

## Faith Under Pressure Remembering

Hebrews 2:5-3:6

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Please open your Bibles to Hebrews 2. How many of you used a GPS to find your way to church today? No one. Now, if I told you to take me to Miami airport, terminal B, how many of you would use your GPS or phone map app? I hope so! And when you are a stranger to a particular big city and you're using the GPS as you drive, how well are you paying attention to that GPS?? A lot! *"Don't talk to me, turn off the radio, I need to concentrate."*

If I am not glued to that GPS what will probably happen? Get lost, miss turns, miss a flight, get angry... When we visited England last summer... driving on the wrong side of the road... I was paying much closer attention and I still made some wrong turns! All the signs were in British! Clearly, I was a stranger!

### Hebrews 11:13

*"These all... acknowledged that  
they were strangers and exiles on the earth."*

Of course, you know your way around Naples... but the reality, as followers of Jesus, is we are strangers here on earth, we are citizens of heaven. We are seeking a better homeland. So, we live by faith in a fallen world, and as we saw last week, if we do not pay much closer attention to what God is saying and to Jesus, what will happen to us? 2:1 We will drift, and as we drift.. we neglect and ignore what is true, our hearts become heard, and that will not end well. 2:3 says how shall we escape the consequences if we ignore such a great salvation.

This is serious stuff!

Hebrews 11 says that the great men and women of faith desired a better country. Do you desire heaven? Eternity?

It makes a difference in how you run the race.

But to desire this eternal home, you have to understand you aren't there yet. Let me explain...



What story is this...

The story of the Ugly Duckling! Who wrote it?? Hans Christian Anderson! The story of a swan who was born into a family of ducks. He looked different, he sounded different, but none of them knew he wasn't a duck... so they made fun of him, called him ugly, and cast him out. // The problem wasn't that he wasn't a duck, the problem was he didn't **know** he was a swan. He was never **meant** to look like a duck or sound like a duck. But he didn't know who he was or what he

was made for or where he belonged. So, life was miserable... until he discovered that he was made to be something else, a swan! And then he found a community of other swans who affirmed his true identity.

Too many Christians live like the ugly duckling. No offense to ducks, they're just not swans. And until you get an accurate assessment of who you really are, especially your identity as a saved and rescued follower of Jesus, you're going to feel lost this side of heaven, I'd say even

miserable. That's why we need to pay attention to what God is saying, and the preacher who wrote the letter of Hebrews wants to encourage his listeners who were struggling, life was hard..., the culture was treating them like so many ugly ducklings, and the preacher is saying... "you are not who the world thinks you are, of course you don't fit in, you need to be reminded who you really are."

So here's our...

**Big Idea: You were made for a glorious purpose.**

Stop living like an outcast ugly duckling. Your faith is under pressure, and life is hard because you are not home. You are more than you know and God wants you to remember who you are and what you were made for.

**Pray**

*When the pressure is on you need to remember...*

**1. Jesus created you for glory.** 2:5-8

Most of life's big hairy audacious questions are going to be answered in this passage. **BHAQs...**

**Who am I?**

**Why am I here?**

**Where am I going?**

**Who am I going with?**

These are questions we all need to wrestle with.

And in verses 5-8 he quotes **Psalm 8** which is an amazing psalm that helps to answer several questions about humans... first

a. **What is man?** **Read 2:5-8a**

This is **God's original intent for man**, his design for you and me.

You did not evolve over millions of years, God created you for a glorious purpose. This is why it is critical for us to listen to what God is saying, and train our children to listen to God- because they are being told something else by the culture. And it radically effects your worldview. God made man, and he made men and women for a purpose different from the rest of creation, we are made in the image of God. Three things right here we see that set man apart...

- i. **Position.** God made man for a *little while* lower than the angels. He made us in his image, but our current experience is lower than the angels because we have earthly bodies that limit us. But that is only for a little while. Angels actually serve God's purpose of helping us find our purpose and our way home 1:14 and when we get there, we won't be lower than the angels.
- ii. **Honor.** "you have crowned him with glory and honor." As image bearers, we reflect God to creation. If creation were to ask, what is God like?, God's intent is to point to men and women...
- iii. **Authority.** When God made man he set him over creation to rule it and care for it. Listen to Genesis **1:26-28**. This is God's original intent for you too, it's in your DNA, it's in your soul. And you need to remember...

*"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

*<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.*

*<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

See **Psalm 8:5-9**

*"Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honor.*

*<sup>6</sup> You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under his feet,*

*<sup>7</sup> all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of the field,*

*<sup>8</sup> the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

*<sup>9</sup> O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!"*

If you want to answer life's BHAQs you need to know what the original intent was behind your design. God made you to rule, **read** Heb 2:8b. Nothing was excluded, everything was made subject to man. But something happened...

look at the last part v8.

