

This is a new series on the book of Hebrews. I preached through Hebrews in 1999 and taught the Wednesday class in 2006, but this is a new series, newly researched, and perhaps more focused. My purpose in teaching through the various books of the Bible is to present the entire Gospel as it is presented in each of them, for the Gospel of Christ is the subject of every book of the Bible. I am not going to deal with authorship, date of writing, or such things, for these are interesting, but not really relevant to the major theme of the book. I tend to believe that it was written by Paul, as the old Belgic Confession says, and before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Those things are interesting for scholars, but the true author is the Holy Spirit and the truths are timeless for both Jew and Gentile, whether in the transitional period before the Temple was destroyed, or afterwards. These things I desire to present as simply and as pointed as possible. My prayer is that you will find the truth compelling and living.

But let us read the first three verses of the book.

“1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” (Heb 1:1-3)

I want to make three major points this morning 1. Redemption is revealed in the Old and New Testaments; 2. Redemption is Powerfully Displayed in Christ; 3. Redemption is fully accomplished in Christ alone. Revealed; Displayed; Finished.

I. Revealed. In the Old and New Testaments.

A. God is the author of both testaments, but there is a stark contrast, as Calvin says.

1. Word of the prophets contrasted with the word of Christ.
2. The fathers are contrasted with us.
3. The various means of the Old are contrasted with the singleness of the New.

B. To these of Calvin we might add the various times in time past are contrasted with the last days, the days of Messiah.

C. We can summarize this contrast by saying that the New is far better than the Old, a theme that Hebrews will develop, for the author sets his major themes at the very beginning of the book, and develops them throughout the book.

D. As far as revelation is concerned, we are living in the last days, the days of Messiah, the days of the kingdom of God, where Christ is ruling from Heaven until all the elect are converted and then the end will come. We do not know how long these last days will last, but it is a rule of Christ from heaven by His word and Spirit, changing the hearts of men, for the curse is removed from men and Christ dwells with us by His word and Spirit.

E. Jesus Christ is the last word for the last days. There is nothing more to say about God and our duty than what was said and lived by the Lord Jesus. There is nothing new in the epistles that were written by the New Testament writers, for they simply mined the doctrine of Christ, both as to His person and as to His work, just as the OT writers mined the meaning of the law of Moses and the promises of Messiah that were contained in the law. They drew out of the well of salvation, but added nothing nor subtracted nothing, living by their own principles that they taught.

F. Redemption is to be found in this revelation of God in the Old and the New Testaments, the promise of the Redeemer is revealed in the Old and the actual coming of the Redeemer is recounted in the New.

G. Application:

1. Study the person and work of Christ if you want to know the truth of God and your duty. This will involve the study of the whole Bible, and you must not be slothful in this or you will be caught in some folly like the Harold Camping debacle.

2. Remember the words of Paul to Timothy: 2Ti 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
 - a. You are not able to understand the world or yourself or God by your own wisdom; you are not born with wisdom, but with a capacity for wisdom by virtue of your creation as the image of God. Without the word, you are an empty vessel, a piece of fluff blown this way and that, a cup filled with wickedness and filth, unless you are filled with the fullness of God, which is known only by the Holy Scriptures. You will be good for nothing except burning, unless you drink of the water of life and feast on the bread of life.
 - b. It is the “writings,” the “scriptures,” that will make you wise, for salvation comes only through faith in Christ Jesus—the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah promised from the beginning of the world.

II. Displayed Powerfully. Jesus Christ is revealed in all His majesty in the words used to describe Him.

A. His is Heir of all things: He inherits what Adam lost.

1. He is the meek who inherits the earth: Adam lost the earth by wicked desire and the pride of life.
2. “3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,” (1Pe 1:3-4)
3. We will come back to this theme again next week and as we proceed through this marvelous book.

