

11/27/22 - Heb. 1:1-4 - "The Glory of God's Son"

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[0 : 00] I don't want to overemphasize the critical aspect that every sermon preached is a grace of God.

Each sermon is, but this week in particular, the fact that I was able to put a sermon together this week with sick kids was the grace of God. And so I stand here completely powerless and just hopeful that God will indeed speak through His Word today, effectually wake up a sinner's heart and to bring those gathered here today the good news of Jesus Christ.

And so we're on the mend, kind of, but yeah, it's been a sleepless couple past days.

ER visits at 3 o'clock in the morning, and it's been wild. But I am here, we are here, and we have the Word of God open. And so we're doing pretty good. And so I want to focus our attention upon a new series, Shift Gears, for the next couple weeks leading up until the first day of the new year, 2023, that's going to be coming up. Who would have thought that this new year would be coming so quickly? Is it just me, or did this year fly? It flew. Okay, glad that I'm, I guess, maybe we're all abnormal in that sense. I'm looking for some sort of sign that I'm normal, but maybe we're all abnormal. But it's great to be gathered here to turn our attention to God's Word and to focus our attention upon what He desires to speak to us. And so in this new series for Advent the next couple weeks, we're going to be in the book of Hebrews. And I'd like to read the passage today that we'll be covering, which is not a long set of verses, but act as an introductory component to the book that will help to bring context within all the preceding verses from there. So if you want to turn to Hebrews, it's, it's after all the gospels, after Romans, after Ephesians, after Philemon, Timothy, but it's before Revelation. So if that's any indication, good luck trying to find it. I don't have the number of the, of the pages of the pew or the chair Bibles, 1,001 on the back row, paying attention, getting bonus points today. And so this is God's Word according to Hebrews chapter 1, verse 1. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

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. 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.

[3 : 37] After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

This is God's Word. Let me pull up our slides that we have today.

I want to set this message up to bring about the reality of that there exists many different beliefs that exist in the world. And knowing that, entering into a text today, we should be corrected, be encouraged, and be challenged according to God's Word. Several forms of belief exist in the world that all attempt to explain who God is and what He is like. And within these realms of belief, you have theism, you have deism, you have pantheism. That's an interesting one.

Where theism is that there exists a God who is involved in creation to some aspect or regard.

Deism, that God kind of spun creation like a dreidel and just is watching it go. Maybe that's giving credit to a deistic belief too much because they actually think that God has removed His hand from all creation, that He's just gone. He made, and now He's gone. But pantheism, that's an interesting one. That everything is God. The chair is God. The rocks are God. The trees are God. And all is God.

I am God. You are God. We're all God. Everything is God. Pantheism. But the incarnation of Jesus Christ dispels any notion of deistic beliefs, pantheistic beliefs that exist out in our world today and our neighbors all around. And the baby laying in a manger is the declaration that God is still at work in His creation. He is still at work in His creation. And at the epicenter of Scripture is Jesus Christ. All the Old Testament forecasts a shadow to Jesus Christ. All the New Testament casts a shadow

back to Jesus Christ. And also, interestingly enough, casts a shadow to our new creation in Jesus Christ, where we will be risen with Him. An eschatological end. And this epicenter, which is founded upon Jesus

[6 : 36] Christ, is the fulcrum of which all Scripture is balanced upon. This epicenter is central to knowing who God is and what God is like. And that message is found only in the Word of God.

You do not find that anywhere else than the Word of God. We have found ourselves in quite a problem, though, today, as I've researched and believe through conducted research of many polls that exist within the church. Because even Christians seem to mistakenly seek out that message of hope through man-made philosophy, through man-made reason, through pantheistic beliefs, interestingly enough, that Christians believe. And biblical illiteracy seems to fill the churches of folks that seem to be much more concerned about being entertained than to be edified. Don't believe me?

Research says many adults can't name all four Gospels in the New Testament, or they can't name more than two or three, maybe four, disciples of Jesus Christ. Sixty percent can't name five of the Ten Commandments, and 82 percent believe that somewhere in the New Testament it is found God helps those who help themselves. Eighty-two percent of Christians. And probably the worst of all, 50 percent believe that Sodom and Gomorrah were a married husband and wife. Talk about how we've arrived in a post-Christian nation. And I believe biblical literacy has a lot to do with that. So, if maybe you've found yourself like, well, I'm just going to sink in my chair because I don't know maybe four or five names of the disciples. I don't know maybe all the Ten Commandments. Maybe I just described you. Maybe you believe Sodom and Gomorrah were married. But these next few weeks in Advent, this will give us a biblical snapshot of the origins of the Christian faith. It will answer and refute the objective questions that have become subjective in our day today. Who God is, what He is like, and how does He speak to us today? And much more. So, I want to dive into the letter to the Hebrews, which was a book written by, well, two Jewish Christians, converted Christians who were Jews.

