

Hebrews 7:1-3 “It’s Time to Go Deeper into Christ”**

Series: “*Going Deeper into The Son – An Exposition of Hebrews 7-9*”¹

Main Idea: The book of Hebrews enables us to go deeper in our knowledge of Christ. As we begin our study of the seventh chapter of Hebrews, we’ll ponder three lessons.

- I. Hebrews teaches us about the supremacy of Christ (1:1-5:10).
 - A. He is greater than the angels (chs 1-2).
 - B. He is greater than Moses (ch 3).
 - C. He is greater than any human priest (chs 4-5).
- II. Hebrews teaches us that we have a lot more to learn about Christ, but may not be ready (5:11-6:20).
 - A. The readers were guilty of lazy hearing (5:11).
 - B. The readers were stuck on the ABCs of God’s Word (5:12-14).
 - C. The readers needed to get involved in the process of spiritual maturity (6:1).
- III. Hebrews teaches us that we can learn about Christ from Melchizedek (7:1-3).
 - A. Melchizedek was a great king and priest (1a).
 - B. Melchizedek gave a blessing to Abraham (1b).
 1. His actions revealed his authority.
 2. His actions revealed his recognition of God’s redemptive plan.
 - C. Melchizedek received a tenth from Abraham (2).
 1. Words can be cheap.
 2. Giving is a way to show respect and appreciation.
 - D. Melchizedek makes us think about the Son of God (3).
 1. We can’t explain him fully.
 2. We can approach God through Him.
 3. We must accept him by faith.

Take Inventory: How well do you know Christ?

1. Do you know Him as your Savior?
2. Do you know Him as the supreme one in your life?
3. Are you taking steps to know Him better?

We love the Bible at WBC! It’s not the paper and ink. It’s because this Book is God’s revelation. He gave us this Book that we might know Him. This summer we enjoyed opening the Book and beholding God through the prayers of Paul. More recently we learned how to live out our faith in Him when times are hard by pondering the words of the Lamenters, Jeremiah. Now it’s time to head back home to our expositional series in Hebrews. We’re exploring Hebrews in sections. We began in 2025 with *Behold the Son* (chapters 1-2). Then we began 2026 with *Rest in the Son* (chapters 3-6). Now it’s time to *Going Deeper into The Son* (chapters 7-9).

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 7:1-3 (begin with 6:19-20)

I was a twenty-one year old senior in college when I noticed it. Oh I had seen it before, I suppose, but this time it really stood out. My home church gave me the privilege of preaching my first series of messages, a month long series from the book of Jonah. I’d been introduced to Christ in that church as an eleven year old boy, disciplined there by those who taught me the Word from that same pulpit as well as behind Sunday School lecterns and in youth group meetings, and by the examples of their lives. It was quite intimidating to walk the steps to the platform, proceed to the sacred desk, and prepare to speak to the onlooking congregation.

And then I saw it. There was a statement engraved in the wood of the large pulpit, visible not to the congregation but only to the preacher. It was placed there to remind

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous look at this passage, see the Hebrews series preached at WBC in 2008.

every person who would ever attempt to address the assembly of his God-given task. The plaque, borrowing a verse from John's gospel, simply stated, "Sir, we would see Jesus."

There is nothing that people need more than a clear view of Jesus. That's not an exaggeration, for Jesus Himself affirmed that knowing Him is eternal life (John 17:3). It's a privilege to know Him—that's why God sent Him into the world. It's a privilege to grow in our knowledge of Him—that's why God gave us His Word. The Scriptures testify *of Him*, as Jesus said (John 5:39).

Which raises the question. How well do we know Him? Yes, we use His name regularly. We cite it in our prayers. We sing it in our songs. We affirm it in our creeds. But how well do we really know Jesus?

I want to go *deeper*, don't you? There's a shallowness that prevails American Christianity these days. We have access to more Christian books and literature than ever, more Christian teaching via podcasts, radio and television, more Christian music, more Christian "talk" with blogging and chatrooms, more, more, more. And none of this is a problem per se, but it tends to mask over a very fundamental problem. I can't think of a better word to sum up the situation. *Shallowness*.

