Okay, good.

[11 : 21] All right. On the ark, you have the cherubim, angels, right? In between here was the Shekinah. The glory of God would dwell here above the ark in between the cherubim's wings.

That must have been a sight. Now, the cover here is the mercy seat. Inside are the tablets of law. Okay, you with me? Now, here's what the high priest would do. He would come in. He had sacrificed for his own sins and the sins of the people. He'd come in, and he would sprinkle the blood here on top of the cover.

He would talk with hyssop to sprinkle the blood on there. Boom, boom, boom. Boom, boom. It is said, I've heard this before, haven't fully verified it, but I've heard it so many times, it must be true. That the priest would wear bells on his robe. So while he was in there ministering to God, you would hear jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle.

[12 : 31] As long as you heard his bells jingling, you knew he was still alive. Because it is—put it back! Thank you.

Because this is a dangerous thing for a sinner in the holy presence of God. If his sacrifice was not acceptable for some reason, that blood somehow was tainted.

Or it came from bad animals or something. People would do that. They would offer animals that were sick. Since they couldn't use it, they would give that to God. Oh, boy.

And so if it was unacceptable, he'd drop dead, and they would wheel him out. There would be a rope on his ankle. They'd just wheel him out. Now, keep, keep, keep.

Don't move it. Don't move it. God is looking down from the glory cloud, right? He's looking down. What's in the chest?

[13 : 34] Law of God. The law of God that you broke. As long as he looks at the law of God that the people broke, we're in trouble.

But once a year on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, blood would be sprinkled. So God looks down from the glory cloud at his law, but covering the law now is blood.

An animal had received the judgment of God by dying. God's blood. In place of people.

And God looks down and sees the blood and doesn't wipe them out. He is propitiated.

He's satisfied. I'll talk more about that in a minute. He's satisfied. And so the people are right with God. Their sins, listen, are covered.

[14 : 47] The law is covered. God sees the blood. And only the high priest could do this. No one else is allowed to go in there. And he can only go once a year.

Because God is holy. Hmm. Why blood? Because Hebrews 9.22 says this.

Indeed, under the law, almost everything is purified with blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. So why blood? That's why.

Sin is cosmic treason. When you sin against God, you die. The soul that sins, it shall die. Adam and Eve, if you do this, you will die. Death is the only penalty for sin before God.

A holy God that just, you go to God's court, you in trouble. Blood must be shed. Something must die in place of the worshiper.

[15 : 49] The animal did it. And when God is satisfied, we are now, our sins are atoned for. There is atonement.

There is at-one-ment. Atonement. At-one-ment with God. We are, reconciliation has occurred. The war is over.

The two sides that were at war are now on friendly terms. And God's righteous law and justice.

Remember, he's a just judge.

Is satisfied. He can't, if he says, oh, don't worry about it, then he's not a good judge. Judge has to uphold the law. God is the ultimate judge.

He must uphold his own law. Forgive him. That's what he has to, right? But the animal receives the justice in place of the worshiper.

[16 : 49] The animal receives the justice. Propitiation. God's justice is satisfied because something else has borne the wrath. Something else.

Someone else has borne the judgment. That's what propitiation implies. All right. You with me? Don't lose anybody.

Come to the New Testament. Come to Hebrews. Hebrews. Jesus is now that high priest who represents all the people whom God has given him.

Hebrews chapter 5. Now go back to Hebrews chapter 5 again. We, verses 5 through now. We read some of it already. Start in verse 5. You are my son.

Today I have begotten you. As he says, you are a priest. Yeah, I got that. All right. Verse 7. In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to him who was able to save him from death.

[17 : 49] And he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience to what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

Being designated by God a high priest after the order of this priest. He met Abraham named Melchizedek. Jesus is now this priest who provides eternal salvation to all who obey him.

To all who submit to him as their king and their high priest. Their representative. To all who submit to him in that way, he becomes their eternal salvation.

And what does he do? He goes into the most holy place in heaven to represent us. The father's right hand. He can represent us because like Aaron, he is made like us.

But without sin, he's perfect. And he offers blood. He doesn't go into the most holy place as it were without blood.

[19 : 12] This high priest goes in with his own blood. Why? Hebrews 10.4. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Remember what I said? I used the word covered. Our sins. The animals covered our sins. The sins of God's people.