But it had an unknown author, but it has a specific known purpose. And that purpose is to reveal God's Son, Jesus Christ. And so, this sermon that we have today is titled, The Glory of God's Son, in the passage that we just read. And what we're going to see is three points of the message of God's Son. We see the man known as God's Son and the mission of God's Son. So, I want to break this down to the message first and foremost in the first point, and we're going to look at verse 1 and 2 this morning. The message, progressive revelation in God's Son. Verse 1, as we read this morning, it says, As long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. As we ponder together what this message is, we will discover that how we define this message of hope will dictate who has authority over us and what the foundation of our faith is. It's funny to read words like this. Depending on where you were, maybe yesterday, if you were in a shopping mall or if you were at home watching Star Wars or if you're in the shopping mall, hearing Christmas tunes on repeat, many times, many ways, Merry Christmas. So, depending on where you were yesterday will dictate upon what pops into your head today when we read, long ago, many times, many ways. I believe Star Wars borrowed this language in a galaxy far, far away. And just as the progression of movies and storylines within popular films, so too, orthodox doctrine is progressive in nature as well. And if it is progressive in nature, it is truly a story. It is a story that God is revealing to us.

This progression is like tracing the common thread and storyline of piecemeal discovery within all scripture. This is known as biblical theology. This is known as biblical theology, how God has related to creation in a pattern of many ways throughout the pages of scripture. And God has done this specifically in how he speaks long ago in many times, in many ways, from dreams to visions to angels, a donkey. But most of all, scripture makes revelation either natural or special. That generally speaking, we can look into nature as Psalm 19, one says, the heavens declare the glory of God and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands. Day after day, they pour out speech. Night after night, they communicate knowledge. Knowledge. Or looking over onto the New Testament, Romans 1.20. Generally speaking, in natural revelation, God's invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen through what he has made. But God has progressed his revelation.

[13 : 30] It's not just the trees, the vastness of an expanse of the sky. He has advanced this revelation from then until later where this author says, but in these last days, he has spoken to us

by his son.

Church, this is Jesus Christ. The one who is before all things, that he eternally existed with God the Father. And he is in all things. He's theistically involved in the one whom is the apex of God's revelation to us. John speaks as he opens up his gospel about this word that was with God.

As he says in verse 1, John chapter 1, In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

All things were created through him, and apart from him, not one thing was created that has been created. In Jesus Christ, in just a short amount of verses that we've gotten into today, don't we see the message of God's grace?

I want you to think about this practically today. Because second to that is don't we see the all-sufficient God of grace in the fact that he spoke?

[15:31] Does this rattle any one of you? In fact, his grace is so abundant today, and abounding today, that if you have ears to hear the word of God open within the pages today, you are hearing God speak.

And God has spoken. This should rattle all of us. Because God has spoken.

And he didn't need to. And I believe that deep within all of our consciences, whether you are a Christian or whether you're not a Christian today, that there is something within us that desires God to speak.

Whether it's in a theistic belief, deistic or pantheistic, everyone created in the image of God desires the Creator to speak to them.

And the author of Hebrews says, make no mistake. How does he speak? Direct revelation through the Word of God.

[16:52] And specifically at the apex of all in Jesus Christ. This message of creation and recreation speak life.

They speak purpose and meaning into all of our days and transcendently authoritative and applicable to every day and age.

And this is a supreme message. The message does not get any better than the message of Jesus Christ. And that speaking means that it speaks into every situation.

And when you come to grip with this, when you hear God speaking, when you know where to hear His voice, when you come to grips with that reality, theological reality in your life, it's as if all the noise that we have left outside of this gathering begins to be distorted to the vibrancy of God speaking to us within His church.

The noise, the itching ears of wanting to hear something new, wanting to walk in here and just wanting to hear a fresh revelation is just absolute nonsense because that revelation is insubordinate to the superiority of the message and the apex of Scripture found in Jesus Christ.

[18:27] Unfortunately, how often we often have itching ears to want to hear something that we want to hear rather than something that we need to hear.

