

Who Is Jesus?
September 7, 2014
Allen Power

Hebrews 1:1-4

In what way are you like your mother or father? (Examples: Sports fan? Musical ability? Mechanical ability? other?)

Here's the BIG IDEA of this lesson: The best way to know God the Father, is to know Jesus His Son.

Let's do a very quick overview of the book of Hebrews:

See if this sounds familiar: When you first came to know Jesus your enthusiasm, joy, and zeal seemed to know no bounds. But as time went by it became harder and harder to stand firm in your new-found faith. Being a follower of Jesus doesn't make you the most popular people in the neighborhood. You might be excluded by friends and family; it could cost you your job; or in some cases even worse. Before long it's easy to fall away from following Jesus. Sound familiar?

Sometimes we're tempted to "drift away" from our faith in Christ. We need someone to point us back to look at Jesus for the amazing Savior and Lord He is. Hebrews was written to do just that for first century believers and twenty-first century believers.

Fast Facts on Hebrews:

- The author is UNKNOWN. Many theories of who it was. We know, a gifted preacher/scholar.
- Likely written about 67-69 AD (shortly before the temple was destroyed in 70 AD)
- Perhaps written to believers in house churches in Rome. But just as easily located elsewhere.
- It's a sermon that morphs into a letter. It contains lots of Old Testament scripture.
- The book is all about Jesus! "...*basically a book that exhorts discouraged Christians to continue on strong with Jesus in light of the complete superiority of who He is and what He did for us.*" (Dave Guzik)
- The book of Hebrews contains some of our favorite scripture verses of all time, here's a taste:

Hebrews 11:1 (ESV)

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 12:1 (ESV)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)

2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 4:15 (ESV)

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:14 (ESV)

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Hebrews 13:8 (ESV)

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Doesn't that "appetizer" of verses make you EXCITED about studying Hebrews?

- This morning we're going to spend our time with just the first four verses of chapter one.
- Really? Just four verses? These four verses are packed with truth! One writer has said of verse three alone: *"Perhaps no other single verse in Scripture reveals more that this verse about the Person and the work of Jesus Christ."*
- These four verses contain SEVEN TRUTHS about Jesus. Let's see what they are; what they mean; and how they can encourage us to HOLD FAST to our faith in Him.

Hebrews 1:1–4 (ESV)

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making 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.

- Verse one: **When Jesus came to earth, what changed about how God spoke to His people?** (Example: Fragments of prophecy leading to the theme of Jesus.)
- When Jesus came to earth, HE became God's message to us. Not just what He taught, but literally everything about who he IS represents God's message to us.
- So, **what is the best way to know God the Father?**
- More specifically, if we want to know God the Father we must learn who Jesus is, obey what Jesus says, and abide in Jesus' presence and power.

- These verses tell us seven truths about Jesus. Let's do some observation of the seven truths then we'll see why they are important to us.
- Answer these questions before you look at the list below. (Use the list to check your answers.)
- **What does verse two say about who Jesus is?**
- **End of verse two: What special role did Jesus play?**
- **Verse three, After radiance what does it say Jesus is? What do you think that means?**
- **Verse three, what role does Jesus play in the universe?**
- **Verse three, what did Jesus do for all mankind?**

- **After that what did Jesus do?**

So, here's the list:

1. Jesus is heir of all things
2. Jesus was the agent of creation
3. Jesus radiates God's glory
4. Jesus is the exact imprint of God's nature (illustration death/life masks)
5. Jesus upholds the universe with the word of His power
6. Jesus made purification for our sins
7. Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father

- Now we have the seven truths about Jesus. Let's ask: So what? Why are these truths about Jesus important to me? I think it comes down to TRUSTING Jesus for WHO He is.

- **What has to happen before you can trust someone?**

1. Jesus is heir of all things - **Why is that important to us?**
2. Jesus was the agent of creation - **Why is that important to us?**
3. Jesus radiates God's glory - **What does the word "radiance" mean?** Jesus doesn't just reflect God's glory, He radiates God's glory because he and God The Father are of the same substance.
4. Jesus is the exact imprint of God's nature (illustration death/life masks). **Why is this important?** In the words of the Nicene Creed, Jesus Christ is "*very God of very God.*"
5. Jesus upholds the universe with the word of His power - **When you hear the name Atlas from a Greek mythology, what picture comes to mind? That's not what this means. Any ideas on what it does mean?**
6. Jesus made purification for our sins - This is how most of us think about Jesus...Savior! It's natural and wonderful to think about Jesus as our Savior, but to be His follower, we must think of Him as Lord...as King...the "boss of my life from now on."
7. Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father - **What does that signify? What role does Jesus play for us in this seat of honor? How does that make you feel?**

Edgar Andrews writes:

"...we seek God in vain if we seek him anywhere other than in Jesus Christ. There is a great deal of 'Christless Christianity' around, that is, a Christianity that has at its core something other than the glorious person and saving work of Jesus Christ. That core may be ritualism, intellectualism, polity, morality, ethics, self-interest, social concern, entertainment—even religious zeal. But if Christ is not the focus and glory of our religion, it is not Christianity." — Edgar Andrews, *A Glorious High Throne: Hebrews Simply Explained*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2003), 35.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Wouldn't it be a tragedy to say you love God and basically ignore Jesus?
- Jesus died, was buried, and rose again to give us eternal life. That's the most important thing to know about Him...and not just to know, but to BELIEVE...to TRUST with our eternal destiny.
- But you and I still have to live in this life in the meantime. Jesus represents all we need.
- He's in charge of all things now and forever. Our most powerful protector and sustainer.
- He created everything, and He actively orchestrates everything down to the tiniest particle.
- He is the radiance and exact imprint of God. If I want to know God and glorify God, I need to know Jesus. To know, to obey, to abide in Him every day.

- Jesus sits in the seat of honor next to God the Father, but what's more comforting, He is constantly speaking to the Father on our behalf asking the Father to guide us, encourage us, correct us, and bless us. You have the very Son of God as your Advocate to the Father!
- That gives new meaning to "What a friend we have in Jesus!"
- Have you trusted Him fully, or have you just claimed Him as Savior but not Lord?
- Are you trying to keep the world turning, come up with the answers, and fight the battles of life in your own strength? Why not rest in the presence of the one who created and controls everything? In prayer this week, why not thank Jesus for all these truths of WHO He is?
- If you want to know the Father, you have to know the Son. This week let's cling to the blessed reality of WHO JESUS IS!