

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Glen Weber's Sermon on September 13, 2015
"Hebrews Initiative #1
Who is the Son?"**

[In today's sermon, part 1 of a 12 part series on the book of Hebrews, Senior Pastor Glen Weber points out that chapter 1 reveals to us that Jesus is superior to everything.]

Notes:

Introduction:

- Today we begin a 12-part focus on the book of Hebrews.
- Not only for our sermons but also for some of our Bible studies and small group discussions.
- Today we begin with chapter 1.
- We will not be going verse by verse, however we are going to hit the key concepts in each chapter.

Audience participation:

- Start reading Hebrews 1.
- Listen for the Holy Spirit to stop you on some thought – it might be a question, something you've never thought of before, or whatever.
- Do not go on – stop at that point.
- Where did you stop? Make a mental note of it.

Dr. Gary Deddo – President of Grace Communion Seminary;

The authorship of this letter has always been debated. In the early church it was considered by most scholars to be authored by Paul, but there were those who had their doubts. Today it is not considered tenable to hold Paul as the author, but it seems likely that the author was a part of the Pauline circle, because of similar themes and the mention of Timothy towards the end of the letter.

The date of the letter is also somewhat difficult to determine. The various theories put the time between AD 68 to the early 80s. The main issue for many scholars is whether the Temple in Jerusalem was still standing, or if it had been destroyed by the time the letter is written (the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70). If the Temple was still standing, then the sacrificial system was still in place. However, it is not necessary to solve this issue in order to understand and benefit from the message of the author.

With the number of references to the Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament, and the Jewish traditions, it is most likely that the letter was written to Jewish Christians. The author is writing to people who came to faith in Jesus and even stood firm through persecution, but are now, for various reasons drifting away from the living God. Somehow, over the years, their view of Christ had not grown and neither had their dependence on Him alone. They were attempting to add other things to their faith in

Christ and the author is concerned that they are in danger of making Christ secondary to their faith or in turning from Christ altogether.

Heb. 1:1-4, explains who the Son of God is:

- This passage is all one sentence in the Greek and would have had a huge impact upon the original readers/listeners.
- Many commentators have called this this most beautiful Greek sentence in the entire New Testament.
- This passage is not only an introduction to Jesus Christ as the Son, but is also an introduction to the entire letter to the Hebrews.
- It will be a revelation of the fact that Jesus is superior to all the other rituals and beliefs that some were bringing back into the church.
- This is so important for us, today as well, to understand.

Hebrews 1:1, In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

- God spoke to His people, because He wanted to connect with them in an intimate way.
- God was not a distant God, but rather communicated on a regular basis with his people – in many different ways:
 - Face-to-face – Adam and Eve/Abraham
 - Burning bushes – Moses
 - Dreams and visions – Samuel and others
 - Prophetic teaching – through the prophets

2) but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

- God has now spoken to us through His son...
- The Greek doesn't just only imply the audible words that Jesus spoke,
- But also the fact that the Father spoke about Himself through Jesus.
- Jesus' character, His actions and especially His relationship with the Father and humans, etc. revealed the Father to humanity
- Jesus tells us in John 14:9, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father."
- Even today, Jesus speaks to others through us, as His followers.

2b) whom he appointed heir of all things,

- Now the author will give a description of the Son...
- An heir is related to the one with the estate and the heir has been appointed to inherit that estate.
- And Jesus, as the Son of God, is the heir of all things.
- Since the author will be contrasting Jesus superiority to angels, did the author have in mind Lucifer who wanted to forcefully take "all things" from the Father?
- Remember Lucifer tried to take it by revolt. (Isa. 14:12-15)
- Jesus, on the other hand, receives all things by inheritance!

- Those who become the sons of God are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.
- Rom. 8:16-17, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. 17) Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

2c) and through whom also he made the universe.

- The Father created the universe by the Son...
- This is declared several times in the NT, including John 1:1-2, and in several of Paul’s letters.

3) The Son is the radiance of God’s glory...

- Jesus revealed the Father’s glory to humanity.
- Jesus is the radiance of the father’s glory
- Nicene Creed: “light of (from) light”
- “Who is so senseless as to doubt concerning the eternal being of the Son? For when has one seen light without effulgence?” [Athanasius, Against Arius, Orations, 2].
- “The sun is never seen without effulgence, nor the Father without the Son” [Theophylact].
- Effulgence means “radiant splendor, brilliance.”
- We see the radiance of the sun just before sunrise before we actually see the sun.
- Jesus revealed the Father’s glory or radiance to humanity.
- We know that the Father dwells with sinners because Jesus did.
- Jesus and the Father are one.

3b) and the exact representation of his being,

- Jesus showed the hypostasis of God – “One of the three real and distinct substances in the one undivided substance or essence of God.”

3c) sustaining all things by his powerful word.

- The NT explains that Jesus literally holds the material world together by His word and being.
- Jesus sustains all people both good and evil.

3d) After he had provided purification for sins,

- Jesus’ death on the cross justified and sanctified humanity.
- The Old Testament sacrificial system pointed the way for what Jesus accomplished for us.

3e) he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

- This action gave us an eternal connection with the Father and His throne room!!!

- This expression always refers to Jesus' glorified humanity state after the ascension as Son of man, not as the Son of God.

4) So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

- By His ascension, Jesus is "made" superior to the angels – compared to His previous state in the flesh – as lower than the angels.
- This is an important understanding for the Jewish community.
- They believed in the power and authority of the angels as their gateway to God.

5) For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? (Psalm 2:7) Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son?" (2 Sam. 7:14).

- Only Jesus, not the angels, is God's Son.

14) Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

- The angels are serving God by helping us.
- God's servants, the angels, serve us.
- They are not our servants.

Hebrews 2 tells us to listen to Him:

2:1, We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

- We should pay attention to what we hear – since it is coming from the Son!

2) For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, 3) how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

- If the angels' message from God had to be obeyed, how much more the Son's word with its good news of salvation?

4) God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

- God has testified to what the Son has said through various signs and wonders.
- And God has also given us the gift of miracles produced by the Holy Spirit to authenticate the Gospel message.

Concluding comments:

- This entire letter – over the next 12 weeks – is going to call us to listen to who the Son is and what He is saying to us!
- The writer will amaze us...correct us...and challenge us.

- We will have a clearer picture of our Lord and Savior by the time Christmas comes to our calendar!
- Next week: What is man? Jesus made fully human!

Closing Prayer: