



JESUS

Up Close and Personal

A Study of Hebrews | The Pastors' Bible Study 2013-2014

Hebrews 1:1-14

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THE TEXT (NRSV)

God Has Spoken by His Son (Key Verses)

¹ Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.

The Reflection of God's Glory

³ He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The Son Is Superior to Angels

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? ⁶ And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." ⁷ Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." ⁸ But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." ¹⁰ And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; ¹¹ they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; ¹² like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end. ¹³ But to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? ¹⁴ Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

OLD TESTAMANT REFERENCES

Verse 5 – Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:14

Verse 6 – Psalm 97:7

Verse 7 – Psalm 45:6-7

Verse 10 – Psalm 102:25-27

Verse 13 – Psalm 110:1

Questions for Reflection

1. What difference does it make to you that Jesus is "heir of all things" and that God made the universe through Him?
2. Why do you think the author of Hebrews made such a point of Christ's deity to these Hebrew Christians?
3. What impact would you suspect these words had on Jewish Christians who were considering returning to Judaism?
4. What are some ways we can honor Christ?
5. What difference does it make to you that Jesus sustains everything by His powerful word?
6. When, if ever, have you sensed that angels were ministering to you or watching over you?
7. What in your life tempts you to back away from your commitment to Christ?
8. In what ways can you honor the Son of God as God in your worship this week?
9. Who can you talk to this week about the unique person of Jesus Christ?

CLOSING COMMENTS

Whenever the church fails to recognize the superiority of Jesus Christ, it loses its' sense of awe, wonder and excitement; and it begins to atrophy. To handle heavenly revelation with a dispassionate attitude or cool rationalism is to deny the transforming power that Jesus Christ brings to a life. It's distressing that today's church is so seldom excited or overwhelmed with Jesus. One feels in certain ecclesiastical circles that enthusiasm for Christ just isn't cool, that it's a mark of too much religious zeal. Yet as we view the history of the church, we see clearly that when Christ isn't at the foundational center of the church, the church suffers! When we bleach the banners of apostolic brilliance, fewer desire to march under its colors.

When, on the other hand, the church rediscovers the magnificence of Jesus Christ and is overwhelmed by His Godly Person and sacrificial atonement, the church comes alive. For this reason, the Epistle to the Hebrews is a crucial document for the church to rediscover.

Too long it has been the "forgotten epistle." May the Holy Spirit bring it back to our remembrance and understanding, magnifying Jesus Christ so powerfully that once again we are smitten and enthusiastic beyond control! Let this high view of Christ again lift up the church to its apostolic power. Then preaching will be transformed; individuals will be changed by His redeeming grace; societies will be delivered from oppressors no longer able to contain the liberated disciples; and the body of Christ will be alive with His compassion and loving grace. The Messiah-Son is God's supreme revelation to humankind. God has said enough. After the atoning work of Jesus Christ, nothing can be added. It is indeed finished!

NEXT WEEK: Hebrews 2:1-8
Kristin Huffman