

Hebrews

The Superiority of Christ (Part 2)

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CONCLUSION:

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INTRODUCTION:

Our need for a Messiah began when Adam and Eve sinned. They thought God was holding out on them and took a bite of fruit from a tree he told them not to touch. They lost their closeness to God and could not get it back on their own merit. And on the saddest day in history, God cast them out of his presence into a world now broken by sin. A world that has been waiting and longing for redemption ever since.

And as we were born, we added **our** sin to the world's need. But God was not silent. He promised to send a Savior. And when Jesus was born in that manger in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago, it was God's **shout** to the world that the Savior is here to **reclaim what we had lost** and to **redeem what we broke**. The most wonderful thing to ever happen was God sending his Son to live among us and die and rise again!

So the book of Hebrews helps us because it was written to a group of Christians who were suffering through persecution and having their homes taken away from them. Some of them were wavering in their faith and some had even fallen away. They were beginning to wonder if Christianity was really worth all of the agony. They, like Adam and Eve, and you and I, sometimes have a hard time **listening** to Jesus.

To compel us to listen, the author highlights **seven messages** God sends to us through the Holy Spirit in the opening verses. When so many other things try to push their way into the space that only belongs to Jesus, Hebrews reminds us that Jesus is superior to all that has come before and all that will come after him.

Will we listen to him?

All Stand and Read Scripture

Hebrews 1:1-4 (NASB95)

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. ³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Prayer

So in the short time we have together, I would like to group the seven messages into three truths that we need to hear and understand in order to strengthen us in our faith: **That God has spoken conclusively through His Son, that Jesus is fully God, and that Jesus is fully man.** He is the our complete Savior.

BODY:

I. God Has Spoken to Us.

Our greatest need is to hear from the one true God Who created us and everything around us. Without his voice we are lost, wondering what life is all about. We do not know **who** we are, **why** we are here, or **what** our purpose is in life. But God is not silent. He has been speaking since the foundation of the world. And what he has been telling us all along is that he is God, we are his people, and he loves us despite everything that seems to prove otherwise.

Hebrews 1:1-2a (NASB95)

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,...

So, God spoke through two big eras, that we separate by the Old and New Testaments. The difference between these two eras is the difference between receiving a letter in the mail about a visitor that is coming one day and receiving that visitor on your doorstep in the flesh. In Jesus, the world received her King—the one she groaned for throughout the ages. What God told us beforehand through our forefathers and prophets, He has now conclusively revealed to us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the answer the world has looked for ever since the fall of man. He is the answer to every question. He is end of every thought. He is the period to every sentence. Jesus is the whole message of God for the entirety of the human race.

So what does he say? Well, the author tells us seven messages God reveals to us through Jesus. These seven messages group together to say that " **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son**" that Jesus is the only Savior we will ever need because He was **fully God** and **fully man**.

II. Jesus is Fully God

Part one of God's message is that Jesus is not merely **from** God. But that Jesus **is** God. When Jesus was born, God added humanity to Him without losing His divinity. The author of Hebrews highlights Jesus' **divinity** through four messages.

1. The Creator of Everything.

Hebrews 1:2c (NASB95)

²...through whom also He made the world.

The plain teaching of Scripture is that Jesus is the Creator of the universe. Listen to John.

John 1:1-3 (NASB95)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Then he identifies the "Word" just in case there was any doubt.

John 1:14 (NASB95)

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

And that is what the author of Hebrews has also just told us. "**In these last days (God) has spoken to us in His Son**". Jesus came to tell us about God. He was the "Word of God".

There are three important things in this passage about Jesus and the Father: 1) Jesus was "**in the beginning**"—He was present at creation and had existed eternally with God. 2) Jesus is distinct from the Father—He was "**with**" God. 3) Jesus is the same as God in nature—He "**was** God."

Then verse 3 of John 1 confirms that "**All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.**"

You may ask...Wait a minute! Doesn't Genesis say that **God** created the heavens and the earth?

Genesis 1:1 (NASB95)

1 In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth.

Yes. However most people do not realize that even Genesis affirms that the Father and the Son had two distinct functions in creation yet worked together to bring about creation.

Look at verse 26.

Genesis 1:26 (NASB95)

26 Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Paul gives the added detail that God created "all things" through Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:16 (NASB95)

16 For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created **through** Him and **for** Him.

In the beginning the God created everything, and what He made was good. But we messed that up with our sin. And the Bible says that that sin causes us to be spiritually **dead**. So we cannot just add a little Jesus to our life, like sprinkles on the cupcake. We need nothing less than a re-creation.

Well, wouldn't it be wonderful if there was someone who could create life where there was none? Well, what about Jesus? What if we not only had a creator of man during creation, but also have a creator **right now**?

God is **so** brilliant! If sin leads to death, and we are all sinners, how in the world are we going to become alive again? The same way He made us alive in the beginning! We can be "**born again**" through the Son! God doesn't change! When we sinned, God didn't give up and retreat to some far-off place in the sky. He worked his plan.

