

And This Will We Do, If God Permits
An Expository Journey through the Epistle to the Hebrews
Chapter 3: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ
Hebrews 1:1-4
30: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ: Part 15

WAOY Tuesday 02/10/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse-by-verse journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and today I want to continue to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** taught about the Preeminence of Jesus Christ. So let's open our Bibles and read **Hebrews 1:1-4** again together.

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
²in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
³And 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,
⁴having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking at the seven *excellencies* that the writer of **Hebrews** shows us in the second half of verse two and all of verse three. So let's read those verses again together:

2 ... whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
³And 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,

Now in these two verses we can see that the writer of Hebrews is going to great lengths to describe just who Jesus is. And in his very detailed description, the writer lists seven attributes about Jesus that are true *only* of Jesus and are *not* true about anyone or anything else - except Jesus - in all the Universe. Those seven attributes are:

1. His Heirship
2. His Creatorship
3. His Brightness
4. His Being
5. His Administration
6. His Sacrifice
7. His Exaltation

And we have to understand that from the very moment that this inspired, infallible Book was written - sometime around AD 68 - nobody could ever describe Jesus again without including these seven attributes in their comprehension of Jesus. In other words, a correct doctrine about Jesus must include these seven attributes, and any person or any group which seeks to describe Jesus and leave off these seven attributes about Jesus is giving a false, or at best, *incomplete* understanding of just who Jesus is. So I hope you can begin to see why this stuff matters.

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking at the fourth “excellency” that the writer of **Hebrews** talked about by looking at the next part of verse three where the writer says that Jesus is:

... the express image of his person... (KJV)

So here the writer tells us that Jesus Christ is the “**express image**” of God’s Own Person. And as I told you last time, we live in a day when there is tremendous pressure on the leadership of the Church to make the Church look and feel and act just like the lost, unsaved world; and I told you how that is a terrible mistake.

Because out there in the lost world, girls are “chicks” and boys are “dudes”; sex is free and the music is loud and the party is hardy; and hell is enlarged to take in all the people that are thrown headlong into the lake of fire.

Out there Man is god, and money is god, and sex is god, and possessions are gods, and power is god, and drugs are god, and liquor is god; and to drive fast and live hard and dance all night and wake up empty is the chief item on the menu. Out there is hate like you can't imagine, and the desire to hurt and to do damage, and to kill and maim, and to wound and to destroy, and to seek out and harm, and to shoot and stab, and assault and threaten. Out there the ways of flesh are in charge; the power of carnal thinking rules; the ways of unsaved, unregenerate, and unconverted lives dominate.

The Bible says that out in the lost world is pain and sorrow and anguish and misery in buckets. Out there is the place where little girls who used to sit on Daddy's knee wake up in some God-forsaken motel room and say "*How in the world did I get here?*" Out there, young men wake up thinking to themselves, "*Where did I go wrong?*"

That is "out there". But in here, in the Church and in Jesus... in the Family of God and in Salvation... things are different. In here, we are *not* the most important people. Jesus is the most important Person. Because in here, in Jesus and in true Salvation, the goal is not to get more stuff or to be healed or to have more money or to have a better marriage or to have children who don't need braces and who hit more home runs or to be happy. That is not the goal in Jesus, and that is not the goal in Salvation.

The goal in Salvation is to love Jesus. And you don't have to be saved to have more money or to own more land or to have a better marriage or to be happy... sinners can do that, and Buddhists and Muslims and even atheists can do that. You don't have to be saved to do any of those things, but you do have to be saved to love Jesus. Only saved people love Jesus enough to obey Him and only saved people follow Jesus when things get really tough.

And I am fearful that many people today go to Church so that they can get stuff from Jesus without having to actually love Jesus. They want to be fed, and be healed, and be blessed, and be happy, and get things and stuff from the Savior *without* being broken, and without bending, and without bowing, and without obeying. And I am fearful that many of us are trying really hard to get people to come to Church by promising people that if they would only come to Church, they could get all of these other things without telling them that *anybody* can do that without Jesus.

But we need to tell lost people that they need to come to Church so they can learn how to love Jesus and so they can learn how to follow Jesus; so they can learn how to take up their cross and deny themselves and obey Jesus with joy, and learn how to suffer as a Christian, and learn how to not allow evil to twist them and destroy them and warp them, but to be molded by the greater power of radical love that only comes through Jesus Christ. And the only way - the one single way for them to do that - is for them to repent of their sins and be saved.

