

And This Will We Do, If God Permits
An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**
Chapter 2: God Speaks Now through Jesus
Hebrews 1:1&2
15: God Speaks through Jesus: Part 10

WAOY Friday/Monday 01/16-19/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse-by-verse journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and today I want to continue to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** taught about the superior way that God speaks to Man under the New Covenant by looking at **Hebrews 1:1&2**. So let's read those verses again together.

Hebrews 1:1&2

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

Now we are continuing to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** is discussing here in these two verses by looking at the various ways that God used to speak to Man under the First Covenant, or the Old Covenant, versus the much more superior way that God speaks to Man through the New Covenant. And Lord willing, on today's broadcast, I want to try to tie together all that we have studied so far. What the writer of **Hebrews** is saying here is that it is far better for us to hear from Jesus than from any prophet. What Jesus says is superior to what a prophet might say, and the Revelation of God that came to us through Jesus Christ in the Twenty-Seven Books of the New Covenant is what the prophets foretold would come through the Thirty-Nine Books of the Old.

Now, please keep in mind that this does not mean in any way, shape, or form that we do not need the Thirty-Nine Old Testament Books. That is not what I am saying and that is not what the writer of **Hebrews** was saying here. The Old Testament Books are inspired; they are from God; they are true. The only thing that we need to keep in

mind is that while they are inspired and true and from God, the Thirty-Nine Books of the Old Testament are also *incomplete*. You see, the Old Testament Books look ahead to the time when the Messiah would come. They point the way to the final Revelation that was yet ahead when all thirty-nine books were written. They are the Books that contain the Promises of God, while the New Testament Books contain the fulfillment of those Promises in and by and through Jesus Christ.

During the time when the “Canon of Scripture” was being assembled by the Church, there were some who wanted the Church to exclude the Thirty-Nine Old Testament Books from the Holy Bible. Their reasoning was that because the New Testament Books show us how Jesus Christ fulfilled the Promises of the Old, there was no longer any need for us to have the Old Testament Books. Thank God that that group’s reasoning did not win out! They lost that fight because it was rightly concluded by wise men within the Church that we need the Old Testament Books so that we can see all that led up to the fulfillment of the Promises in the New Testament Books.

Here is a better way to understand this. Most people today realize that the word “Gospel” means “Good News”. But *why* is the Gospel considered to be “Good News”? Why isn’t the Gospel just “News”? What makes the Gospel to be “Good News” instead of simply “News”? The answer is the Thirty-Nine Books of the Old Testament.

You see, the Gospel would simply be “News” if there was not some “Bad News” that precedes the “Good News”. In other words, what makes the Gospel to be “Good News” is that there’s some really bad News that comes first. What is the Bad News? The “Bad News” is that God demands perfect and continuous obedience to His Law in thought, word, and deed, or *nobody* goes to Heaven. Why is that Bad News? Because nobody can do that. Nobody can perfectly and continuously obey the Law... nobody except one Man, Jesus the Christ. You see, dear friends, there is a huge misconception about the Old Testament that we need to correct. Many think today that Moses and Joshua and David and Isaiah and the rest of the Old Testament characters all operated under one religion, while we operate under a different religion today.

That is a false concept of the Old Testament. There has been only one religion that the Bible teaches, and that one single religion is the same one today as it was then. You see, although God gave Moses the Law, Moses was not saved by his obedience to that Law. And the *reason*

that Moses was not saved by his obedience to the Law of God, is because Moses *failed* in trying to obey the Law. And because he failed, Moses was nothing more nor less than just another transgressor of the Law. Moses was born in sin. Moses sinned every day of his life, and Moses died a sinner, and no amount of will power and no amount of human effort that he put forth to obey the Law caused him to be anything other than a transgressor of the Law. But Moses went to Heaven when he died because Moses was saved. Moses was saved the very same way that we are saved today: by Grace alone, through Faith alone, in the finished Work of Jesus Christ alone... even though Jesus wasn't even born yet. And Moses was "so saved" that he even appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. So Moses is in Heaven today, but not because he obeyed the Law, because the fact of the matter is that Moses did not perfectly and continuously obey the Law of God.

But Moses obtained the Righteousness that the Law that he received from God talked about because he *believed*. Moses was saved by *Faith* and not by *works*. And Moses was saved by Grace because Moses didn't deserve to be saved; he was a sinner who had no claim to eternal life. But God was merciful to an unworthy sinner like Moses. And God graciously imputed Divine Faith to him so that he could believe, and the very Righteousness of Jesus Christ was imputed to Moses by the agency of Faith alone... the very same way that we are saved today.

But the reason that the Law was given was not to save anyone. No, it was given to show all of Mankind their sin, and to prove to them their "lost-ness". It exists to irrefutably testify about Man's complete *unwillingness* and radical *inability* to obey the Law of God, perfectly and continuously, in thought, word, and deed. And because of our inability to cease from sin, God's Justice must be vindicated against our sin. In other words, because God is perfectly Holy and cannot tolerate any sin at all, He is good to judge us for our sin; and He is correct to pour out His Wrath and Fury against us because we deserve that Wrath... because we are sinners.

