

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus, Part 2

Hebrews 1:1-4

Turn in your Bibles, if you will, to the first chapter of Hebrews. This is the prescription for all Christians who are now living in this time. Here it is, fix your eyes on Jesus. That's the bottom line. Fix your eyes on Jesus. He's written eleven chapters expositing the superiority of Christ in the New, comement, Covenant, when the writer to the Hebrews applied those truths to his readers in this way. He said, "Let us lay aside," in chapter 12, "Let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Let's follow him. Let's look to him. The writer tells us why we should fix our eyes on Jesus in the very next verse, it said, "So that you may not grow weary and fainthearted." Any of

you feeling weary? Any of you feeling fainthearted? Fix your eyes on Jesus. We're to consider how Jesus endured hostility from sinners against himself and know that we, too, will endure hostility from sinners against ourselves, but you've got to know that is all a part of the plan. We live in some good days for the church.

These Hebrews, like us, but these Hebrews desperately needed this reminder, along with strong encouragement and some stark warnings, as well. They're professing Christians, many of them true believers, but their church, like the church in our country, their church was being winnowed. It was being separated. It was being divided to tell who the true and the false are. Social and political pressure from their own countrymen, a coming destruction by the Roman general, Titus Vespasian; all that was winnowing the church.

All that pressure was winnowing the church. True Christians stood firm. They faced the reprisals, they accepted the consequences, some lost property, some were arrested, some were taken to prison, many of them were publicly exposed to reproach and affliction. Others in the midst of that forsook the

fellowship. They stopped meeting. They returned to their former Judaism. They preferred safety and security through social compromise, and they preferred that over suffering.

Hebrews was written, delivered around 67 or 68 AD. Very shortly after that, you know your history, AD 70 Jerusalem fell to Titus Vespasian. It's a clear judgment of God on Jerusalem, on the people of Israel, for rejecting its Messiah. And beloved, I don't want you to miss the connection here. That the original readers of this Epistle to the Hebrews, they, too, were watching the crumbling of their society and their culture, their way of life. They were lamenting all they thought they held onto, all that they thought kept them safe, secure. They were suffering under the just judgment of God for turning their backs on the truth, just like our nation is. So it's an apt place for us to spend time this morning. A place to refocus our perspective and to give us reasons to fix our eyes on Jesus.

I've got six reasons for you from this first chapter of Hebrews, six reasons to fix your eyes on Jesus. Number one, first reason, fix your eyes on Jesus, number one first reason, fix your eyes on Jesus, number one because: He is God's final

word of revelation. He is God's final word of revelation. You don't need to listen to anything else, turn on any other voice because Jesus is God's final word of revelation. As we track the author's argument throughout this epistle, he proves the superiority of Christ over everything that these professing Hebrew Christians might consider important; every source of news, every source of perspective they have elevated over Christ.

The writer to the Hebrews says, listen, Moses, Aaron, the Jewish way life, all of that, all of that is not superior to Christ. Listen to him. Most of this first chapter, all of the second chapter is providing Christ's superiority over the angels. But this opening argument, it establishes the basis of authority, which is God in his revealed Word, put simply Christ is superior to all the prophets because he's God's final word of revelation. Look at verses 1 and 2. "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."

It, that, in one sentence, just summarized 1,500 years of prophetic revelation; God spoke to our Fathers by the prophets, he spoke long ago, he spoke it many times, in many ways, and his point here is to draw their attention to an emphatic set of contrasts. He contrasts to God speaking long ago, he has spoken to us, the writer says, "Now, in these last days." Last days, it's a statement with rich, rich prophetic significance to it. We're living in the same last days, in contrast to our fathers, God has now spoken to us, he says, this first-century generation; he's spoken to us, the church. In contrast to using, many ways, many messengers, God has chosen one. He has isolated his revelation. He's speaking exclusively through one spokesman, by his Son.

All the verbs there in verse 2: spoke, anointed, created; all those verbs are aorist indicative verbs. He intends by those, by that verb tense to convey a full stop nature of total perfection, of final completion in the revelation of Jesus the Son. God appointing Jesus Christ to be the heir of all things that is complete and final. God creating the world through him that, too, is complete and final. Here, God revealing himself to

mankind, complete and final, as well. Complete and final revelation in the Son, Jesus Christ.

What had been progressive in nature in revelation that's come to an end. All revelation from God is culminated in the person and the work of Jesus Christ, nothing more to be said to finish God's redemption, nothing more to reveal to bring his purposes for this world to its final end. In him, God has spoken. It's complete.

And there are so many implications and applications of this point. The time we have only allows me to stick to our purpose for this morning. Here's the point: Fix your eyes on Jesus because he's God's final word of revelation. If you keep reading and studying the completed text of Scripture, which became complete when John put down his pen in Revelation 22, you're not missing anything needful. You've got it all. You have everything you need in this Book. You have everything you need to keep you safe and secure; everything you need to keep you content and grateful.