B. He is the Creator. The language “through” does not contradict what John says “All things were made by Him.”

1. God is a Trinity of Persons, and to the Father is ascribed the work of Creation, as the Apostles’ Creed confesses. But the Three are One and there is full equality in the Persons and what one does, the others participate. The Father is first, but the Son and the Holy Spirit also are active in Creation, which is accomplished by the decree of God, the wisdom of God, and the power of God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
2. Verse 3 also says that He upholds all things by the “word of his power.” “Word” is not Logos here but a more common word, ordinary utterance or communication. Calvin says that Christ upholds all things by a “nod,” as a great king may give great authority and power by simply a nod, communicating power and authority. He who created all things by a word, upholds it by a nod. What mighty power this is! And you and I wonder if He will keep His promise to us and to our children?

C. He is the Brightness of God’s Glory. Moses could not look on the face of God, but only saw his hinder parts. Even this was too much for Israel and Moses had to veil his face.

1. Only a limited revelation of God was accomplished in the Old Testament.
2. Even the angels veil their faces for they cannot behold His glory,.
3. The fullness of God’s revelation is in Jesus Christ, for He beholds the face of God and reveals Him to us by His word and Spirit.
4. This we read in 1Cor. 2: 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.¹⁰ But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.¹¹ For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
5. What marvelous words we have in the Holy Scriptures! What a shame that we spend so little time reading and mastering their content, being content with crumbs that fall from the table, when as in a mirror, as Paul tells us in 2Cor. 3:18 “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory

of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The context is a comparison with Israel reading the Old Testament with veiled and hard hearts and the Christian reading the New Testament with unveiled and soft hearts.

D. He is the Express Image of God's Person.

1. From Eternity the Son was begotten of the Father; not to be another God, for that cannot be, but to be another Person, a Son who is loved and treasured. From the Father and the Son proceed the Holy Spirit, who is called the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son. Three equal in power, glory, honor, dignity, will, love, eternity, immensity, and all the other attributes, but having their own identity and self-consciousness.
2. Therefore, this Lord Jesus, the Christ or Messiah, is God Himself, fully and truly God. He is Immanuel, or God with us, in our flesh, our history, our life.

E. Application

1. The Lord Jesus is to be loved and worshipped as God, given full reverence and glory as the Father, as Jesus Himself taught and which He received from men.
2. He is not to be subordinated but is equal to the Father, for all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily. What a mystery this is; to be believed and loved, rather than understood!

III. Finally: Accomplished. Redemption is fully accomplished in Christ alone. It was promised in the Old but not accomplished until Christ appeared. This is stated by two phrases in verse 3:

A. He Himself purged our sins. This was His work alone. It was decreed by the Father and worked in us by the Holy Spirit, but the work was His alone.

1. He purged our sins. "purged" is two words: one to do and accomplish; the other to clean or purify.
2. Christ Himself cleansed us from our sins with His own blood. He washed us in His blood.
3. We were polluted by guilt and filth of sins; Christ undertook the cleansing of sinners.
4. This is the meaning of His death on the cross. He took the curse of sin upon Himself, for cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.

B. He sat down at the right hand of God, the majesty on high.

1. This Moses never did. Aaron never did. John the Baptist never did. Abraham never did. David never did. Solomon never did. Even neither Job nor Noah did this, nor did Daniel. This is the work of the Son of God alone.
2. This means that the work of redemption is finished and nothing is to be added to it. It is the wonderful gift that God gives to those who are appointed to eternal life.
3. This sitting means He has the authority and power to send forth the Holy Spirit to bring all His sons to glory, as Peter said on the day of Pentecost; the sending of the Spirit was evidence that Jesus had ascended to the throne of His glory in Heaven. See Acts 2:32-36.

C. Application

1. Let us believe and trust in Christ alone, for all the good things that are promised in the Holy Scriptures.
2. Let us pray that we may be filled with the Spirit, so that we can accomplish the things that He has called us to do in this world for His glory and honor.
3. As the Heidelberg Catechism states it in Q116: Why is prayer necessary for Christians?
A116: Because it is the chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us, and because God will give His grace and Holy Spirit only to those who earnestly and without ceasing ask them of Him, and render thanks unto Him for them.