Many who are sitting in churches this morning will sing about and hear sermons about and affirm belief in a Jesus they barely know.

That's why I'm thrilled to return with you to our study of the book of Hebrews. If there's anything that Hebrews enables (even forces us to do), it's to *go deeper into Christ*. Who is Jesus Christ, and why did He give His life on a cross, and why should we live our lives for Him no matter what the cost? Hebrews tells us why, and there's nothing surfacy in the answer it gives!

The stakes are high, beloved. The book of Hebrews was written to encourage some predominantly Jewish followers of Jesus who were pondering throwing in the towel. They were being persecuted by family members and community members and government authorities, and they were starting to waver. Is it worth it to follow Jesus?

Quite frankly, many today believe in a "Jesus" who is *not* worth following, and certainly not worthy dying for. They believe in a gutted Jesus. They can recite a few, maybe even many facts about Jesus, that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus died for our sins, that Jesus is coming again. But there's a hollowness to those statements of faith, true as they are.

We are not saved merely by believing in propositional statements. We're saved by believing in the *person* of whom those propositional statements are true.

Sir, we would see Jesus. I hope this is your desire today. If so, the book of Hebrews can help us, for this book is well suited to take us deeper in our knowledge of the Son. As we return to the seventh chapter of Hebrews, let's ponder three lessons. The first two take us back to ground we've already covered, and the third breaks new ground.

I. Hebrews teaches us about the supremacy of Christ (1:1-5:10).

That's the theme of the entire letter, the supremacy of the sufficient Christ.² Why should I devote my life to one Supreme Savior and Lord when the world around me insists there are many religious options on the shelf? Hebrews says because there is none like Him.

The epistle begins by making this announcement in Hebrews 1:1-2, "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in

² The letter takes about fifty minutes to read through, so it may originally have been a message delivered to encourage believers in a first century church's worship service.

these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.”

We don’t know who penned this letter, but we know his intent. Based on five warning texts included throughout (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:14-29), we know the writer is concerned that his readers are wavering. They came out of Judaism and were being pressured to return to their family traditions. But why go back? Christianity isn’t anti-Judaism, but the fulfillment of all that the Hebrew Scriptures foretold. Christ is supreme. We’ve seen three comparisons thus far in our journey through Hebrews.

A. Christ is greater than the angels (chs 1-2). Most first century Jews considered angels to be exalted beings and revered them greatly. And while they are powerful, listen to what the writer said in 1:5, “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father’? Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’?” And in Hebrews 1:13, “To which of the angels did God ever say, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’?”

God never said that to an angel. But He did to His Son. Yes, angels are magnificent creatures, but they can’t begin to compare with the One who created them and everything else. Christ is greater than the angels.

B. Christ is greater than Moses (ch 3). This, too, was a huge issue for first century Jewish believers who believed that God gave His people the Torah through Moses. “You’re being anti-Moses if you turn from Judaism to Jesus,” said the critics. Not so, says the writer of Hebrews.

Listen to Hebrews 3:1-6, “Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.”

Does Moses deserve honor? Certainly, but Jesus is worthy of *greater honor*. Moses was a servant in God’s house, but Jesus the Christ, God’s own Son, is over God’s house.

C. Christ is greater than any human priest (chs 4-5). For fourteen centuries, since the day Moses came down from Mount Sinai, God’s people had approached God *through priests*. The Latin word for *priest* is *pontifex* which means “a bridge builder.” Barclay explains, “The priest was a man whose function was to build a bridge between men and God by means of the sacrificial system.”³

“That’s your problem,” said Jewish opponents to the early Christians. “You don’t have a priest, and consequently you don’t have a bridge to God like we do.” Not so, explains the writer of Hebrews in passage after passage.

2:17 “For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.”

4:14 “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.”

5:1 “Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.”

³ William Barclay, p. 66.