The problem is not God speaking because even God speaks to us in His silence and His absence. The problem is not God. The problem is us. And so, church, we can turn off the noise and open the Word, 66 books in all.

And if this is, this might be a daunting task to hear God speak to us today, I'd encourage you to turn to your neighbor or turn to somebody in the church to just walk through Scripture with you, to walk through this challenging book, to be edified, lest we be victims of our own demise of wanting entertainment.

You see, church, the theological reality that God speaks today should humble us to the core and guide our lives. Guiding our confusion, guiding our fear, guiding our doubts, guiding our worry.

We put down our phones and our Google searches of what we need to do and how we need to think about situations and we pick up the Bible. We turn off our podcast of what this preacher who doesn't know your name, but what he's saying about the situation.

[19:49] You open the Word and talk to God, the God of creation found within the Word. We need to limit the noise and open the Word. There and only there is the voice of God waiting to speak.

Speak. Within the Word is the hope our souls truly long for. But not only that, we see something developing within Hebrews and we meet a man as was introduced in verse 2 and we'll continue.

We see the man, the attributes of God's Son. We see that not only was he the object of speech in God.

God declared his glory through Jesus Christ, but he was appointed in verse 2 as it continues, the heir of all things through whom also he created the world.

Verse 3, he is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. And he upholds the universe by the power of his word.

[20 : 59] This Jesus Christ was appointed the heir, meaning traditional cultural category of Hellenistic Judaism.

The people who this was written to, they would understand what this meant specifically because Jesus Christ was invested in all things.

And yes, even creation, he's the heir of all things. He has an investment in all things. Meaning the doctrine of redemption and creation are united by the same God as expressed in the person of this one God-man, Jesus Christ.

And within the message is this man. And look at this. He is the radiance. Does anybody use that word anymore?

Unless you're trying to earn bonus points with your significant other, you're radiant today. I think one word, we're probably one word away from a marriage series right now.

[22 : 06] Radiance of your marriage. He is the radiance of the glory of God. In other words, the aura of Jesus Christ as expressed in the verse today, you can see it in Jesus Christ.

Looking into the Old Testament, there was something known as the Shekinah glory, which was shining. A visible glory that demonstrated the majesty of God.

You see it in the Exodus wilderness guide in Exodus 13. Or the cloud upon the tabernacle in the wilderness in Exodus 40. or even at the dedication of Solomon's temple, you saw the glory of God manifest.

And contextually speaking to the audience, then this would have made quite the impression. They knew the glory of God that was proclaimed back then.

And they are now to discover that in Him. You see, the glory of God in Jesus Christ is to see the most fully glorious one, the radiant one.

[23 : 24] That Jesus Christ was divine. He was God's Son. How so? Jesus Christ, it says in verse 3, He's the exact imprint of His nature.

Like the imprint of a coin. He's stamped in Jesus Christ. That each and every bevel and curve within that existed as the object of the stamp is in Jesus Christ.

He shares the exact imprint of God the Father. He shares the divine nature with the Father as the second person of the Trinity. And not a similar representation, not a, well, close, but missed a couple marks, or near-perfect representation.

No, I believe the Hebrew author is making it quite clear. He is the exact representation of the glory of God.

He is the Shekinah glory. Jesus Christ is God divine, clothed in humanity. He also had a creational duty at the drawing board of when all things came to be in an ever-present role of holding the universe.

[24 : 40] He's the sustainer according to this verse, holding all things together by the word of His power. If you were to have a conversation with Tim Keller, you would probably, you can ask him about the illustration that changed his life.

And there was an illustration back when he was in Sunday school that the teacher indicated that the, just one paper thickness, one paper thickness equals the distance between the earth and the sun, as Tim Keller was sitting there in Sunday school.

And so that's, you know, what? 92 million miles. I don't know if they've changed that. It seems like science is always changing and morphing, but the thickness of paper is that distance.

And so this teacher continues that if that's the case, then the earth, the distance from the earth to the nearest star would be a stack of 70 feet tall pieces of paper to bring that into reality.

And to think about the diameter of the galaxy, Tim Keller would be sitting there as the teacher instructs that that stack of paper would be 310 miles tall, the expanse of the galaxy.

[26 : 06] And so the teacher concluded to Tim Keller in the class, Jesus is holding that together. That together.

By the word of his power. and isn't this the kind of person worthy of giving your life to? This illustration changed Tim Keller's perspective on life, the depth of reality, and how small we truly are.

