

Hebrews

Hebrews 1:5-2:4

September 28, 2008

I. Jesus – Superior to the Angels – Therefore Listen To Him

A. **Hebrews 1:5-2:4** . . . [5] For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me"? [6] And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him." [7] And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire." [8] But of the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. [9] "You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions." [10] And, "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands; [11] they will perish, but you remain; and they all will become old like a garment, [12] and like a mantle you will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But you are the same, and your years will not come to an end." [13] But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, until I Make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? [14] Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? [2:1] For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. [2] For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, [3] how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, [4] God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

II. A Look At The Theological Highlights Of **Hebrews 1:5-2:4** – The superiority of Christ to the Angels – therefore listen to Him!

A. Angels (*messengers*) are servants of God. Christ is the Son of God.

1. **Hebrews 1:5** . . . For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me"?

- B. Angels worship. Christ is the one worshiped. He alone is the King of kings and Lord of Lords.
1. **Hebrews 1:6** . . . And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."
- C. Angels were created by God to serve. Though Christ serves, He is as God – no beginning and no end. And as God, He himself is the creator, and He himself rules and reigns.
1. Angels Serve
 - a. **Hebrews 1:7** . . . And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers (*servants*) a flame of fire." *That is, God makes His angels like the wind – though unseen, their presence is felt. And God makes them like flames of fire that fulfill His judgements upon evil men – destroying and consuming them and whatever evil they have created.*
 - b. **Hebrews 1:14** . . . Are they not all ministering (*servant*) spirits, sent out to render service
 2. Christ creates, rules, and reigns.
 - a. Christ creates: **Hebrews 1:10** . . . And, "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands;
 - b. Christ rules: **Hebrews 1:8** . . . But of the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.
 - c. Christ reigns: **Hebrews 1:13** . . . But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, until I Make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? *This is a picture of ruling and reigning when and where there is peace all around. It indicates the best of times for any king and his kingdom.*
- D. Angels serve those who have been and will be saved. Christ saves.
1. **Hebrews 1:14** . . . Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?
- E. **LOGICAL CONCLUSION:** If God held those accountable whom He spoke to through His angels, we can be certain He will hold those whom He is speaking to through His Son even more accountable.
1. **Hebrews 2:1-3** . . . For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. [2] For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable,

and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, [3] how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, [4] God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

2. What is the significance of this?
 - a. For those who reject Christ as God's son, or as the human revelation of God to mankind, or as man's savior, or the teachings of Christ – it means severer punishment than if they only had the Law and Moses or the prophets. To whom much is given much is required.
 - b. For those of us who believe in Christ for salvation, yet pick and choose where and when we will submit to Christ for daily living it means severer discipline and ultimately punishment if we do not change our ways.

III. A look at **three** Practical Highlights of **Hebrews 1:5-2:4**

A. **Hebrews 1:9** . . . You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions.

1. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness –
 - a. This is thinking and feeling as God thinks and feels about good and evil.
 - (1) And indeed, we cannot love something without hating whatever threatens the well-being of what it is we love. There is no genuine, godly love without hate.
 - (2) There is weak human love – but that kind of love (*if we can call it love*) is love laced with selfishness. Such love hardly hates what threatens the good of what we love.
 - b. **Notice**, too, it is righteousness on the one side and lawlessness on the other. We may hate sin – at least certain sins, but Jesus hated lawlessness – everything that had anything to do with rebelling against God's rule.
2. God has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions:
 - a. This anointing is the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) In **Isaiah 61:1** we read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me..."

- (2) Peter, in **Acts 10:38-39**, is recorded as saying: "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.
 - b. The anointing God placed on Jesus was greater than any anointing He placed on Christ's companions – which includes us. Why? Because Jesus loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
3. Application to us today:
 - a. Do you love righteousness and hate lawlessness?
 - b. What do you want in relation to being like Christ in this area?
 - c. What do you think pleases God the most about you – the fact that He made you someone special or the fact that you treat Him as special?
 - (1) If it is treating God as special, can we treat Him as special and love some lawlessness and care nothing for some righteousness?
 - d. How do you see your usefulness to God – as being gift and ability determined or holiness determined?
 - (1) Can we be vessels for honor and cling to some lawlessness, minor as the specific sin may seem to us?
 - e. What do you pray for and pursue in relation to being conformed to the image of Jesus? Would you pray for God to work in you so as to be conformed to Christ in this area?
 - f. Perfection may be an elusive accomplishment for us while we are yet fully human, yet does not love for God call us and compel us to spend the rest of our days pursuing perfection?

B. **Hebrews 1:10-12** . . . And, "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands; [11] they will perish, but you remain; and they all will become old like a garment, [12] and like a mantle you will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But you are the same, and your years will not come to an end."