What was His plan? Well, **you** were his plan. **You** were created through Jesus. And even though your sin broke the relationship between you and Him, He sought you out in his grace, and—if you have trusted in Christ for salvation—he **recreated** you. You are a living miracle! Your life is so important that Jesus left his home in heaven to come to this dumpy world and live and die and rise again for **you!**

So, do not think **the you**--that you are right now--is a problem for him. The you--you are right now--with all your doubts and flaws and imperfections--is **the you** Jesus delights in because you are his creation. "Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?'" Do not argue with him! Just as he created Mary in her circumstances and chose to use her for his glorious purposes, he can use **you** also.

But you may say, "Me? No. I am too bad. I have really messed up my life." **STOP THAT!** Nothing in your life is outside the creative power of God. He can use you! He is the creator!

So...**will you listen to him?**

The second and third messages go together. Jesus is the Radiant Brilliance of God and the exact Imprint of His Nature.

2. The Radiant Brilliance of God.

Hebrews 1:3a (NASB95)

³ And He is the radiance of His glory...

In the Gospel of John the eyewitness testifies this about Jesus.

John 1:14 (NASB95)

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

To say that Jesus is "the radiance of God's glory" is to say that Jesus makes God's character and nature visible (apparent) to humanity. When you see Jesus, you have seen God.

In the Old Testament, God's glory is represented in terms of radiant brilliance. And when Jesus came down, he brought with him the glory of God because he **was** God. That is why on the Mount of Transfiguration, "**his face shone like the sun.**" It is not that Jesus has **some** of God in him, like a lantern that may go out. He has the **fullness** of God's glory because he **is** God. Who Jesus is, God is, and who God is, Jesus is.

This means the Son participates in the divine nature with the Father. In other words, the radiance that Jesus represents is not just a **reflection** of God's glory as some interpreters have rendered it; nor is this radiance merely **similar** to the glory of God; here we are told that Jesus represents the exactness of His being.

3. The Imprint of God's Nature.

Hebrews 1:3b (NASB95)

³ ...and the exact representation of His nature,

He is also the exact imprint of his nature. His character **is** the character of God. Jesus is the “exact representation of His nature,” “the image of the invisible God.”

I do not know what else to say. As amazing as it sounds, when Jesus was born, **God came down**. And he brought with him God’s radiance and imprint. Which means, we do not have to wonder what God is like. We **know** what He is like because he revealed himself in Jesus.

For example Jesus tell us about God's heart. This is amazing!

Matthew 11:29 (NASB95)

²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, **for I am gentle and humble in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls.

Is that what you thought the heart of God was like? That is how Jesus describes Him!

Matthew 11:27b (NASB95)

²⁷ ...nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.

So, when we hear of Jesus’ heart, he’s revealing *God’s* whole heart to us. Listen to what Isaiah said about God centuries before He sent us His son.

Isaiah 42:3 (NASB95)

³ “A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.

Jesus was the exact imprint of God's nature. Listen to how Paul described his nature.

Philippians 2:5-8 (NASB95)

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

And these aren’t just words. **This is the glory of God:** gentle enough for all your weaknesses and humble enough for all your needs.

So I ask again, will you listen to him?

4. The Upholder of the Universe.

Hebrews 1:3c (NASB95)

³ ...and upholds all things by the word of His power.

Christ upholds the universe by the word of His power. Oh, I love this phrase. What does it mean that Jesus upholds the universe? It means he has got the whole world in his hands.

All things included. The depths of the earth, the heights of the mountains, the valleys of the ocean, the brightness of the stars, the warmth of the sun. Every planet, every comet, and every galaxy swirl in his great, big, giant palms.

But it is not just the big things. His eye is on the sparrow. Every one of your tears is bottled up as he keeps count of your tossings and turnings, and one day he's going to wipe every single drop from your face and replace it with unspeakable joy.

At His word barren fig trees withered on the spot; at His word winds were ceased and waves were stilled; at His word the lame could walk and the dead came forth from the tomb.

He is so big he spins the galaxies by his word. He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them. And He is so near that he knows the sorrows and joys you walked in here with today.

You know, sometimes we wonder why God is not speaking, but the truth is that he never stops speaking! If he did, the world would crumble. **So, if you cannot hear him, it is not because he is not talking, it is because you are not listening!**

Jesus' upholding of the universe is not like Atlas holding the world on his shoulders. He is not holding it up as much as he is carrying it along, taking it where he wants it to go. It is not weighty in his hand. It is like a feather. It is easy for him. He does not grow weary. He is full of energy. So, your need is not a problem for him. It is an opportunity for his grace to shine forth. He is upholding the universe by the word of his power, so when you need him, **nothing** stands in his way of coming to you.

CONCLUSION:

These first four messages show us that we have a Savior that was fully God. He is The Creator of Everything, The Radiant Brilliance of God, The Imprint of God's Nature, and The Upholder of the Universe.

God has spoken to us in his Son. So I ask one more time: **Are you listening yet?**

Next week, Lord willing, we will look at the final three messages concerning Christ. These will reveal the human side of Christ. Jesus is not only fully God, but He is also fully man. These seven messages show us that we have a complete savior. One that is worth every trial that we face on earth.

He is Lord.