And that is the Bad News. The Bad News is because every one of us is absolutely guilty of transgressing against God continually, the Just Wrath of God is bearing down on us like a freight train at 300 miles an hour... and we are all chained to the railroad tracks.

And what makes the Bad News to be Terrible News is that there is no hope in ourselves; there is no recourse; there is no way, by and through our own human effort, or by exercising our will power, or by summing up our own inner strength, that we can change any of that. Because we are flesh, we sin, and every sin that we commit must be paid for, and that payment is not a few days in the pokey. The payment for just *one* of our sins is eternal damnation in hell. That is the Bad News. God's Just and Righteous Fury is heading our way, and it is Just because we are in fact guilty of sinning, and it is Righteous because God's Wrath against sin vindicates His Own Justice.

Now I realize that most people hearing this have never heard anything like this before. But before you think me to be nothing more than a hard-hearted barbarian, dear friends, *please* hear me out. What I just said to you is precisely what the Bible teaches, and I suggest to you that the reason that we have so many people today in the modern Church who abuse Grace and who presume on the Mercy of God, and who use Grace as nothing more than a license to sin... the reason why things like respect for the House of God is at an all-time low today, and why there is no fear of God in the minds and hearts of so many who attend Church today, is because "Good News" is absolutely meaningless to people who do not fully comprehend the "Bad News".

Until and unless the reality of God's Just and Holy Wrath against our wicked sins is known and feared again, "Good News" becomes simply "News"; Grace is looked at as being nothing more than a tool whereby people can sin without fear; Mercy is looked at as being nothing more than an avenue whereby people can do what is right in their own eyes; God is looked at as being nothing more than some grandfather who lives for no other reason other than to dispense toys and trinkets and candy to his grandchildren; Faith is looked at as being nothing more than a tool whereby we can twist God's Arm to get what we want; the Bible is looked at as being nothing more than a source of catchy quotes; the Church becomes a place where Man comes, in Man's own way, to do Man's own thing, all to the Glory of Man, while Jesus sits over in the Corner... disobeyed, dishonored, and *not* worshipped.

This concept about Good News and Bad News is no different, my friends, than the concept about the freedom we have here in America. The reason that so many people today abuse the Freedom and Liberty that we have here in this country is because they have no idea what it is

to live even five minutes without it. Let these people who shout so loudly about their rights and what the country owes them, and how much the Government should do for them, spend a few years in Afghanistan or Indonesia or Saudi Arabia or The Sudan; they will come back over here and kiss the ground. The great contrast will change their view and the loss of Freedom will cause them to appreciate it.

You see, Freedom without Responsibility, and Liberty without Service, for the long term, doesn't do anything but ruin people. You see that blessings are good - they are wonderful - but only if they are appreciated and respected. But when blessings are expected, and when Liberty and Freedom are not reciprocated with responsibility and service, then Freedom and Liberty make people greedy, self-centered, and lazy.

That is the very same way it is with Grace. When all we tell people and when all we teach in the Church is how much God loves us - to the exclusion of teaching people about God's Justice and Holiness and Righteousness, and to the exclusion of teaching them what God expects and demands and is entitled to after we are saved - we ruin them to serve Jesus. We hinder them to be willing to sacrifice for Jesus; we hurt their opportunity to live a life of self-denial; we stand in the way of them suffering as a Christian out of a grateful heart.

You see, dear friends, God is not more loving than He is just, and God is not more just than He is loving. His Love and His Justice are always in perfect balance, and so we must teach people that perfect balance so that they too can live a balanced and godly life. I have said this before and it needs to be said here again. The man who stands in the pulpit to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ stands between two great extremes. On the one hand, he hears the rejoicing of those in Heaven and they sing praises to God throughout all eternity; and he preaches with a passion and conviction that comes from hearing that glorious sound. He is pleading with tears to all men to do whatever it takes so that they will not miss one second of that.

But on the other hand, the man who stands to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ *also* hears the unmistakable screams of those who are burning in the lake of fire as they are tormented, day and night... and he preaches with a passion and conviction that comes only from *hearing* that terrible sound. He is pleading with tears to all men to do whatever it takes so that they will not spend one second in that.

And, moved by what he hears from *both* sides, he preaches the uncompromising and glorious Good News, motivated and compelled by the reality and certainty of the Bad News. Here's how the Bible puts this in **2 Corinthians 5:11 (KJV)**:

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;

You see, when the Bad News of God's Just and Holy Wrath against all sin is correctly taught as being real, sure, and certain for every single human being who does not repent and believe, the News that Jesus came and died and rose again and paid for all my sins rises up way past being just "News" and becomes *Good News*. In other words, because of the demands of the Old Testament to obey God's Law perfectly and continuously in thought, word, and deed - and when the failure to do so that results in eternal damnation is correctly taught - then Grace becomes magnificent; Mercy becomes marvelous; and the reality of God's Anger toward me because of my sin is melted in the Glory of God's Love through Jesus Christ. So the writer of Hebrews is saying here that *nothing* that God spoke through any Old Testament prophet comes even close to what God now speaks through Jesus.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 www.covenantofpeace.net

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.