Church, there's a lot of heavy things that we often attempt to carry independently and ignore God who stands by our side if you're in Jesus Christ. We were not created to carry the weight of the world, the weight of our troubles, the weight of our own flesh and sin.

We're not superheroes in how often we neglect our created function to be dependent on God. We neglect our weakness and try to think that we're something we were not created to be. operating as if we don't need God in our own power. How often we attribute glory to ourselves and things that we handle only to find ourselves suffering over the course of our lifetime.

[27 : 33] All of a sudden we're 40 years old having blood pressure issues, suffering from heart attacks at young ages and in hospitals. What I've come to find in the wisdom of my short 35 years on this life is that it's better for you to humble yourself lest God will humble you and put you in a hospital bed if you can't slow down and rest in him.

He's woken me up probably twice like that in my life, my short life on this earth. You see, if the message is objectively true and the man of the message is objectively true, what reason do we have to doubt the one holding the universe together?

He's concerned of holding the universe together. How much more concern being made in His image is He with holding us together, holding your marriage together, holding this church together? How can we be so certain? we saw already, God speaks. He spoke and He speaks today.

Turn to Jesus Christ. He is mighty to save and mighty to sustain. You don't need a heart attack to wake you up. You need ears that are open this morning, on this day, to receive that hope.

[29 : 06] The sustainer of the world will sustain you, whether you believe it or not. And here we find our greatest assurance in this man whose attributes are vast, whose power is mighty.

So come to the one who gives true rest in this life. And not only that, we see the message, we see the man, we see the mission in verse 3 and 4.

Verse 3 continues saying, after making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

I think Christmas time is one of the most marveling times and seasons. Yeah, it's kind of man-made and everything like that and the Advent calendar and all of that.

And you can argue that at Bob Evans after the church service. But regardless, the incarnation, regardless of what month you think about it in, regardless of what day of the week it is, it could be the Lord's Day, it could be Wednesday.

[30 : 25] It is the most marveling aspect, I believe, in our faith, is the incarnation of Christ. That the baby laying in the manger, cuddled up warm in fabric, was destined to die.

That this baby that we sort of over dramatize the coming and this little baby and we're holding it, caring for it so tight, was born to die.

That rocks me to my core. That it was the shadow of the cross that rested over the manger. And the progressive revelatory message in man revealed in the word makes this clear, of that duty of the cross, that even as the book, the author of this book of Hebrews prepares us later on by mentioning purification of sins.

He doesn't expound on it right here, but he will in chapter 9 and 10. But when the word says purification for sins, this is meaning a duty of the cross.

This is a specific priestly duty. It's speaking Jewish in this, purification of sin. It's thinking Jewish, priestly duty. And the original audience would rest assured that they knew exactly what this was indicating.

[31 : 59] But in just a single instance, we enter into a vivid picture of the full account of Jesus' words and Jesus' works that demonstrated that Jesus Christ was indeed God.

He reigned over death. Just as Jesus said, he's greater in works. John 6, 63, says, it is the Spirit who gives life.

The flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. He's greater in works, as John 5, 36 says.

But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.

And it's almost as if the author of Hebrews is borrowing the illusion from Psalm 110 that the Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

[33 : 14] And actually as we continue, this book has this permeating argument of Psalm 110 throughout, of Jesus being that greater one who is at the right hand, who has made the enemies his footstool.

And look, anybody keen on knowing how to read body language? I believe it's a spiritual gift of women to overanalyze body language sometimes at times.

But he's seated. Normally the posture of sitting indicates that, you know, we're done. Right? Unless we're sitting at a Thanksgiving meal table. But not where he's sitting. He's sitting on a throne. A work is complete.

Where is his throne? He's at the right hand of the majesty on high. This indicates there's been a completion of work in Jesus Christ.

[34 : 23] And it brings a sure hope that the cry of Jesus Christ from the cross, that it is finished, is certainly true and he is reigning in posture and position with God the Father in heaven.

This is good news. No angel on heaven would ever be given such posture and position with God. And in that, even the angels declare in Revelation 4.8, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of his glory. There is one name above all names. There is one message above all messages.

There is one revelation above all revelations. There is one work above all works. And there is one promise over all promises.

And it is all found in Jesus Christ. At the center of the Bible is Jesus Christ. Maybe you're a Christian here and you're just like, yep, hallelujah, amen, let's go to lunch.

[35 : 34] If he's the center of the Bible, I want to ask you a question. Is he the center of your life? Because God is speaking through his word this morning of his supremacy, but is this sort of an optional thing that we kind of carry at our own convenience?

