

Jesus is Better

I. Announce:

- A. Slide#1 Baby dedication 3rd Service: Andre & Jennifer. *Santiago Jose Gonzalez DeOrense*.
- B. Slide#2 Baptism: today at 2:30pm.
- C. Slide#3 Harvest Crusade: Next weekend, Fri-Sun eve.
- D. Apology from last week: Tanzania. Samwel/white team vs. Western Team.

II. Slide#4 INTRO TO HEBREWS

- A. Title: **Jesus is Better**
- B. When Spurgeon opened this text on the eve of May 21st 1882 he said, *I have nothing to do tonight but to preach Jesus Christ*.
 - 1. I start with the same, *I have nothing to do today but to preach Jesus Christ*.
- C. Slide#5 Remember a few years ago hearing about what happened in San Diego with 4th of July fireworks? Instead of *ending* with a **grand finale**...it started with one. The 18 minute show started 5 min early & lasted only 15 seconds when it *accidentally caught fire*...living up to its name, The Big Bay Boom!
 - 1. Here in Hebrews we also have the **Grand Finally** right up front. **Let's read it**.
- D. Slide#6 Author? A standing joke at some Seminary's, *Who wrote the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews?*
 - 1. Jerome & Augustine popularized the idea that Paul was the author.
 - 2. Tertullian thought Barnabas. Luther/Apollos. Others suggest Clement, Silas, Philip, & even Aquilla & Priscilla.
 - 3. Origen nailed it when he said, *"Who wrote the letter to the Hebrews only God knows for certain."*
- E. To whom it was written? – Obvious the audience was Jewish.
 - 1. But we also know they had put their faith in Christ (See 3:1)
 - 2. But they were drifting away from the truths they had embraced (2:1)
- F. Main Theme? – These Jewish believers were being tempted to **abandon** the fullness of Christ & go back to the emptiness of a religious system soon to be destroyed.
- G. Thus a 2-fold theme: Jesus is better & Go on to perfection.
 - 1. Slide#7 Jesus is a better **Messenger** than the prophets & angels (ch.1,2).
 - 2. Jesus is a better **Leader** than the Moses & Joshua (ch.3,4).
 - 3. Jesus is a better **High Priest** than the Aaron & Levi (ch.5-7).
 - 4. Jesus is a better **Covenant** with better promises, sanctuary, & sacrifices (ch.8-10).

5. Therefore we should live a better **Life** of **faith, hope, & love** (ch.11-13).
 - a) So we have a series of arguments for *the Superiority of Jesus* over all trivial claims to allegiance.
 6. **Slide#8 Let us go on to perfection (see 6:1)**
 - a) This is a book on **maturity**, *spiritually growing up*.
 - b) **Go on** to **perfection** **not back** to *imperfection*.
 - c) This book repeatedly demands a **response** from the reader.
 - (1) Ask yourself, **am I looking back & craving the old life? Or, am I pressing on to maturity?**
- H. **The Father** has chosen **his Son** to minister in **4 all-important areas**:
1. **Slide#9 Outline: Revelation, Creation, Representation, & Purification.**

III. **Slide#10a REVELATION (1,2a)**

- A. Like a **sky rocket** shot into the air...so starts this epistle.
1. **Slide#10b** In one paragraph we fly past the **OT Prophets**; through the **incarnation**; past the **cross**; **then** it **bursts forth** in the **glory** of **Jesus' exaltation**.
 2. **No opening greeting, no indication of the writer, no expression of good wishes.**
- B. **Note the immediate connection w/Jesus, Judaism, & the OT (1)**
1. He wants His readers to know that the gospel **isn't adverse** to Judaism.
- C. **Slide#11 At many times & in many ways –**
1. **Polymeros** - in many ways, in many parts. *Fragmentary or progressive revelations.*
 2. **Polytropos** - in many ways, in various manners. *In diff locations w/diff methods of disclosure. e.g...*
 - a) **To Moses** @ Sinai in thunder & lightening & w/the voice of thunder.
To Elijah in a still small voice. **To Ezekiel** by visions. **To Daniel** by dreams.
To Abram in human form. **To Jacob** as an angel.
 3. **Sometimes God used:** direct oracles, other times Q & A; **or** by allegory's acted out; **or** by preaching; **or** by signs.
 - a) *This dramatically demonstrated God's loving desire to communicate with His people!*¹
 4. Since God spoke **so clearly** it caused **men & women** to live on a **higher plane**.
 - a) **Abraham** had the faith to sacrifice his son. **Moses** to w/stand Pharaoh.
David to go against Goliath. **Daniel** to achieve & maintain integrity in Babylon.

¹ Kent Hughes, Hebrews Vol.1

5. Yet Gods communication to man was still *fragmented & lacking...until* he spoke by **His Son**.

D. **Slide#12 Jesus is God's Final & Finest Revelation** (2)

E. **Spoken to us by His Son** –

F. **Jesus was greater than the Prophets**

1. Like **the Blind man** in Jn.9 who 1st **when asked who healed him** said, **a man called Jesus**. **When next asked** he said, he was **a prophet**. **Then lastly**, he declared, **Lord, I believe**.
2. Deut.18:17,18 **And the LORD said to me:...** 'I will raise up for them **a Prophet** like you(**Moses**) from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

G. **Slide#13 Progressive Revelation:**

H. **Remember**, Judgment is based on the revelation you have been exposed to: *But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you (Capernaum)*. Mt.11:24

I. **Slide#14 God 1st spoke to man via Creation** - Showing they have **not** been put together by chance, **but** were wonderfully made by a **Supreme Architect**.