5:4 “No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was.”

So we do have a priest! Christ is our priest. How then did Christ become a priest? We find the answer in the next two verses. The writer says in 5:5-6, “So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father [a quotation of Psalm 2:7].’ And he says in another place, ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek [a quotation of Psalm 110:4].’”

Note carefully that last phrase, “In the order of Melchizedek,” for we see it again just four verses later at the end of verse 10. “And was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.”

“Who is Melchizedek?” you ask. Good question. The writer wants to give us the answer too. Right here. But he says he can’t. Why not? In the very next verse, the writer makes a shocking announcement. He says in 5:11, “We have much to say about this, but...” Uh oh. He wants to say more about the subject of Christ’s priesthood, particularly about how Christ’s priesthood is “in the order of Melchizedek.” But he can’t say it. Oh, he could say it, and he will say it eventually as we’re seeing in chapter seven. But he can’t say it yet. Why not? Because his readers can’t handle it.

This brings us to lesson two. First, Hebrews teaches us about the supremacy of Christ.

II. Hebrews teaches us that we have a lot more to learn about Christ, but may not be ready (5:11-6:20).

To put it bluntly, some of us aren’t ready to go into the deep end. We don’t even realize we should or could. The thought bores us. We prefer staying, as it were, in the kiddie pool. And so we hear that there is something to be learned about Christ from Melchizedek and we’re already tuning out and wondering what’s for lunch. We’re just not ready to learn more.

What’s the problem? It’s what the writer of Hebrews addresses next. It’s with his desire to help his readers (then and now) that he confronts three issues head-on.

A. The readers were guilty of lazy hearing (5:11). “We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn.” That’s the NIV. The ESV says “dull of hearing”.

The problem wasn’t that his subject matter was too difficult, although the subject of Christ’s priesthood is certainly mind-stretching. No, the problem is that *you are slow to learn*. Slow/dull comes the Greek word *nothros* meaning “careless, slothful, sluggish.” We see the same word in 6:12, there translated “lazy” (NIV) and “sluggish” (ESV) and “slothful” (KJV).

And what was lazy/slothful/sluggish? The NIV uses the words, “to learn,” but it’s actually from the Greek noun *akoe* which means “hearing.” The readers were guilty of “lazy hearing.”

What kind of a hearer are you? What would your spouse say about the way you listen to him or her? More importantly, how do you listen to God’s Word when you are hearing it? Do you come to church *wanting* to hear it, *ready* to listen to it, to learn it, be changed by it, and grow in your relationship with God because of it? If we want to go deeper, we cannot be passive, lazy hearers.

Lazy hearing is not an ear problem. It’s a heart problem. We hear with our hearts. If we’re not hearing God’s Word well, it’s because our hearts are distracted. And here is a vivid evidence of lazy hearing.

B. The readers were stuck on the ABCs of God's Word (5:12-14). We read in Hebrews 5:12-14 (NIV), "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths [ESV 'basic principles'] of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

He refers to the *elementary truths/basic principles of God's word*. The *milk*, he calls it. Milk is a good thing, but we can't live on it, not for long. We need solid food if we want to grow and be strong. And who can handle solid food? It's for the *mature*, he says. And this brings us to the third issue with which the writer confronted his readers.

C. The readers needed to get involved in the process of spiritual maturity (6:1). In the NIV, "Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ [ESV 'the elementary doctrine of Christ'] and go on to maturity."

Think carefully about that counsel. He just told his readers they needed milk, that they needed someone to teach them the elementary truths all over again. What would we expect his next words to be? I would expect him to say, "Well, since you can't handle solid food yet, I'll give you some more milk." But he doesn't. Rather, he challenges them to "leave the elementary teachings about Christ and *go on to maturity*." The implication is clear. You can do this. You don't have to remain a spiritual infant. You can grow, but you can't be passive. You must purposefully engage in the process of spiritual maturity.