*"At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him."*

So this brings us another question.

b. **What happened to man?** 8c.

You were made for glory but that's not your current experience... Here's why. **Romans 8:18-25**

*"Yet what we **suffer** now is nothing compared to the **glory** he will reveal to us later. <sup>19</sup> For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal **who his children really are**. <sup>20</sup> Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's **curse**. But with eager hope, <sup>21</sup> the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in **glorious** freedom from death and decay. <sup>22</sup> For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup> And we believers also **groan**, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of **future glory**, for we long for our bodies to be released from **sin and suffering**. We, too, wait with eager **hope for the day** when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. <sup>24</sup> We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. <sup>25</sup> But if we **look forward** to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)"*

We live in a fallen world, and we are called to live by faith not by sight, faith is the assurance of things hoped for the conviction of things not seen. And we have hope for the third question...

c. **What will happen to man?** This is God's ultimate intent and

we saw it in Romans 8, there is glory on the horizon, we are groaning now because we are waiting for our full adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. And this is one reason why the incarnation is so important... And now we are getting to Jesus... God gives us a glimpse of

our future... and here's how he does it... **2:9**, *"But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor..."* Jesus is leading the way for us home. And in v10 it says he is bringing many sons to glory.

This is what is happening in our world. God created you for glory, sin has frustrated that original intent in us, but God is making a way... that's good news! and that leads us to #2

***When the pressure is on you need to remember...***

**2. Jesus suffered to restore you to glory.** 2:9-15 **read!**

Three ways that Jesus suffered for us, kind of mixed in throughout these verses, but let's look at each one.

First, ***Jesus did this in...*** Jesus suffered in...

a. **The Incarnation.** We don't often think about that.

But to leave your throne of glory and be born as a human baby is suffering. To have to endure puberty and teenager years and middle school, for me that was suffering! He humbled himself, here it says in v.9, lower than the angels who he created, Philippians 2 says he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. Heb 2:14, says he shared in flesh and blood and all the realities of keeping these bodies going, hunger, thirst, sickness, injuries – *he was a carpenter!* But maybe the most mind blowing (apart from the crucifixion) was this, he suffered when he was tempted, **read** v.18. What does that mean? The same thing it means for you and me, it was hard. When you resist temptation, it feels like suffering. There's a part of you that wants to do something, but you know it's wrong, and there's a struggle. // Is the struggle sin? No. You should be encouraged by that. Jesus knows the struggle, he suffered in it, but he never made the choice to sin, like we do. But he endured the suffering of temptation. And because he never sinned he was able to subject himself to the next suffering to restore us...

b. **The Crucifixion.**

The end of v.9 says that by the grace of God he tasted death for everyone. The glory we were made for was cut off because of sin. The Bible is clear, the penalty for sin is death. Romans 3:23, *"for the wages of sin is death..."* To restore us to glory he had to taste death for us. If you have watched any of the Bible based Easter movies, you've seen a bit of what a crucifixion is like, The Passion of Christ, it's awful, meant to be terrible, not merciful or humane. It is Cruel in every way. That's what you deserve, that's what I deserve, but not Jesus. He took our place. And that's the next thing he suffered for us...

c. **The Atonement.** The suffering was physically brutal,

but it was spiritually even worse. The guilt, the shame, and the sin of the world was heaped on Jesus. There is a legally binding judgement on each of us that says, guilty, and the sentencing has been determined, death. And Jesus said... I will pay that debt for you. It's called penal substitution, and in theological terms we call it substitutionary atonement. The apostle Paul describes it in **2 Corinthians 5:21**, *"For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ."* And in...

**Colossians 2:13-15**, *"You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup> He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross."*

*And that's another suffering...*

d. **The victory over Satan.** Satan doesn't know everything, but he knows the rules, and he knows that sinners must die, and he wants to keep you under his control, v. 15 *calls it lifelong slavery through the fear of death.* If you are familiar with the Chronicles of Narnia by JRR Tolkien, it is a story that is a metaphor, a spiritual analogy to the message of the gospel. The lion, Aslan, is the Christ figure, and without telling the whole story, he allows the forces of darkness to kill him in place of a human. The law of sin and death required it, but what the evil forces did not know, was when one who did not owe the penalty sacrificed himself for others, it **broke** the curse of sin and death. But to do this for us, Jesus had to suffer in order to defeat the devil. This stuff is real, death is real, Satan is real, the penalty of sin is real, // but so is the freedom that comes when you put your faith in this Jesus.

