

12/4/22 - Heb. 1:5-14 - "God Speaks of Christ"

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[0 : 00] Hebrews chapter 1 verse 5 says, For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my son, today I have begotten you.

Or again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, Let all God's angels worship him.

Of the angels, he says, He makes his angels winds and his ministers a flame of fire. But of the sun, he says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

The scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore, God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.

And you, Lord, laid the foundations of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

[1 : 06] They will perish, but you will remain. They will all wear out like a garment. Like a robe, you will roll them up.

Like a garment, they will be changed. But you are the same. And your years will have no end. And to which of the angels has he ever said, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?

Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? This is God's Word. Thanks be to God.

So just as was mentioned, we are in the Advent series, a couple weeks that we specifically reflect upon the incarnation of Jesus Christ leading up to Christmas Day.

And this is a special time that we have in Hebrews. Hebrews is a book that was written by man, but it was inspired by God.

[2 : 22] Meaning that God literally guided man's hand to write. And so what we read just now, what we have in our possession is God's Word to us.

What we have is inerrant, infallible speech of God. And this specifically identifies Jesus Christ as Yahweh.

And the passage kind of goes hand in hand with some Trinitarian logic. That God is one in essence who exists in three persons.

This is not meaning that He's spiritually, He's a spiritual transformer. Just like the movies. And He transforms different modes and changes at various points in history.

But He co-existently, co-authoritarily, and co-eternally share the same essence. It's difficult.

[3 : 32] But if you are looking for a resource that you can see this come into bloom in your life, you need the Word of God open. And I would encourage everyone, if you're wondering about the Trinity, how to study that, go through the pages of Scripture.

Highlight the work and the role of God the Father. Highlight the work and the role of Jesus Christ the Son. Highlight the work and the role of the Holy Spirit. And when you get to Revelation and you lay it all out, you will see that there is a similarity in role and function of all those persons.

And so that is helpful. But if you want to look at the early church fathers, I would encourage you to turn to Tertullian's work on the Trinity.

Just a fantastic resource. Actually, he started writing it for the sake of kids benefiting from studying the Trinity. Though I'm not here to persuade you about the Trinity today. I know all the Bible heads are like, oh, keep going, keep going.

But for the regular folk like me, I'm not here to persuade you with the Trinity. I'm here to persuade you to come under the authority of God's Word.

[4 : 46] To come under the encouragement of God's Word. To be corrected. To be rebuked. To be instructed from the Word. In that, it is not my words or logic.

It's God's words that speak. So, Hebrews is a book that tells us that Jesus Christ is better than anything that mere religion has to offer.

In our world today, it naturally sifts out all the lies that encapsulate our world today and our thinking. And it naturally reveals and preserves truth found in the Word.

It's a sifting that it does. And for that, we should be blessed. Extremely blessed for the next half hour or so in this time.

You might have to go to the bathroom. You might be thinking about other plans and everything like that. But if we can truly allow our minds and our hearts to be engaged in the Word, we will leave this place changed.

[5 : 51] That is our aim. So, let's do that. So, Hebrews is talking about Jesus being better.

Well, what's He better than? Well, there's a couple things that the author of Hebrews has to give us. But today, it's that He's better than angels.

He's better than angels. And I believe we can probably give credit to our wonderful pop culture that surrounds us in our lives.

That has sort of just created this unbiblical view of angels' roles, angels' personalities.

That, you know, it makes me think of Christmas movies like Clarence the Angel from It's a Wonderful Life. You know, that Clarence, you know, trying to get his wings.

[6 : 50] And he has this strange power. But he seems like the least likely person to be ever given that power.

Because he just seems like he's fumbling all the time. But, oh, let me take you in the past. And there he goes with George Bailey as he's walking him through the story of his life.

Or we might think of pop culture references of Angels in the Outfield. That was popular when I was young. And, you know, the losing team. These angels came.

This divine intervention came. And they were on a winning streak. And everyone was stretching their head. Especially leading to the 11th hour of the game. Would the angels come again? It's like all these references within pop culture.

You've got a chubby little guy with wings that has a bow and arrow at Valentine's Day. You have angels that are all in Hallmark's cards. And so we have this disposition as we go into the word of who angels are and their role and their function.