And to help them grow, he now takes them back to the subject that just moments ago he said they couldn't handle. Remember the subject? At the end of chapter six he mentioned for a third time that Christ is a "high priest forever after the order of *Melchizedek*." And this brings us to new ground and our third lesson.

III. Hebrews teaches us that we can learn about Christ from Melchizedek (7:1-3).

The writer takes the whole chapter to discuss the life of Melchizedek. Actually, his topic isn't really Melchizedek. Melchizedek is a means to something. His goal for teaching us about the mysterious Melchizedek is to help us get to know Christ better.

So by the end of today's message and even the end of the study of this chapter, I can assure you that we won't know all there is to know about Melchizedek. But we will know Christ better, if we refuse to be lazy hearers, for the study of Melchizedek is designed to help us go deeper into Christ. The writer gives us four insights regarding Melchizedek in verses 1-3.

A. Melchizedek was a great king and priest (1a). Verse 1 begins, "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, met Abraham." Stop there. That's a significant combination, *king* and *priest*. Melchizedek was both.

He was the *king of Salem*. Salem means "peace". Salem is a shortened name for Jerusalem (see Psalm 76:2⁴). And he was *priest of the Most High God* (ESV and KJV). In the NIV, it's God Most High. In the literal Greek it's "priest of the God the highest." This reference to "the Most High God" doesn't mean there are many gods and that Melchizedek was priest of the highest of them. The term simply means that God is the sovereign one over all His creation. It's worth noting that elsewhere the title is applied to Christ, as "the Son of the Most High God" (which the demons said in Mark 5:7, and Gabriel said in Luke 1:32). Melchizedek then was a great king who served as a priest of the only true and living God, the Sovereign One, God Most High.

⁴ Psalm 76:2 "His abode has been established in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion."

B. Melchizedek gave a blessing to Abraham (1b). Verse 1 continues, “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.”

Melchizedek is mentioned in only three books of the Bible, here in Hebrews and previously in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110. In our text the writer refers to the events of Genesis 14 and mentions interaction that occurred with Abraham. He “blessed” Abraham when he returned from the defeat of the kings.

If we go back to Genesis 14, we can fill in some of the details, which no doubt the Jewish readers already knew. Genesis 14 is fairly early in the Abraham story. He has left Ur and is a sojourner in the land of Canaan which God promised to him. He is still known as Abram. He doesn’t have a son yet. Ishmael will come as a result of his lack of faith in chapter 16. Isaac will come as a miraculous gift from the Lord in chapter 21. But he has a nephew named Lot who got into some trouble in chapter 14.

Scan the page of Genesis 14 and you’ll see that the meeting between Abram and Melchizedek occurred because of a war between these kings in Canaan. We’re introduced to the two parties of kings in verses 1-12. The actual meeting between Abram and Melchizedek occurred in the valley of Shaveh, known as the King’s Valley (17), just a short distance east of what will later be known as Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley.

Abraham was there because he had just rescued Lot who had been taken hostage by a coalition of aggressive kings who captured Sodom and Gomorrah where Lot had been living (11-12). When Abraham heard of his nephew’s predicament, he took 318 trained men from his household, attacked the enemy forces, set Lot free, and hauled away the spoils (13-16).

After he returned from battle, according to verse 17, the king of Sodom went out to meet him. So did a mysterious and previously unmentioned figure called “Melchizedek king of Salem” who brought Abram bread and wine (18) and blessed him. The Genesis account records his words in Genesis 14:19-20, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor [ESV footnote, or ‘Creator’] of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

Melchizedek’s actions provide us with two insights. *First, his actions reveal his authority.* The person who gives a blessing is greater than the person who receives it, a point the writer of Hebrews will make in verse 7. The actions of Melchizedek speak of his inherent authority as a king-priest.

Second, his actions reveal his recognition of God’s redemptive plan. He affirms his conviction that the Most High God has worked with and through this man Abram to bring about a mighty deliverance. Again, this is in the early stage of God’s redemptive plan through Abraham, but Melchizedek sees it, and recognizes it, and blesses God for it.