But didn't take them away. So we have a better sacrifice. Come on, somebody. This one who is not made like the animals.

Nor is he made like angels. But he's made like us. I hope you understand. Human beings are not animals. I just want you to be clear about that. I know biologists want to say things like that.

But brothers and sisters, there's a difference between us and animals. Huge difference. We're made in the image of God. You're not an animal, so don't act like one. Right?

[20 : 15] Okay. He offers, he goes in as a man, a human being, a perfect human being, and offers his blood in place of imperfect human beings like you and me.

Oh, maybe a little, but you definitely. He offers his blood as a perfect human being. You got me? He doesn't, and he doesn't need to do it every year at Yom Kippur, or even daily as the other priests.

Listen to Hebrews 10. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

He was done. But waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

For by a single offering, he has perfected for all times those who were being sanctified.

Hallelujah. That's why we don't celebrate the Mass. That got real quiet. The Mass is the re-sacrificing of Christ.

[21 : 39] We don't celebrate the Mass. It's already been done once and forever. You do not re-sacrifice Jesus. The very thought is monstrous.

You cannot re-sacrifice him. It's clear in Scripture. One sacrifice for all time for all people whom he died for. Amen? We are made one with God forever.

And God's wrath is, here's that word again, propitiated forever. Remember, where did the wrath go?

Where did the... And by the way, when we talk about God's wrath, we're not talking about God flying off the handle being mad.

We're talking about his judicial judgment against sin. It's not wild. It's very focused. But it's very powerful. Where did the wrath go?

Greg, it didn't fall on you, bro. It went to Jesus. It went to one who... He sprinkled his...

[22 : 45] He sprinkled his blood over us. Cleansing us. He poured his blood on the mercy seat, covering the law forever.

Forever. Forever. So when God looks down, as it were, from glory, he sees the law of God. But he sees something else for all eternity.

The blood of his son. The blood of his son, which cleanses the son's people forever. Because it doesn't just cover their sin.

It takes it away. As far as the east is from the west. So far has he removed our sin from us. Not covered. Because, Andrew, he was made like us.

The animals are not made like us, so they cannot take away our sin. He is made like us, but more, he is God in human flesh, so that his death has eternal significance.

[23 : 56] Yes. Yes. Man. Oh, boy.

He deals with our sin as our eternal high priest, so we can have safe access to God forever. Amen. The door, the throne room has been thrown wide open.

Because the ark of the covenant was the throne of God among his people. The presence of God among his people. Where now do we go for the presence of God among his people?

We go to Jesus. We go, we don't go to the, we go to the throne, but more we go to the king on the throne. We have access to God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who has made the way.

And so now, priest of God, now you are a kingdom of priests. And you offer to God yourselves and the fruit of our lips that confesses his name, and we do good.

[25 : 05] I'm quoting from Hebrews 13. That's what we, we, Romans 12, we offer our bodies. Hebrews 13, because we're priests now. The high priest made us priests.

And what do we offer? He doesn't want blood from animals from you. He wants you. God wants you. He wants, and he wants to use you to profess his name, your fruit of your lips, to praise him and to speak of him.

And another sacrifice, the good works that you do in his name. That's what he wants from his people. Give yourself to Jesus.

The great high priest who has died for you, who has made way for you, who has reconciled you to God. The war is over between you and God.

God will never hold your sins against you because he's taken them away. He will have to reinstate them. Well, change my mind, Derek.

[26 : 14] We're reinstating your sins. What a thought that would destroy the whole atonement. One sacrifice forever. Wow.

Okay. He absorbs God's wrath. He opens the door for us. But this is only true. This can only be true if Christmas is true.

If Christmas is not true, then this can't be so. If the son of God did not come from heaven and become man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, then none of what I just said is true.

Christmas must be true for this, for you to be made right with God. Otherwise, we're still in trouble. Now, let's ask a question.

When God in love reconciles us to himself, what does that mean for us? Well, you know we got access to God. We already got that. I have to put something out there that you know.

[27 : 25] He then makes us vehicles for reconciliation. If the death of Christ propitiates and reconciles us to God, then those who have been reconciled to God, now God wants to use as his vehicles a further reconciliation.

You don't propitiate God, so that's not—don't worry about that. But the process—not only Jesus can do that. But what that produces is a reconciled people who then become vehicles of that same type of reconciliation.