[7 : 59] And so we acknowledge that today. And we come to the text with that. But I want us to see what the Bible has to offer.

Especially through the writing of the book of Hebrews. Because this passage is going to address the identity of Jesus Christ. But also the identity of angels.

And specifically both of their identities and roles in the world. And so this is done. The author in Hebrews does this in sort of movements. I hope that I emphasize like the continuation of thought when I read it.

But it's three different movements of doubled Old Testament references. And this was a way to scripturally give evidence to proven arguments.

And so within his writing it has a certain emphasis. And it should have an emphasis for us today. And so we're going to see those movements transpire and understand them.

[9 : 02] But most importantly I want us to see a sermon titled that God speaks of Christ. And if God speaks of Christ what does he speak of Christ?

And what is Christ's role? And all these questions will be answered today. Before we dive into the study within these movements in the passage. I want us to pray.

And we'll break down these movements in just a moment. But we must pray as we enter into the word for the Holy Spirit to guide us. And ask his blessing over our time.

Let's pray. Lord we are prepared to receive from you today. Lord God turn our hearts to your word.

And turn our hearts towards you. Father God we come emptying ourselves of just the lies of the world.

[10 : 05] Of how we think of reality. We submit them to you to fill us with truth this morning. So do that filling today right now.

And we pray this in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So the various movements in the text. We're going to see the first two.

I'm going to include that. I was going to break it into a couple different points. But I saw a thematic similarity in the first two movements. So we see first a section which is titled God speaks of Christ's sonship.

And that goes between movement one and two of the text found within verse five to seven. And so it says in the first and second movements.

And now the second movement here. And again. And now the second movement here. And again. And again. And now the second movement here.

[11 : 09] And again. And again. And again. And again. And again. When he brings the firstborn into the world. He says.

Let all God's angels worship him. Of the angels. He says. He makes his angels winds. And his ministers a flame of fire.

You see the movement in the text. It's like these coupling of two Old Testament references back to back. And I believe by the end of the passage. And I believe by the end of the passage.

You're going to see that it's all pushing us forward in just the realization of Christ's mission upon the earth. Found in the last verse.

But what is the author stating? What's the argument being made by the author? Well, Jesus has received a supreme status in the heavens.

[12 : 06] And that angels could never receive that status. Jesus Christ is here. And although the angels are pretty cool.

They're not up here. They are lower than Jesus Christ. This first movement references two Old Testament scriptures.

One from the writings of Psalms. And one from the prophets. We have Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel 7.

And both of these two references that are coupled together reveal that Jesus Christ is co-equal and co-eternal with the Son of God.

Okay? I didn't say that right. It reveals that Jesus Christ is the co-equal and co-eternal with God. And so verse 5.

[13 : 00] It mentions a day. Look at verse 5. For to which of the angels did God say? You are my Son. Today I have begotten you. This language relates directly to the moment of His incarnation.

Which was proved that Jesus Christ was truly begotten by God the Father in His humanity. And that led to the moment of His resurrection.

Which proved that Jesus Christ was not begotten of His divinity. And this is important. Because from the cradle to the cross, Jesus did not inherit anything at His incarnation other than grave clothes called flesh.

And He borrowed them for about 33 years. He was all sufficient even as a baby in the manger. Fully divine. Jesus made these claims that He was the Son of God many times throughout Scripture.

We see that often even in John 5 as we went through a series not long ago through the Gospel of John. And He referred, He made claims that He was the Son of God. And that the Sonship of Jesus Christ is often misunderstood by us.

[14 : 22] To think that saying the Son of God makes Him inferior to God the Father. However, within a Jewish culture of which this book was written to, that would not be the case.

To make the claim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, they would understand that Jesus Christ is literally claiming that He is making Himself equal to God. In other words, the resurrection is that declaration of Sonship.

Not the origination of it. Jesus Christ did not inherit anything at His baptism. It was just affirmation that this is my beloved Son whom I am well pleased.

He did not inherit anything. He was fully man and fully God. And then the second movement goes into another coupling of verses.

In Deuteronomy 32 it references from the Law and also Psalm 104 in the writings. It's like the author has much to say.

