



Links Players

Drawing Near With Confidence

Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16, NASB)

The difference between the great golfers and what you might label as the journeymen on the pro circuits usually cannot be seen on the driving range or practice facilities.

Yes, Rory is exceptional with the driver, and Tiger is as good as it gets with irons. For a few years, Jordan Spieth looked like he was going to make every putt he looked at, and Phil amazed us around the greens. Nonetheless, all the players at the highest level have most of the shots.

Well, let me take that back. They have most of the shots most of the time. However, under pressure, the cream often rises to the top differently when a major title or big event is on the line. The great players appear to be more focused and likely to hit a great shot, and the others often stumble down the stretch.

This doesn't happen because they cannot hit the shots required to win; instead, it is usually because doubt creeps into the mind. The difference between great players and the rest is confidence.

The author of Hebrews recognizes this as a differentiator in our faith. Hebrews chapter eleven opens with the following verse, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Assurance of things to come is the definition of faith. Or as it is referred to in today's verse as "confidence."

The book of Hebrews is largely written to compare and contrast the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant. Jewish believers in Jesus were being ostracized for their faith in Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. The New Covenant thus rendered the Old Covenant's types and shadows (e.g., priesthood) abrogated.

They were tempted to return to the safety of their Old Covenant past, e.g., Mosaic Covenant, temple service, Aaronic Priesthood, etc. The writer repeatedly demonstrates that the new covenant is "better," especially since the office of the High Priest is now fulfilled in Jesus.

The idea of grace was not easy to understand by Jewish believers, and frankly, it is hard for us to comprehend still today. Judaism required the High Priest to be the go-between for communication from man to God and God to man. Jesus was the ultimate game-changer.

Jesus not only replaced the need for a High Priest in the line of Aaron (Moses' brother) to make sacrifices for their atonement (covering of sin), but he gave us direct access to the throne room of God by grace.

This access given to us by Jesus gives us confidence that our prayers will be answered, that wisdom may be given, and the deep conviction that our cries of desperation in times of need will be heard.

Because of Jesus, there is no barrier to our access to God. There is no need to prove your merit before God, and there is an endless flow of grace and mercy in our direction so that we may be confident that he is drawing near to us and us to him, especially in times of need.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the mercy and grace you have extended us through Jesus; teach us to be confident in your love and care.

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Josh Nelson

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