When we need something, when we're feeling sick and we're taking our kids to the ER at three o'clock in the morning, yeah, this would be a good time to ask God for some help. Here, I'll pull God out of my back pocket.

Lord, bring healing and rest for your namesake, as our family has been saying. Is this a convenient supremacy in our lives, or is this a supreme, reoccurring, established disposition, an attitude that has changed in all of our work life, our marriage, our relationships, and even how we care for others around even in the church?

Is this supreme in our lives? Jesus Christ is the apex of the scriptures, but how often he fails to be the apex of our own lives.

And so I would like to exhort you, not beat you down this morning, but to encourage you in the supremacy of Jesus Christ, in how he is supreme over all.

[37 : 04] He is sovereign over all. And that he is worthy to be the center of our attention.

Specifically, the early first couple minutes within our mornings that we rise should be dedicated to God, because we didn't deserve to even wake up.

But maybe there's this disconnect that you have not known Jesus Christ. You have grown up in a different set of beliefs, and I would be doing a disservice today of saying that you're okay and you're going to be okay to continue in that way of belief, whether deism or pantheism.

Because do you believe in that Jesus Christ today, the one who is supreme? you can turn every stone that is upon the earth looking for salvation, but you will not find it until you turn the pages of Scripture.

And trust in the Word that we find as the apex of Scripture. Trusting in anything else, any hope, any promise that some guy on TBN told you gave \$500 and you're good.

Well, you're not. Because our salvation is not based upon works, but by grace we have been saved through faith.

[38 : 40] You have a reason to be so deeply, profoundly assured of salvation in this life, regardless of if your circumstance dictates that assurance.

Because there is quite a severe sin of unbelief. There's a product that is produced due to unbelief, and that is eternity separated from God the Father.

Eternity in hell. Torment, misery, absence of God, pain, darkness. No, you're not okay by your own works.

But Jesus Christ made it simple. Believe. Come. Follow me. Turn your life. Repent.

Give all your sin to Him laid at the foot of the cross and follow Him. And from birth, we have been born into rebellion against God and our sinful nature is so evident.

[39 : 47] But even regardless of our rebellion, God offers grace through Jesus Christ. And that grace is fully restorative, regardless of your past, regardless of the legal record that we hold, whether it's, it might be fornication, it might be adultery, it might be a list of other sins that you're just like, oh God, there's no way I can be forgiven for these things.

That's just not true, according to Scripture, according to Saul of the Bible. Jesus Christ calls us to repent of our rebellion and turn to the one true God, the one whom the prophets spoke of, the one appointed heir of all things, the creator of the world and the radiance of God's glory, the divine replica of God, the redeemer and sustainer, Lord of all.

This is a message that is worthy of attention at this season of our lives, filled among biblical illiteracy and also filled with a plethora of false belief, false assurances of salvation.

salvation. So as we sort of wrap up our time, this is the advent of hope. The message, the revelation of God's Son, the man of that revelation being radiant and glorious, being the glory of God, and his mission of being a sufficient sacrifice, making purification for sins.

We are placed between the gravity of life and the grace of God, and here there is only one place to turn, one place to surrender, one place to worship.

[41 : 50] It's a call to conform our lives to the contours of God's grace and redemption. The perfect perfection of his holiness is a mold that is demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ.

What else do we need to propel us to live according to God's glory and God's sacrifice? What else do we need other than what we find here written in the Word?

You might say, well, that's really hard to follow. It is. It is really hard to follow.

It's hard to follow a call to die. It's hard to be asked to commanded, not asked, commanded to relinquish our control over situations that are far beyond our control.

It's hard to look a doctor in the face and receive a diagnosis that is terribly unpleasant. It's hard to lose loved ones in this life.

[43 : 14] It's hard to have even the guilt of our sin that we have been forgiven to really feel like we're forgiven. It's hard. But is Jesus worthy?

Yes, He is. He is worthy. He deserves our highest praise, regardless of the difficulties in our lives.

The baby in the manger was born to die so that we might live at the time of our death. death. And in His death, death's power couldn't hold Him, and in our death, it cannot hold us as well, if we believe in this message of Jesus Christ.

This is Christmas, a story of God's promise to bring about the purification of sin. by taking the form of a servant, He emptied Himself into flesh, a God-man.

And as the Christmas carol sings, born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

[44 : 35] Hark, the herald angels sing, glory to that newborn king. Let's pray.