[15 : 36] He wants to talk about angels. So let's talk about angels. Let's get into it. Well, guess what? The angels declare the Sonship of Jesus Christ as well.

And that's where God speaks of Christ's Sonship in these two movements. In other words, the angels know their Creator. Angels were used as the primary messengers of declaring to the shepherds of the Incarnation.

The angels knew who He was. And look, from the cradle He was declared by the angels. And then remember at the resurrection at the cross. With Mary coming to the gravesite.

It was an angel who declared that He is risen. He's not here. So while God's Son never inherited a status, He's always been, always will be, He's ever-changing, He is God, the angels did inherit a status.

Because they're lower. To be given a status is to be insufficient in creation. The angels were created beings and they were given a status.

[17 : 02] They were created to glorify God and enjoy God's presence and to carry out His purposes. Look, God gives them wind to fly in Psalm 104 in this passage.

The angels are ministers of flame, of fire. In reality, angels are servants of Jesus Christ.

Angels are servants of Jesus Christ. Isn't there similar language and references within the Westminster Shorter Catechism? What is the chief end of man?

Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. However, humanity, you and me, as well as the angels, are never to be mistaken as being gods, worthy of worship, but actually apprehending the task that the angels and us have is servitude to God our Father.

And the good news that's in view within Jesus Christ's sonship is that those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will inherit a status of God's Son.

[18 : 29] We will inherit sonship too. I know I just threw your minds for a tizzy. That's not to mean that we become divine, like little gods.

That's popular today. Become little gods empowered by the hemi engine that the Holy Spirit fills and we can do all the things. We are gods.

It is not as if we become divine, but sonship that participates in Christ's redemptive work through our union with the founder of salvation.

I've got to ask you a question, though. Who wouldn't desire a status like that? Who would just pass up something like that?

That through the cross, we are recipients of a status by our faith. And we are given the status of sons and daughters of Jesus Christ.

[19 : 41] You want to talk about something not piling in comparison to your job title promotion. I mean, this outlasts your job.

This outlasts your decaying body and bones in like just 50, 60 years. This is forever.

Who wouldn't desire a status of pardon from sin? Who wouldn't desire a status of forgiveness?

Who wouldn't desire a status of freedom? Now, being a Christian isn't just a bunch of yeses and nos, but it's actually yeses to the right things, the good things.

The purpose of our very creation and saying no to the harmful things. It's good. And so if you do desire that status today, and you know you've been treaded by your own power in this life, and you have commons in this building not knowing who Christ is, well, meet your God.

[20 : 54] Now, in Jesus Christ, before it's too late. Come and be baptized. We'll fill that baptismal next week.

And we'll get this done. Come join the family. You see, God speaks of the sonship of Jesus Christ. Might Jesus Christ speak of your sonship in Him today?

The second portion of the passage goes into God speaking of Christ's kingship. God speaks of Christ's kingship.

This is a single movement, just a coupling of one set of verses. In verse 8, it says in the first verse, But of the son, He says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

The scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore, God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.

[22 : 02] And, on the other side, another verse, You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

They will perish, but you will remain. They will all wear out like a garment. Like a robe, you will roll them up. Like a garment, they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will have no ends. Boy, what nourishment. After the first movement of the author's scriptural evidence to support the argument of the identity of Jesus Christ, he moves from sonship to kingship.

And we have two references here similar to the previous movement in Psalm 45 and Psalm 102. And it's contrasting a king and his kinsman.

It paints an image of majesty that's only due to a king. The one who has a scepter is that of a king. The one who's anointed with oil is that of a king. And priests and prophets as well.

[23 : 16] But he's talking about a kingdom. Who has a kingdom? A king. It paints the image of majesty due to a king. An angel surround the throne of God.

And who sits on the throne of God? Jesus Christ. As this passage is saying, of the Son, he says.

Jesus was set apart. Anointed. Consecrated. For a specific purpose. And then it goes into another contrast of creator and creation.

Between eternal and temporal. You see, God's kingdom and reign is forever. Amen? Creation. All of this will pass away.

And is severely subject to change. We got a reality of that in 2020 with the pandemic. All of this, though, will pass away. But the Son is everlasting.

[24 : 22] Isn't the divinity of Jesus so confusing, though? I mean, over the last 200 years, it seems like within pulpits in Orthodox theology, it's like there's been like this chipping away.