So what does that mean? First of all, that means this. It means, one, that we preach the gospel. I mean, listen, think about it. When you understand how helpless you were before God, with no one to represent you but yourself, but in his great love and mercy, he gave you help by sending Jesus for you.

When you really let that sink down deep in your soul, it's hard to keep quiet about it. You ever—let's go back to my law, my lawyer illustration.

If you ever have needed a lawyer and you got one who really helped you out, if you meet somebody else who needs a good lawyer, what do you do?

[28 : 58] You can't stop talking about, man, my lawyer, Kevin Smith, my lawyer, he hooked me up. Man, he took care of me. He was attentive to my needs.

He understood my problem. He went into the courtroom. He laid it out before the judge, and I got \$50,000. Woo-hoo! When someone else you know and care about a little bit, even if you barely know them, if you hear them say, man, I need a good lawyer, you wouldn't be able to help yourself. You would say, I got one. I got someone who can represent you. Family. That's evangelism. Everybody out there needs a good lawyer in the courtroom of heaven. There is nobody out there who doesn't need that.

We are all made in the image of God, and we've all failed. We've all flumped it. We've fumbled the ball many, many times. The Cowboys did win yesterday, thank you, but it was ugly.

[30 : 15] I'm just saying, you know, we're a mess. And everybody, if they will admit it, they look at themselves in the mirror and they wish they could be better. Everybody wants to be better.

But the problem is, we really can't, but so much. We can do some cosmetic stuff and do a few good things, you know, but down in here, I'm still me.

You may not see that me. Oh, but yeah. And when I get, and at times, he comes out. He get loose. We're all like that. We need a lawyer in the courtroom of heaven. We need a representative. And that's when you and I come in.

We come to people and we see their lives and we see how they're struggling with pain or this unhappiness, illness, just life. Life. Life just beats you up.

[31 : 20] You know what I'm saying? Disappointments. People. I mean, life would be great if it wasn't for people. I mean, we're all broken up.

And when you meet people, you can make that assumption. You can make that. That's the assumption you can always make about somebody. They're a sinner.

In need of big help. And all you're doing in evangelism is letting them know where you found help. And see, if you understand how desperate your situation was, remember, law broken, God is holy, looking down at the law, and you come in the room.

Okay? There's no hope. If you remember this, if we could just, you know something, we have been spiritual amnesia. We really don't remember how much we needed help.

[32 : 30] And how much, and sometimes we don't remember how much we still do need help. I know you say, sanctify and fill with the Holy Ghost and fire. Amen. I'm all good.

That's Pentecostal language if you don't know what that is. Amen. Amen. But the reason the Spirit of God is in you is because you need help.

You need lots of help still. And so the Spirit of God is in you to help you, to transform you, to correct you, to guide you, to say, don't touch that. Don't go there.

I need that kind of help. My spiritual GPS can lead me the wrong way sometimes. I need somebody else who knows more. So that's all you're doing.

You've been reconciled by the great high priest and now you're a priest under him to speak the message of reconciliation to people all around you who are in desperate need of help.

[33 : 37] even when they don't know it. And that's the worst place to be is to need help and not know you need help. Second thing, and we'll wrap it up, applying it, just thinking about it a little bit more.

Being reconciled makes us peacemakers. Thank you, elder.

It got so quiet, no one was with me. I just, I lost him at the door, I guess. I don't know.

Peacemakers. Reconcilers. That's what reconcilers are. You're peacemakers. That suggests then what Jesus said in Matthew 5, right?

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall what? To the children of God. See, they look like their daddy. See, the father is the ultimate reconciler and peacemaker.

So when you are reconciled to him, you begin to bear his image, you too become a peacemaker. If you're not a peacemaker, check your birth certificate.

[34 : 52] Spiritually speaking. We become reconcilers. We become peacemakers when we walk into the room we try to bring folk together. When someone hurts you or steps on your toe in some way, your response is to, Matthew 18, go to them to be reconciled because you can't stand the thought of being at odds with your brother or sister in Christ or your family member or anyone else for that matter.

The Bible says, as much as it depends on you, live at peace with all men. You can't make someone love you or be reconciled to you, but you can't not try.

