



Hebrews 1:1-14
The Great and Powerful
September 14, 2014

MEMORY VERSE:

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.” (Hebrews 1:3, NIV84)

OVERVIEW

God has spoken to us: in the past and now through His Son. The course has been defined and the instructions for running the race of faith have been disclosed. Once again, God provides us with insight we could never attain on our own. We are told to fix our attention on the person of Jesus. The reason becomes obvious- Jesus is God’s son. Jesus’ deity is affirmed, his incarnation is referenced, His redemptive work is stated, and His glory is declared.

NEXT WEEK:

- Read chapter two and note how the focus on Jesus changes from chapter 1.
- Why do you think the emphasis in chapter 2 can be troubling to those who have decided to follow Jesus?

SERMON NOTES: Hebrews 1:1-14 (NIV84)

GOD SPOKE

¹ *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,*

- God is **Proactive, never disengaged**
- God has chosen to **communicate** with us

GOD SHARES SOMETHING NEW . . .

² *but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*

- **Taking Us Deeper Into God's Thoughts And Ways** (cf. Colossians 1:16-17; Proverbs 8:22-36)
 - Jesus, our inheritance, **provides continuity** in the redemptive story

³ *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

- **Leading Us Further Down The Road To Spiritual Maturity**
 - From **Glory**, to **the Cross**, to **the Throne** of God

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

- **Helping Us To Gain A Greater Appreciation Of Our Salvation**
 - Jesus "**a name above all names**".

DID YOU HEAR THE MESSAGE?

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, “**You are my Son**; today I have become your Father”? Or again, “I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”? ⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “**Let all God’s angels worship him.**” ⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.” ⁸ But about the Son he says, “**Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.**” ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.” ¹⁰ He also says, “In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ¹¹ They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. ¹² You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.” ¹³ To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? ¹⁴ Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

- Jesus Stands Alone In His **Baptism And Resurrection** (cf. Luke 3:22; Acts 13:33)
- Jesus Is **Worshipped** (cf. Hebrews 1:6)
- Jesus **Reigns** As King Of Kings For All Eternity (cf. Hebrews 1:8)

Jesus, great and powerful, is **God’s guarantee** that He will keep His promises.

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE: Hebrews 1:1-14

OPENING

- I'm certain everyone can recall a time in life when a promise wasn't kept. How did it affect you? Are you now a bit less trusting? What must be in place for you to believe a promise will be met?
- *(Leaders: Draw out the lack of trust we have when promises are not kept. New England has been said to be a skeptical area of the country, which probably goes hand in hand with being the most intellectual area of the country. We love to challenge what is, and when words don't match reality it is easy to jump on it. We tend to be distrusting toward most authorities, our government most often highlighted, because of promises not kept. As a country with many broken families many of us have experienced, first hand, the impact of broken marriage promises. Draw out the impact of these broken promises on our inclination to trust. Reality is, we live in a world littered with broken promises and that can leave us inclined to not only distrust people, but also God. So, what must be in place for trust to be established regarding promises? Simple: consistency between words and action. Where's the evidence? Do someone do what they say they will do? Examples: arrive home or at meetings when they say they will; finish what they started; stay away from things they say they'll stay away from.)*
- *(Leaders: The power of drawing this out is that only God has made good on His promise, and the whole chapter of Hebrews 1 explains that it is Jesus who evidences the trustworthiness of God's promises spoken to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, king David, and through the prophets. Only Jesus evidences God's love and justice, by His finished work on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. This stands in stark contrast to what we experience each and every day).*

GOING DEEPER

- The writer of Hebrews (whose identity remains cloaked in mystery) felt compelled to validate the fact that God reveals his thoughts and will to mankind. What are some of the unique ways God has revealed himself in scripture? How has God shown himself to you?
 - *(Leaders: the value of the fact that God has spoken and speaks to us lies in the truth, hope, and promises He has given to us throughout history. Follow this up by asking, "What does His*

history of speaking to human beings reveal about God's character and His attitude towards us?" Answer: He wants a relationship with us—He wants to engage us in conversation and life. Another question worth asking, "Why would God want to speak to us?"—answer: He wants a relationship with us, and to show us how to exist in relationship with Him. The important part here is that God speaks to us because He loves us and will ultimately show us that through the person of Jesus).

- Pastor Bruce mentioned in his sermon that God shared something new in these last days. The disclosure of the person and work of Jesus provides a platform that takes us deeper into God's ways, further down the road to spiritual maturity and enables us to gain a greater appreciation of our salvation. As you look over Hebrews 1:2-4, what are some things that you learn about Jesus?
 - *(Leaders: Jesus is 1) God's Son, 2) Heir of all things, 3) Creator of everything, 4) radiance of God's glory, 5) exact representation of His being, 6) Sustainer of everything—by His own word (speaks to His commanding authority), 7) Purifier, cleansing us from all the impurities of our sins, 8) seated on the throne of Heaven, 9) and superior to all angelic, celestial beings. All this to say, no one compares to Jesus, and only He has the final word and the credentials to prove His authority. Interestingly, this list speaks not only to Jesus ultimate power as God's Son, but also to His love for us and nearness to us. Did you notice that He not only created the world and reveals God (radiance and exact representation), but also sustains the world and purifies us who are in it—meaning He cares enough to keep life going and to cleanse it from the brokenness that separated us from God. He is not just above us, in supreme authority, but also got His hands dirty in redeeming us).*
 - *There are two things that essential foundations for us to trust in someone, even before they fulfill what they promise—they must have 1) the ability (power/authority) to complete their promise, and 2) have our best in mind. If either of these are not present trust breaks down. Without authority and power we cannot trust that anything will actually happen. Without love and good intentions we don't know that anything is fulfilled for our benefit. God fulfills both of these things in Jesus!*

- You could also ask, “If all of these statements about Jesus are true, and if He really is God’s son, what difference would that make in us trusting in God’s promises?” Why?
- In addition, read Colossians 1:16-17 and take special note that Jesus’ creative power encompasses “all things . . . visible and invisible”. What does this imply about Jesus’ role in the world? How might this truth help you to develop a greater confidence in Him?
 - (Leaders: “visible and invisible”—meaning all that we can see and all that we can’t see. Jesus is Lord over the physical world and the here and now, and He is Lord over our emotions, over our hopes and dreams, over the mysterious future, and all we cannot control at the moment. If this is true, what does that do to our trust? What might that do for our tendency towards anxiety?)

CHALLENGE

- Jesus is presented as great and powerful. He is declared to be more than able to accomplish what He has started. The writer of Hebrews suggests that a closer look at the person and work of Jesus will ensure that we are ready to run the race marked out.

Embrace the following challenge:

 1. Commit the next 10 weeks to participate in this study
 2. Commit to a Connect Group to share your thoughts and questions
 3. Commit to prayer, asking God to reveal himself in a fresh way
- (Leaders: Great opportunity to present the PURPOSE of the Connect Group, and to present the VALUES and GROUP GUIDELINES as suggested in the CG Covenant. The power of this agreement is establishing trust, safety, and common ground about the future of your group. This would also be a good time to let members know that in committing to the next 10 weeks they are not anchored indefinitely to your group, but will be given the three options of 1) “continue with this group,” 2) “take a break” or 3) “join another group” at the end of the journey. That will also help relieve pressure some may be feeling and also secure commitment in the short run, as you present the safety of a “trial run” feel moving forward.)
- Remember, there are further resources at www.bethanychurch.com