Well, this makes a little bit more sense to us. And moving towards more like a liberal view of orthodoxy. And kind of redefining a couple things.

And taking some things out that are just difficult. But it's especially... It's definitely apparent with the denial of who Jesus is.

And especially the divinity of Jesus Christ. I love how C.S. Lewis spoke concerning the person of Christ. He said that he was either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord.

The claims Jesus Christ made of Himself sets Him apart of just being a good teacher.

[25 : 29] Just being a wise fellow. It's also not good enough to say that, well, He was God-like.

Jesus Christ makes the claim that He is equal to God. Why does that matter? Why are you bashing the past maybe two centuries specifically in this chipping away in liberal theology?

Well, because it takes a perfect God to atone for our sin. Not merely somebody who was God-like. Christ's substitutionary death is the means of salvation.

If Jesus Christ were just a man, His death wouldn't have been able to save a fish from drowning. But because of His divinity, because of His deity at His death, humanity finds complete atonement and forgiveness and sin in the completed work of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

And we got the receipt from 500 eyewitnesses that He rose. And He said what He was going to do. And He followed through with what everything, every claim that He said and made.

[26 : 51] This Jesus is Lord, verse 10. He debated this often with the Pharisees, didn't He? And the deity language. This is what Psalm 102 is referring to.

The second reference in here. With the creation. Basically meaning that if Jesus Christ is Lord over creation, He is going to long outlast the stars that He created.

He's going to long outlast the universe, even within its grand vastness. But there is bad news. He will also outlast the refining fire of judgments that will occur upon this earth.

A refining fire that 2 Peter 3.10 speaks about. In other words, just as this passage says, things will change.

But He remains. There will come a time where fire will destroy everything.

[28 : 02] The saints, all believers in Jesus Christ will be saved. There's a promise of Jesus Christ Himself. And at this destruction, this refinement, every blemish of sin, every aspect of evil will be wiped away.

We just had an act of evil this morning while we were sound asleep. At 2 o'clock in the morning on the south side, three people were shot outside a bar.

And all of that will be judged. The vengeance and the anger that we hold in our lives towards our enemies, judgment will come.

And that is bad news if you're on the wrong side of grace. This term for change is also used to describe the believer's glorification.

This change is also referenced, the same word in 1 Corinthians 15.51, where we will all be changed.

[29 : 17] Those in Christ will be changed and live in eternity. How? By the power and the promise of Jesus Christ.

You see, at the incarnation, history changed. Upon the cross, redemption changed. For those in Christ, at death, will be changed.

And this is certainly good news and the promise of the gospel. And then the last, as we're kind of coming to the end, there is an emphasis in the structure of this passage, which leads to section 3, where God speaks of Christ's commandship.

In verse 13 it says, To which of the angels has God ever said, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Turning completely from what God has spoken concerning the identity of Christ and the disposition of angels, he returns to the opening phrase of verse 5.

[30 : 41] To which of the angels has he ever said? In so doing, the last movement serves as this linguistic or semantic climax of words, of transitions from even past tense to present tense, but also has a climax in theme as well, to the distinct role of God and the role of angels.

He references one verse in his conclusion of the argument of Psalm 110, being the verse that he references in verse 13.

It's looking at the relationship between Jesus Christ and angels. It's in that that we see that references to Psalm 110 describes that Yahweh promised the Messiah complete dominion over the world.

It's that dominion that Daniel 7 speaks about. And similar to that of a commander of an army, Jesus Christ is now distinct in his charge over the heavenly host.

And verse 14 resolves it all, resolving the conclusion in which the angels are involved in the lives of God's people.

[32 : 13] And so what do you have? You have this Jesus Christ who is supreme, the sonship of God. You have him being the ruler like a king over a kingdom.

He's going to outlast creation. And now it says that he has an army, an angelic army of hosts.

We don't need to credit the pop culture portrayals of the false roles and personalities that American Christianity sometimes has. We become confused.

Our view of angels become commercialized. The cute chubby portrayals that we find in sympathy cards. But in thinking of what the Hebrews author is indicating, we have to think biblical regarding angels.