Especially within the church of God. As brothers and sisters, we are all part of one family. If I hurt your feelings in some way, you need to come and tell me.

If you can't overlook it, love covers a multitude of sins. Amen? Some things you can overlook, but some things need reconciliation. Some things you need, you say, because I've been reconciled to God, I have the reconciling spirit in me, the spirit of the peacemaker himself in me, and I am going to do everything I can to reconcile with you.

A few years ago, something called COVID hit. Maybe you heard about it. And churches across this land, over one thing in particular, masks.

[36 : 42] I don't have one on me, Jack, you should have one on me. Piece of cloth. Breathable, usually.

If not, just, that's what I would do. I did it many times, I'll tell you. And churches across this land were destroyed.

People who would say they'd been reconciled to God could not reconcile with one another. People left churches.

And it was basically two sides, right? You know, one side said, if you don't wear masks, you're not loving your neighbor. The other side said, if you wear masks, you are giving into the government, letting government have control of our churches and our worship.

And both sides were sure they were right. Not just a little right, 100% right. And they couldn't reconcile.

[38 : 02] And they couldn't reconcile. Over a mask. who was at work?

We are a church since the very beginning has believed in racial reconciliation. reconciliation. But if you can't do reconciliation, you're a heck of not doing racial reconciliation.

If you can't learn to talk to your brother and sister and say, hey, you hurt me, let's talk about this and work it out. If you can't do that, forget racial reconciliation.

That's a farce. That's a fake. If we can't talk to each other when we hurt each other and we look the same or not, it doesn't matter.

We can't come to the table and then we talk about we racially reconcile. I'm just applying the passage. Reconcile.

[39 : 16] Reconciliation. Propitiation. We've got to be people who will humble ourselves before the living God and one another.

You see, I can humble myself before you, Cody. I can admit to you when I'm saying, I can admit that I blew it, man. I blew it. I don't lose anything by doing that.

Now, if he says, I don't care what you say, I'll break my heart. But I don't lose anything. I don't become less than a, I don't become less than a son of God.

Reconciliation is the fruit of being reconciled by our high priest. You're having marital problems and you say you're a Christian, don't you dare walk away.

Reconcile. Work it out. Don't run away. That's not reconciliation. It's not racial reconciliation.

[40 : 30] It's the very opposite of what Jesus died for. And I will tell you about reconcilers. When you're a peacemaker, a reconciler, if you're trying to help people come together, get ready.

You're going to get shot. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. To make reconciliation between us and God, Jesus had to take the shot.

Right. That's right. If you're trying to reconcile people together, understand something, there's a good chance you're going to take some shots too. Because you're not going to side with either one. Right.

You can't. Unless, of course, you know something that's definitely true. That person, I mean, if you know, that's one thing. But I'm saying, in general, both people usually bring something to the table that's ugly.

And if you try to reconcile them, it's like police officers going into a domestic disturbance. But let me tell you something.

[41 : 32] You're so like your Savior when you do. It's worth it. It's worth it. I'll tell you my heart real quick. I was that guy in the middle in our church.

And I took those shots. And I hated it. And I'm still hurting from it. Sometimes you can't win if you do one or the other.

You just can't win. I'm in the middle. The session was in the middle. And we took shots from people that we loved. But would I do it again?

You bet I would. For Jesus. The body of Christ is worthy. It's worth it. You blood washed, born again, family in Christ.

You're worth it. We are worth it. because he reconciled us by his own blood when we were helpless and hopeless without God and without hope in this world.

[42 : 45] Death and luck waiting for us when we close our eyes. But he came made like us to reconcile us to God, to bring us to God, and to make us the children of God forever.

our sins are atoned for. Yes, you are worth it. And I hope I'm worth it to you too. Well, like I said, I didn't show how far I would get and I didn't get very far.

That was point one. We'll pick up point two next week. Father, in Jesus' name, thank you for your word and thank you for Jesus, our great high priest who with his own blood took away our sins.

We are made right forever. We are your people forever because of him and we bless and praise your name. Lord, make us your reconciling people. Lord, work in us.

Help us. Remind us of how helpless and hopeless we were until we met Jesus and remind us each and every day how much we need Jesus and your spirit and your word or we will fall fat on our face each and every day.

[44 : 04] Help us to remember that he is our great help. There's no one better. In his name we pray.

Amen.