You have everything you need to sustain you, to satisfy your soul, to cause you to rejoice and be glad no matter what anything looks like out there. Listen, in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Not in the pollsters, who, again, were abysmally wrong, not in the pundits, not in the daily diet of news media or talk radio. It's in Christ, not in Netflix. It's in Christ, not the Disney Channel. It's in Christ that there is fullness of joy and at his right hand are pleasures forever more. Why look anywhere else?

So beloved, give yourselves to mining the gift of God's Word so you can see and savor the Lord Jesus Christ, so you can know God, your eternal reward, you can know him as Father, enjoy the purposes of his being and glorify God and enjoy him forever. Fix your eyes on Jesus because he is God's final word of revelation. In Christ, God has spoken the only words worth hearing.

Second reason to fix your eyes on Jesus, number two: Because he is the creator, the God who sustains. Fix your eyes on Jesus because he is the creator, the God who sustains. Look at verse 2 again, looking at the first part of verse 3, as well.

God "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."

Look at the order in verse 2, the Son of God was "appointed heir of all things" and then he adds, it's through the Son that God created the world. That tells us that the creation has a, *telos*, that is to say, it has an ultimate object, it has a purpose, it has an end in mind. God is the one who brings it to its end. To sum up all things in Christ, Christ is the beginning, the Creator, and he is at the end as God, "puts everything in subjection," to, "under his feet," Hebrews 2:8. In other words, prior to the creation of all things, the Son has been appointed, we might say it more accurately, he has been eternally appointed as a function of his Sonship, appointed to be the heir of all things. And then, God created all things through the heir of all things.

So the end was determined before anything was spoken into existence. All things, literally, it says, "Through whom also he," made, "created the ages." That's the word, *aionos*. In its



singular form, *aion*, refers to a lifetime, refers to an era, an epoch. In some constructions, that word can refer to eternity, like “unto the *aionos*,” the ages. It means forever. Here in its plural form, *aionos*, refers to the entire time-space creation.

As Paul says in Colossians 1:16, “the heavens and the earth,” things, “visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.” The term, *aionos*, is used to comprehend the entirety of the created order. It leaves no created thing out of it. It comprehends every era of history, every turn of the calendar, every presidential election, every rise and fall in power: Everything.

This One, God appointed as the beginning and the end, the creation and the *telos* of creation. This One, shares in deity, verse 3. First, he’s the radiance of the glory of God. If God is the source, the invisible essence, Christ is the light who makes that invisible glory known to the creatures who are able to see and comprehend it. He is the effulgence. He is the radiant splendor of the unseen God. Paul said, “He’s the image of the invisible God.” John said it this way, “No one has ever seen God;” but he, “the only God, who is in the bosom of the Father,

he has made him known.” So he is the radiance of the glory of God.

Second, he is the exact imprint of his nature. That word, exact imprint, refers to an engraving tool, literally. But it’s used figuratively to mean an exact or an authentic representation; exact representation of God is God. He represents God’s nature. That word is, hypostasis, his substance, his *ousia*, his essence. The Son and the Father share in the exact same ontology, which is deity.

Thirdly, he upholds the universe or literally, he bears up all things by the word of his power. How can he do that? Only if he has superlative power, creative power, divine power. He has omnipotence, omnipotence possessed by virtue of the first two points that he is God. So, folks, this is why you should fix your eyes on Jesus. Because he’s the Creator. He is the God who sustains. He is all powerful. He doesn’t share his power. He doesn’t share his glory. He’s not concerned by power dynamics here on terra firma, in any country at any time. He’s unconcerned. An elected group of wealthy elitists, a corrupt band of oligarchs, drunk with their money, intoxicated with

their power, thinking they can dismantle this world and create a new world, their own Tower of Babel. People like them believe they can be like God, that they can ascend to his level. They actually believe that, to be their own gods.

Listen, that's the language of the beast. That's the language of Anti-Christ, Isaiah 14, to say in their hearts, hearts "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly," whether that's Davos, Switzerland, or wherever, Washington D.C. "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." Tiny little human beings, they cannot hold a tiny little candle up against the radiance of Christ's divine glory, his divine power. One puff on their little, tiny candle will snuff out their little, tiny light. And *this little light of mine* will not be shining any longer. It will be banished to eternal darkness while Christ moves forward with God's foreordained program. End of story.

The more you fix your eyes on Jesus, the less you're gonna be concerned about the forces that are out there aligning, and scheming, and plotting, and planning; executing silly little

rebellions against God and his anointed King. All their machinations will end with their death. So fix your eyes on Jesus because he's God's final word. He's the Creator and Sustainer.