1. They will perish (*the foundation of the earth and the heavens as we know them*), **but Christ remains**
 - a. Three scriptures that further make this point about the foundation of the earth and heavens perishing:

- (1) **Hebrews 1:11b** . . . and they all will become old like a garment.
- (2) **II Peter 3:11-13** . . . Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, [12] looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! [13] But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
- b. **Hebrews 1:12a** . . . Like a mantle you (Christ) will roll them up – as one would do when one is through with a shirt or pair of slacks or pair of socks – indicating the time will come when they will no longer be needed.
2. Like a garment the earth and heavens will also be changed. **But Christ remains the same.**
 - a. God makes this point in the first chapter of Hebrews and in the last. In **Hebrews 13:8** God says: “Jesus is the same, yesterday, and today, and forever.”
 - (1) This truth is the anchor of our faith, the fortress of our security, the certainty of our salvation, the hope of our future, and the invitation to encounter and experience and trust and fellowship and commune with Jesus just as millions have done down through the ages.
 - (2) What anyone else at any other time has had with Jesus – we have it too!
 - (a) As Jesus treated the widows and the sick and the demon possessed and the children and the hungry and the sinners and His disciples and the Pharisees so he treats us today.
 - (b) What He said about himself during his days as a carpenter’s son on the earth is true of Him today.
 - b. His compassion has not diminished; his mercy has not decreased; his tenderness is no less now than it was then; his meekness and humility are the same as they’ve always been. He loves you and he loves me just as much as he loved Peter, James and John; He is just as attentive to us as he was to everyone who came to him for help or healing.
 - (1) Just as he kept everyone the Father gave to him then, so he keeps us now.

- (2) As he prayed for his disciples so he intercedes for us now.
 - (3) And though the earth perish, Jesus will remain; and though the earth be changed, he will remain the same forever.
- 3. Have you anchored your soul, your eternal future, your standing with God, your day-to-day forgiveness of sin, your inner peace, your confidence that all will be well in spite of the current circumstances, your provision and protection, your foundational beliefs and values, and your joy in the bedrock of the unchanging Jesus?
- 4. To anchor our faith and our hope in the unchangeableness of Jesus is to anchor them in the unchangeableness of God and to see that all the qualities that draw us to Jesus and all the tenderness that makes us feel secure in Jesus' love belong to God as well. As God is, so is Jesus, and as Jesus is, so is God.

C. **Hebrews 2:1** . . . For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.

- 1. We must pay much closer attention:
- 2. So that we do not drift away:
 - a. **Drift** is a nautical term. An example of its usage would be a ship which has been carelessly allowed to slip past a harbor or a haven because the pilot has forgotten to take into account the wind or the current or the tide.
 - b. Or it speaks of a gradual moving away from some fixed, secure point toward something dangerous – usually something that brings destruction to a ship – such as shallow water or rocks.
 - c. This gradual moving is hard to perceive with the eye and is often caused by a slight breeze or slow current in the water.
 - (1) In other words, the forces that cause the drift are almost imperceptible (hard to clearly see) yet the results, over time, can often be disastrous.
 - (2) And in either case (*missing the harbor or winding up on the rocks*), failure to pay attention to what is important leads to disaster.
- 3. For most of us, the threat to our spiritual health and supreme love for God is rarely from plunging head first into the worst of sin, but rather that we slowly and almost imperceptibly drift into increasingly destructive sin.

- a. I know of no one who started life as a bank robber or a murderer or a child molester or an adulterer or a drunkard or wife beater or addicted to drugs or addicted to pornography or a glutton or driven by greed or filled with bitterness and anger and such as that.
 - b. But I know many people who have slowly drifted into such behavior over the years. Why? Inattentiveness to what is important to the health of their soul, their character, their faith in God, their submission to God and their love for God.
- 4. For most of us Christians, the threat is not that of turning our backs on God completely, but of slowly hardening our heart to certain truths that God has given us to live by.
 - a. I don't know of any Christian who has gone from a serious pursuit of God one day and the next has said "I've had enough of God and His ways!"
 - b. But I do know those who have slowly allowed self and sin to creep in and take over so that the day comes when they find more pleasure and happiness in avoiding God than drawing near to Him. And how does this happen? Inattentiveness to what is important to the health of their soul, their character, their faith in God, their submission to God, and their love for God.
- 5. There is great and often immediate destruction from committing the grossest of sins. Yet there is great impending peril in drifting away from the truth of God, from loving God supremely, from submitting to God's will and word, from the narrow path, and from the kind of vigilance required to live a godly life.
 - a. Would we not be greatly helped in guarding against this kind of drifting by nurturing a love of righteousness and a hatred of lawlessness like unto that which Jesus had?
 - b. Would we not be greatly helped in our fight against drifting by encouraging one another toward vigilance and calling each other back to the narrow path when we see one among us drifting away?
 - c. Will you nurture such sensitivity to the indwelling Holy Spirit and such longing to love God more than anything and everything else so as to be compelled to be on guard against drifting?

IV. Conclusion