**1 Corinthians 15:55-56** says,

*"Death is swallowed up in victory."*

*"O death, where is your victory?"*

*O death, where is your sting?"*

*<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

We need to remember these things, even if we are not facing certain death because of our faith, like these people the preacher was writing to. These were most likely converted Jews living in or near Rome who were about to face the full force of Nero's persecution, Christians being burned as lanterns to light the city, fed to lions in the colosseum, they had immediate reasons to be afraid. That may not happen to us, but have you ever thought about death? It's part of the reality of life in a fallen world. We will all experience that. But if you believe in Jesus, if you trust him...- you don't have to be afraid anymore. The power of sin has been broken, the power of Satan has been broken, the power of death has been broken in your life. You are no longer a slave, you are a child of God. If you have not yet said "yes" to Jesus, what are you waiting for? You were made for so much more, God created you for glory, and Jesus suffered to restore you to glory. So, give your life to him, just tell him... *"Lord I need you, I bow before you as my Lord and my Savior, I surrender control of my life to you, - I trust you to bring me home, to glory. Thank you for forgiving me, for paying my penalty by dying on the cross. Now, Jesus, please help me, help me live for you."* Amen.

And that's the third thing we need to remember today from our text...

**3. Jesus will help you get to glory.** 2:16-18 **read.**

We've answered a few BHAQs this morning,

*who am I?* made in the image of God, position, honor, authority

*why am I here?* To reflect God to creation, and now in a fallen world to help people find their way back to God

*Where am I going?* Home! To glory, to heaven, but we are not there yet, that's why it's hard, but Jesus suffered so he can bring us to glory.

*Who am I going with?* The family of God, his son's and daughters, the children of God, the church! we do this together!

*How am I going to get there?* Through faith in Jesus, and with the help of Jesus. Do you see that in v.16 – he helps **us**, he doesn't help angels, that's kind of tough for angels, when they sin, it's game over- you are out- go play with Satan and face eventual destruction in a lake of fire.

**1 Peter 1:12** says Angels long to look into the salvation given to humans, they see the mercy of God given to us, they see the grace of God given to us, but they will never experience it. To people who reject the gospel, angels must look at them and think – are you crazy! But angels were not created in the image of God like we were. Look back at 1:14, talking about Angels *“Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?”* Angels are there to help us! That's a whole other sermon, but be encouraged, angels **are** real and they will help you too! But let's keep our focus on Jesus...

**Three ways he helps us get to glory**, at the end of this text.

Jesus...

a. **Serves as our High Priest.** He is our mediator. **Read** v.17a,b.

He had to be made like us in every respect, amazing! We already talked about his sacrifice for us, but this idea that he is our high priest is an ongoing ministry, he is seated in heaven and he is praying for us and he is our advocate. **1 John 2:1-2** *“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an **advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> He is the **propitiation** for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”* **If** anyone does sin? Do you think that is going to happen? Yes, it will, it does, all the time, and it's one of the things that trips us up and Satan loves to accuse you and discourage you with it, but what does this say... Jesus is a merciful and faithful High Priest, an **advocate**, he is on your side, he has your back, his wounds paid for the sins in your past, your present, and your future. That shouldn't cause you to want to sin, what does John say, *“I write these things so you may not sin!”* But as our advocate he has done this also, a big theological word right there at the end of v.17, he had to be made like us to make propitiation for the sins of the people. So Jesus...

b. **Makes Propitiation.**

It means to appease the righteous anger of someone, this is a very poor illustration, but if I had to work late and missed a special dinner my wife made, I might bring her flowers to make propitiation, to appease her righteous anger. God, because he is holy, has every right – it's part of his character to be angry, not like we get angry, but in a righteous, just and holy way, we may have a hard time with the fact that God's anger needs to be appeased, but that's what this word means. But the good news is Jesus helps us by satisfying that anger. And we will get to this in chapter 4, but I want you to see how this helps us, it enables us to approach God with confidence, **Hebrews 4:14-16**, *“So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. <sup>15</sup> This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.”* That's incredible! You can have confidence to approach God through faith in Jesus. You don't have to clean up your life to approach God, you can't do it, impossible. You should desire to live for God, to not sin, but the temptations come and we will sin, but here's the final way in our text Jesus helps us. He...

c. **Helps us in Temptation.** **Read** v18. **1 Corinthians 10:13**,

*“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.”*

You were made for a glorious purpose. That is the better country your soul longs for, and Jesus will lead you there if you will follow him. He made you for glory- so stop living like an ugly duckling, remember who you are! But to do that you need help, Jesus suffered so you can be restored to glory and he is with you now to help you get there. You are not alone!

**Pray**