Today we have the whole Bible and know the whole story. We know that the story of the Bible is the story of redemption. We know that in the beginning, man the creature rebelled against his Creator, but God chose to buy back (redeem) man from his bondage to sin (3:15). We know He did it by choosing one man, Abram, and entering into a covenantal relationship with that man, so that through him He might bring hope to the world. He gave Abram a new name, Abraham, and gave him a son of promise, and through that son, two grandsons, and through grandson Jacob He formed a nation, called Israel, so that through that nation He might ultimately send His own Son, Messiah Jesus, into the world to redeem a people from their sins and for Himself.

“I will bless those who bless you,” the LORD had told Abram back in Genesis 12:2. And that is what Melchizedek did. He *blessed* Abraham, thus affirming his recognition of the redemptive plan of the Most High God. It’s this story, this mysterious man, that

the writer of Hebrews says can take us deeper into Christ. Melchizedek, a great king and priest, “blessed” Abraham, says the NT writer in Hebrews 7:1. Then he says this.

C. Melchizedek received a tenth from Abraham (2). Notice verse 2a, “And to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything.”

Think of it. A tenth. Of everything. That’s what Abraham gave to Melchizedek.

The fact is, *words can be cheap*. For example, think of the words, “Thank you.” How many times do we hear and say those words in a day’s time? They’re good words, but are they meaningful? Sometimes more than others.

While words can be cheap, however, there is an action that captures attention. The action of *giving*. *Giving is a way to show respect and appreciation*. Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe, ten percent of the spoils he gained in the battle. That’s interesting. It may indicate that the act of tithing preceded the giving of the Law. And it surely demonstrates that Abraham respected and appreciated this king named Melchizedek.

We too have a king, don’t we? How do you show our king that we respect and appreciate Him? It’s through our giving, right? We give Him the trust of our heart. We give Him the praise of our song. We give Him the tithe of our income. We give Him the obedience of our life. He gave to us. So in response we give to Him. Words can be cheap, but giving demonstrates our respect and appreciation for the King of kings.

The writer gives us the meaning of Melchizedek’s name at the end of verse 2. “He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness [in the Hebrew language *melek* is king and *sedeq* is righteousness], and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace [Hebrew *shalom* is peace].”

This would have meant much to the first Jewish readers. They loved names and the meaning of names. And the order of these two names is significant. *Righteousness* must precede *peace*.

Centuries later the prophet Isaiah made this point in Isaiah 32:17, “The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.” Paul shows the same connection in Romans 5:1, “Therefore, since we have been justified [i.e. ‘declared righteous’] through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

So put all this together and what do we have? We have a great king and priest, who blesses people, and who receives gifts of thanks from people. Who does that sound like?

D. Melchizedek makes us think about the Son of God (3). Verse 3 says, “He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.”

Is the writer saying that Melchizedek didn’t have a father or mother, that he was never born and never died? If he didn’t have a father or mother, that would mean he wasn’t human, wouldn’t it?

I should point out that the Greek word translated “without father” (*apator*) was actually used on first century birth certificates if the father was unknown and therefore the child illegitimate. It’s amazing yet true that the writer of Hebrews used that word here. Scholars go back and forth on the identity of this mysterious figure. Who was Melchizedek?

One theory introduced by the rabbis at the end of the first century (and later picked up by Luther) says that Melchizedek and Noah’s oldest son Shem were one and the same. Others have suggested that he wasn’t a man at all. Some of the Gnostics, for instance, identified Melchizedek as the Holy Spirit, linking Psalm 110:4 (which refers to “a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek”) with Romans 8:26ff which indicates that the Holy Spirit is the one who intercedes in behalf of saints. Others have suggested that

Melchizedek was a Christophany, an appearance of Christ in human form prior to His incarnation. But as Gromacki explains, “It would be difficult to argue that He was a priest after the order of Himself.”⁵ Centuries ago Epiphanius put his finger on the weak spot in this hypothesis, “If Melchizedek resembles the Son of God, he cannot at the same time be the same as the Son of God; for how can a servant be the same as his master?”⁶

What are we to make of Melchizedek? Keep in mind that Hebrews is addressed to a Jewish audience, and they knew their Hebrew Scriptures.