If love is defined by obedience... if obeying Christ is the only way that you and I can prove our love for Christ... if that is the measurement of what love is... then only saved people can truly love, and only saved people know what it is like to be truly loved, and in that true love is found the fullness of joy.

And if the fullness of joy is found only in this Divine Love, then obedience is a pleasure; to suffer reproach for Christ's sake is an honor; to be rejected and maligned and persecuted and cast out brings rejoicing. This is what the Apostle John meant when he said in **1 John 5:3:**

³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

You see, dear friends, keeping God's Commandments is the most horrible thing for any lost sinner to ever hope to do. Lost people don't study the Bible; they don't pray for God's Will for their lives; they don't live their lives in humble submission to God's Word. No, they do what is right in their own eyes. That is what it means to be lost. Lost people couldn't care less about the Word of God; the Bible bores them, and they would much rather go do something *exciting* than sit down and read and study God's Word. That is because they are lost and unsaved and unregenerate. So why do some people love God and others don't?

The Apostle John taught that those who have received God's Love - those whom God has set His saving Love upon - he taught them that their response to God loving them first is that now they love God. That's what John meant when he said in **1 John 4:19:**

¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.

So the only reason any of us love God today is because God loved us first. Before God loved us, not one single human being on earth possessed any love for God at all. That is the result of the Fall, and that is the result of us being born after the similitude of Adam - after he sinned and any love for God that man had was destroyed in the Fall.

So, nobody loves God until God loves them first... and so we must understand, dear friends, that our love for God is a gracious and merciful gift from God; and that goes back to what I said earlier. People can do all sorts of things without loving Jesus and without being saved.

They can win gold medals; they can sing beautifully; they can make tons of money; they can have good health; they can own vast tracts of land; they can learn how to perform brain surgery; they can have nice children and a good wife, all without Jesus and all without being saved.

But *nobody* - not one soul - no one loves Jesus unless and until God sovereignly loves him first; and until God sets His great, saving love on that soul and “violates the stew out of his will” and draws him to Christ so that Jesus can save him. So you have to be saved to love Jesus. And loving Jesus is the goal of the believer, and by loving Jesus, we find ourselves following after Jesus. We find that obeying Jesus brings fullness of joy, and we find that obeying Jesus honors God... and that is the only thing we live for.

That is why I say that in here, inside Jesus and in Salvation, there is love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. In here people rejoice because they are saved; people laugh because they dwell and abide in true joy; in here people are content because they dwell in real peace. In here, sorrow and sighing flees away.

In here, Christ is magnified, exalted, worshipped, adored, loved and obeyed. In here, Jesus Christ is Lord, Jesus Christ is First, Jesus Christ is Best; Jesus Christ is Master, Savior, and King. He is the Lily of our Valley, our Bright and Morning Star. In here, Jesus Christ is the Rose of Sharon, the First and the Last, the Lion and the Lamb, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

In here, Jesus has the Preeminence, or the Highest Seat, the First Place, the Captain’s Chair, the Commander’s Gallery, the Owner’s Box. And the side benefit - *not* the main benefit - but the side benefit of loving and obeying Jesus because He first loved us, is that in here, men learn to love their wives. Children learn to honor their parents. Women

learn to submit to the authority of their husbands, and the result of that is that families are made strong and healthy and godly... and *they last*. And the world looks on in wonder as Christians endure and persevere and go on, and they don't quit; they don't stop; and when they fall down they get back up; and when they sin, they repent and change.

In here, people give, and they contribute, and offer, and join in, and they become a part and they pull together; they assemble together and they collaborate together; they lift up one another and they pray one for another, and they weep when one weeps and they cry when one cries; they rejoice when one rejoices, and they share each other's burdens, and they carry each other's loads, and they make sure that each one is tended to; they make sure that widows and orphans are not neglected, and they make sure that the poor have food and that the older people are not pushed off and neglected; and they make sure that they open their homes and open their hearts and open their pocket books; and they open their lives and they don't keep secrets from each other, and they don't hide from each other, and they don't deceive or defraud one another, and they don't lie to one another.

In here love flows like a river; peace passes our understanding; and the Presence of God fills the room, and the Glory of God overshadows the sanctuary. In here, God is honored and God's Word is precious, and God's Law is obeyed, and God's Truth is upheld, and God's Presence is valued; God's ways are proven and God's Son is magnified and worshipped and adored. And *that* is why I tell you that it is better in here than out there.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.