Third reason to fix your eyes on Jesus, number three, is because: He's your savior, the perfect redeemer. Fix your eyes on Jesus because he is your savior, your perfect redeemer. The writer needed to establish the authority, the Word of God, that he's the final revelation. He needed to establish the fact that Christ is fully God and fully man here, but here we see, after establishing the transcendent power and the glory of Jesus, the author now shows us Christ's eminence, his kind condescension to come from heaven and to save us from our sins.

It says there, "After making purification for sins," verse 3, "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." At this point, I've got to stop and give you a bit of background. Some scholars believe here the community of Hebrew Christians that were reading this letter, they were influenced by some Jewish separatist group.

The Dead Sea Scrolls had this community of Essenes, who lived there, and they had some kind of strange views, millenarian views and all the rest. And these Christians here could have been connected to one of the groups and may be confused by an incomplete theology about Christ, at least some of them. And one author says, quote, "Members of this Dead Sea sect were awaiting the advent of two Messianic figures, of whom the kingly would be subordinate to the priestly, but both of whom would be subordinate to the supreme figure of the archangel, Michael." Jehovah's Witnesses aren't anything new, are they? But they also looked for another prophet, a second Moses to fulfill Deuteronomy 18:18, who would, who would resume the whole sacrificial system prescribed in Mosaic Law.

First Century Jews, even the sincere ones like Christ's disciples, they failed to discern, at least at first, they failed to discern that all those figures, prophet, priest, king; all rolled into one. They needed to see how their Messiah, how Jesus is superior to all, even the highest-ranking angel, Michael the Archangel. Beloved, we need to see that too. We need to see that he is superior to all. We need to see that he is our

prophet, priest, and king. And we need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. All those roles, prophet, priest, and king, fulfilled in one person, one human, with a human nature and divine nature put into one person. The majesty, the glory of this person would be demonstrated not in a, some spectacular act of exultation that we would expect, the way we would expect a great person doing great deeds. His honor, his glory would be demonstrated in his great humiliation.

Notice it's not after conquering the world that God exalts him to his right hand, it's before that. He exalted Christ after he made purification for sins, after he humbled himself becoming obedient, even to the point of death, even death on a cross. That's when he exalted him. At the moment when it looked like his greatest failure to the world, Paul illustrates in Philippians 2, God exalts the humble. "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus sat down. No High Priest entering into the Holy of Holies ever sat down, never. They entered in there and because lingering in there and accidentally touching something that would result in their death; so they got in, got out. They did their work, and they did not linger. Christ, his atoning work is finished. He passed through the veil. He entered into the Holy of Holies and he sat down. The work to secure our redemption was accomplished. Sin paid in full by his perfect death, his obedience to death on the cross. That is why, all hail the power of Jesus' name, because he is our perfect redeemer.

Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Charlemagne, Constantine the Great, Nebuchadnezzar, whoever, those names do not qualify to be the name above all names. Praise God! Only the suffering servant qualifies because he poured out his soul to death and he was numbered with the transgressors.

Fix your eyes on Jesus, beloved, because he's your Savior. He's your perfect Redeemer. He lives. He's exalted to the Father's right hand and from that position, he rules and reigns over all things right now. He's watching over you. He's watching

over all of you. If he died for you, he's watching over you. He intercedes for you. Your salvation is safe and secure. Your religious freedom is not ultimately in jeopardy at all. Your freedom to worship is still fully intact and you may bow down. You may worship him as you please and you should.

Fourth reason to fix your eyes on Jesus, fourth, because: He is the Son of God and Son of Man. Fix your eyes on Jesus because he is Son of God and Son of Man. Starting in verse 4, He has "become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'?" Answer: none. Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son?" Did he say that to any angel? No! But, "again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angles worship him.'"

His superior, his superior nature, his superiority to the angels, the more excellent name he's inherited is established in his unique one and only relationship to the Father, and his unique one and only relationship to humanity. In his divine Sonship, his status as the Son of God is eternal. He is one



person among the three of the Triune God. He shares in all attributes of deity and all prerogatives of deity. He is Son of God. In his human Sonship as the Christ of God, his status as the Son of man signals his place in humanity as the firstborn, as the preeminent one. He is the representative head of a new humanity no longer in Adam, now in Christ.

And so along with the holy elect angels, we bow down. We fall on our faces to the ground in joyful worship of Christ. We're not fretting about elections, conceding elections, recounts, litigation, changing politics in a fallen world. Beloved, we have our King and he is appointed by the perfect, all-wise, all-powerful God. He is not elected by a mob of fallen human beings. He is God's final word. He's the creator and sustainer. He is your savior, your perfect redeemer. He is the Son of God and Son of Man. And he is appointed, not elected.