When we read the first book of the Bible, Genesis, the book that contains the Melchizedek story, one of the things that stands out is the importance of genealogies. We’re given the generations of Adam in chapter five, of the sons of Noah in chapter ten, of Shem in chapter eleven, and of Terah, Abraham’s father, also in chapter eleven. When we read about men like Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Esau, and so on, we’re not left in the dark. The writer of Genesis, Moses, tells us both who their ancestors were and their descendants.

But not this man. Melchizedek is one of if not the only person in Genesis that worshipped the true and living God whose genealogy is *not* given in the biblical record. It’s not in the text. Does that mean he didn’t have one? Or is it simply not mentioned? Good questions.

“Well, how could he be a priest then?” the Jewish mind would ask. As William Barclay points out, “A Jew could not be a priest unless he could trace an unbroken descent from Aaron; but if he could trace such a descent nothing could stop him from being a priest. If a priest married and his bride-to-be was the daughter of a priest, she must produce her pedigree for five generations back. It is the odd and almost incredible fact that the whole Jewish priesthood was founded on genealogy. Personal qualities did not enter into it at all.”⁷

Let’s remember the charge being leveled at the Jewish followers of Jesus. “You’re a renegade religion. You don’t have a legitimate priest.” To which the writer of Hebrews says, “Yes, we do. We have a priest who is like Melchizedek.” Again, not who *is* Melchizedek, but who is *like* him, after the *order of Melchizedek*.

William Barclay explains, “The Aaronic priesthood depended on genealogical descent; the priesthood of Melchizedek depended on personal qualifications alone. Melchizedek’s priesthood was based on what *he was*, not on what *he had inherited*.”⁸

And this is true of our priest, beloved, the great high priest who is Jesus the Son of God. Notice the comparison the writer makes at the end of verse 3. Speaking of Melchizedek he says, “But resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.” He doesn’t say Melchizedek *was* the Son of God, but that *resembles* the Son of God.

How so? Let’s talk about three similarities between the king-priest Melchizedek and *THE* king-priest Jesus Christ the Son of God.

First, we can’t explain him fully. He doesn’t fit into our little boxes. Indeed, He created the minds we use to develop our boxes! I hope you can live with mystery because you and I will never be able to explain Christ fully.

How could God become a man? Explain that. How could God forsake His own Son as He hung on a cross? Explain that. How could God’s perfect Son take upon Himself the sins of undeserving sinners so that by His death those sinners could be washed clean

⁵ Robert Gromacki, p. 122.

⁶ Quote taken from Philip Hughes, p. 243.

⁷ William Barclay, p. 74.

⁸ William Barclay, p. 69.

and indeed become children of God? Explain that. I can't explain those realities, nor a host of others, not because they are not true, but because we simply can't explain our Priest-King fully.

However, this we can do, a second similarity between Melchizedek and Christ. *We can approach God through Him.* That's what a priest is. He is a bridge builder. He connects two parties, God and man. And unlike Levitical priests who served only twenty years from age thirty to fifty (Numbers 4:3, 22, 33), the Son of God remains a priest forever. My friend, that means you can call upon the Living God right now. You can know Him on personal terms and one day enter His presence and live with Him forever.

The writer of Hebrews will have plenty more to say to us about Melchizedek, as we'll see next time. But to help us bring things together today, I'll invite Warren Wiersbe to give us a helpful summary: "Melchizedek was a man (see Heb. 7:4), so he had to have a mother and a father. But there is no *record* of his genealogy in the Old Testament... Melchizedek was not an angel, or some superhuman creature; nor was he an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ. He was a real man, a real king, and a real priest in a real city. But *as far as the record is concerned*, he was not born, nor did he die. In this way, he is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God."⁹

And this brings us to a third similarity. As with Melchizedek, much more so with Christ, *we must accept him by faith.* Not blind faith, but faith that's based upon the record of God's Word. No, I can't explain Melchizedek, but I believe he existed. He was a real person who blessed Abraham and received a tithe from him. That's what God's Book says.