Scripture actually indicates that an angelic encounter that you find in Scripture is like borderline traumatic. Our culture today would be running for their safe space.

[33 : 33] We saw that, don't you, in the Christmas narratives from maybe even that we spoke about last year, Luke 2, 9, of the angels appearing to the shepherds in this dark field.

And then all of a sudden, it's this activity of light and things. They were freaked out. It's known that over 300 times, the Bible refers to God's people being told, do not be afraid.

And a handful of them are from angels. And a handful of them are from angels. Following the arguments and the emphasis of this passage, we confidently know that Jesus Christ is superior and angels are never worthy to be worshipped or praised.

And guess what? They're okay with that. You can tell Clarence, it's going to be all right, buddy. Right? All these things that go through our heads, isn't it silly?

But instead, they are God's creation with certain roles and functions among creation. They're ministering spirits, as verse 14 talks about.

[34 : 44] They provide physical protection through the pages of Scripture to the church. They provide provision. They encourage. They direct. And much, much more, and I know you're probably bummed out we're not going to keep talking about angels and angelology, but maybe at a different time and a different place and location.

But we need to see something here, that their role is directly tied to Jesus Christ's commands. If by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to this author in Hebrews does anything for us today, if we want to get anything out of this, it really should captivate the glorious reality that although the church face trouble, although this world is uncertain and will pass away, and even though it's hard to have faith in this life and embrace that in the darkest moments that life has to offer to us, we know that we are not alone.

This isn't to overemphasize some spiritual unknown of angelic activity, but it's definitely not to underemphasize it as well. And I cannot do either of them.

Personally, subjectively, I've experienced God's intervention and our family has. Unexplainable just provisions in our lives of these occurrences of my wife grabbing my child in a burning house, our firstborn from a burning house, and running down the stairs with Micah curled up in her chest.

And who would have found, who would have thought that she would find a complete, clear path in the smoke to the back door?

[36 : 39] And a handful of other things. But this is not about me, it's about the reality of what Scripture says is what it says. You have to deal with it. It's between you and God.

There are many strange books that exist out there regarding the topics of spiritual warfare, all kind of experiential, they're fallible, very highly subjective.

But what the Word of God has to infallibly say to us today is to have confidence that these agents that are operating in our lives are agents of God's throne.

They operate for us. And most supremely of all, if angels have any role in redemption, they are under the direct command of Jesus Christ, who is God, Yahweh, the Lord.

And even an angel's greatest and glorious function in our lives pale in comparison to the glory of the Commander, the Redeemer, and the Son of God.

[37 : 47] Church, when we encounter the truth within the Word of God, let's embrace not only the Scripture, the power within Scripture that has been put into manuscripts of paper and pen.

Let us not only embrace its power because God has spoken to us miraculously through the Word today and still communicates today, but let's not forget about its spiritual power in our lives.

When we do, we will find an intimate connection with the living God through the Word. And so as we come to a sort of wrap up our time, wrap up our thoughts, we will continue to embrace the intimate relational connection with the living God.

We will continue to embrace that. And as we do, we can rest assured that this relationship was made possible only due to the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the King over all, the Commander over all.

And being a Christian is about a duty to the Lord. It is. Just as angels serve God, we serve God as well. It's a duty to the Lord, but it ought to be a delight to us.

[39 : 21] In order to adequately apprehend who we have been saved to, it's always important that we must forget what we've been saved from.

It's not just that Jesus Christ has saved us from addiction or depression or anger or a plethora of other experiences.

But if we are in Christ, we have been saved from sin, set free from sin, and in our baptism we declare that freedom.

We declare that we are truly risen with Jesus Christ. the old is gone and the new has come. And no, Jesus Christ did not save you from your emotional state.

He saved you from a depraval state. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are being made new. And this is a path that appeals to the Holy Spirit residing in us.

[40 : 21] And we trade our seeking for addiction, we trade it for benediction, for depression, for delight, for anger, towards peace.

And I'll close with this. What God has spoken, what God has spoken cannot be unspoken.

And that which cannot be unspoken cannot be repealed. And that which cannot be repealed is a transcendent promise.

Friends, that which is a transcendent promise is the base of our hope. Because our hope is founded upon Jesus Christ, the one of whom God has spoken.

So let's pray. Thank you.