Of far greater significance, however, is what we do with Jesus Christ. The Book says the King came from heaven to rescue us from our sins and ourselves and from the wrath of God. And the Book says that He is the only One who can save us, and that He will indeed save us, no matter who we are and what we've done. But there is only one way. We must accept Him by faith. There is no other way to enter God's presence now and forever than by doing so through this priest.

Take Inventory: How well do you know Christ?

Do you want to go deeper? Hebrews enables us to go deeper. But before we can go deeper, we must ponder three important questions.

1. *Do you know Him as your Savior?* Listen to what Hebrews 2:14–15 (NKJV) says about Him, "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Do you know this person who releases sinners from the fear of death? Do you know Him as your Savior?

2. *Do you know Him as the supreme one in your life?* He is Savior, yes, but much more than Savior. He is also the priest-king, the Ruler, the Lord, the Supreme One. Is that true in your life? Are there areas where He is *not* Lord? If so, don't try to clean up your own life. It never works. Come to Him. Submit to His good and loving Lordship and watch Him begin to transform your life.

3. *Are you taking steps to know Him better?* The steps are not complicated. He has given us His Book and His Body. If we want to go deeper into Christ, we must prioritize His Word and His church. Both are vital. When we make His Word priority, and we make His church priority, He becomes great to us. So plug into a community group, and

⁹ Warren Wiersbe, p. 300.

prioritize our time together in Hebrews in the coming weeks. Join us on the journey to the deep end, my friend. There is joy unspeakable waiting for you.

Closing Song: #389 “*More About Jesus*” (all four verses)

Eliza Edmunds Hewitt (known as Lidie) was born in Philadelphia in June 1851. After graduating from high school, she became a teacher, then developed a spinal malady that cut short her career and made her a shut-in for many years. During that difficult season, she began writing poems for her church. Including this one.¹⁰

*More about Jesus would I know,
more of His grace to others show;
more of His saving fullness see,
more of His love who died for me.*

*More about Jesus let me learn,
more of His holy will discern.
Spirit of God, my Teacher be,
showing the things of Christ to me.*

*More about Jesus in His Word,
holding communion with my Lord,
hearing His voice in ev'ry line,
making each faithful saying mine.*

*More about Jesus on His throne,
riches in glory all His own;
more of His kingdom's sure increase;
more of His coming, Prince of Peace.*

*Refrain: More, more about Jesus;
more, more about Jesus;
more of His saving fullness see,
more of His love who died for me.*

Community Group Discussion:

Today as we resume our series in Hebrews, we've come to a new section. We have moved from *Behold the Son* (chapters 1-2) and *Rest in the Son* (chapters 3-6) to *Going Deeper into The Son* (chapters 7-9).

1. Share the following with one another in your group. How long have you known Christ? How has your knowledge of Christ changed since you first came to know Him?
2. What happens when a person who knows Christ stops growing in their knowledge of Christ? Has this ever happened in your life, and if so, what factors contributed to it?
3. Read again today's passage, Hebrews 7:1-3. How does this passage affect you initially (be honest)? Why do we need passages like this? What does it take to benefit from a section in God's Word like this section in Hebrews?
4. What do we learn about Melchizedek from verse 1? From verse 2? From verse 3? Why is knowing about Melchizedek important according to the writer of Hebrews?
5. Allow this passage to guide you as a group in a time of meaningful prayer by having three individuals pray. First prayer: praise the Lord that He is great and has revealed Himself in the Bible so we can know Him. Second prayer: ask the Lord for help that we might go deeper in our knowledge of Him in our Hebrews series. Third prayer: pray for those in our families and community and world who do not know Him.

¹⁰ https://hymnary.org/text/more_about_jesus_would_i_know_more_of