1. The heavens **declare** the glory of God; And the firmament **shows** His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, & their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun. Ps.19:1-4
2. This Voice of Revelation alone is deafening...**but many won't hear it**.
3. And those who do hear...**hear only partially**...Job 26:14 These are just the **beginning** of all that He does, merely a **whisper** of His power. Who, then, can comprehend the **thunder** of His **power**?
4. Often our ears are opened **widest** **when** life is **darkest**. (like **John Bunyan** writing **Pilgrims Progress** in 1675, while in Bedford County Jail for his faith)

J. **Slide#15 Next He spoke through the Prophets**

1. The OT, **or** the Hebrew Bible, **or** the Tanakh = Acronym [T,N,K/*tav,nun,khahf*] for the 3 traditional subdivisions: **Torah** (Pent.); **Nevi'im** (Prophets); **Ketuvim** (the writings/poetry).

K. **Slide#16 Next through His Son** (which **all** the NT writers wrote about)

1. **Basically God wrote Himself into His own play**. (As a director/producer can write himself into his own production)
 - a) Like Mel Gibson using his left hand nailing Jesus to the cross. Gibson said, *"I'm first on line for culpability. I did it."*

- b) **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, Thus God wrote Himself into our world.
2. Many unbelievers have cried out to God wanting to hear from Him & shouted, **“If you’re real say something”, or “do this or that so I’ll know you out there.”**
- a) **That’s not how He chose to reveal Himself.** He has already spoken in volumes.
If you want to **hear Him, or from Him, you must listen** the way **He** wants you to **hear**.
- b) **Phone in prison cell analogy:** Picture visiting a prisoner in Jail. On the other side of the glass he **1st** tries to put his **ear to the window**, **then** tries placing **a glass to the window**; **then** tries **reading your lips**. **Next** he yells, **“I CAN’T HEAR YOU!”** - You finally say, **“Pick up the phone!!!”** [it’s the **only way & best way** to communicate]

L. Heir of all things –

1. **Sons** are naturally **heir of all things**.
2. Ps.2:8 **Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.**
3. **What does Jesus inherit?** Yes everything, **but** listen to **the apex** of his inheritance in Eph.1:18 **that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.**
 - a) Paul was praying that his readers would understand **how highly they are valued** in Christ.
 - b) **Slide#17 Saints** do you know that? Out of all of His inheritance **YOU** are His precious treasure.
 - c) The kingdom of heaven is like **treasure** hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that **field**.

IV. Slide#18 **CREATION (2b,3)**

A. **Slide#19 HE MADE THE UNIVERSE** [He made the worlds]

1. **Quote** Stephen Hawking
2. Cambridge physicist **Stephen Hawking**, who as been called **“the most brilliant theoretical physicist since Einstein,”** says in his best-selling **A Brief History of Time** that our galaxy is an average-sized spiral galaxy that looks to other galaxies like a swirl in a pastry role & that is over **100,000 light-yr**s across² – about **600 trillion miles**. **He says**, “we now know that **our galaxy** is only one of some **hundred thousand million** that can be seen using modern telescopes, **each galaxy** itself containing some **hundred thousand million stars**.”³
It is commonly held at the average distance between these **hundred thousand million galaxies** (each **600 trillion miles** across and containing **100,000 million stars**) is **3 million light years!** **On top of that**, the work of Edwin Hubble, based on the Doppler effect, has shown that **all red-spectrum galaxies** are moving away from us –

² Stephen W. Hawking, A Brief History of Time (New York: Bantam, 1990), p.37.

³ ibid

and that nearly all are red. Thus, the universe is constantly expanding.⁴

Some estimates say that the most distant galaxy is 8 billion light years away – and racing away at 200 million miles an hour.

3. The writer of Hebrews simply says, **He made the worlds!**

B. Slide#20 **HE MAINTAINS THE UNIVERSE** [upholding all things]

1. Col.1:17 **He is before all things, & in him all things hold together.**

C. *Through Christ*, we understand **where** everything came from, **where** it is going, **what** keeps it going, & **why** it is here.

1. With a Savior like that, why look for a *substitute*?

2. Slide#21 Spurgeon, **Other men had the threads of truth; but Christ took the threads, & wove them into a glorious robe, put it on, & came forth clothed w/every truth of God.**

V. Slide#22 **REPRESENTATION (3a)**

A. **Who** being the brightness of His glory (3)

1. Jesus doesn't simply **reflect** God's glory...He is **part of it**.

a) This was shown on the mount of transfiguration, His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

b) Slide#23 The **Nicene Creed** says of Christ, *God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God*

2. Barclay said, *"the glory of God is not the glory of **shattering power**, but the glory of **suffering love**."*

B. Slide#24 **The express image** of His person –

1. **Image** = impression, stamp, an exact reproduction.

a) Gk. *χαρακτηρ*/character - As a coin reflects the exact image of the die, so the Son reproduces the precise **character** of His Father.

b) Thus Jesus could say to Philip, **He who has seen Me has seen the Father.**

2. Now, if you take these last 2 facets of Jesus it pulls together His **deity** & **humanity**.

a) **His Glory** – Jesus is part of the source, 1 w/the father. (**The Word was God**) [deity]

b) **His Image** – Jesus is distinct from the Father (**The Word was with God**) [humanity]

VI. Slide#25 **PURIFICATION (3c)**

A. **Purged our sins** – His once & for all sacrifice for sins.

1. Slide#26 Story from Ravi Zacharias: On November 26, 2008 a gang of Islamic terrorists stormed The historic **Taj Mahal Palace Hotel** in Mumbai. After the carnage that took over 200 innocent lives ended, one of the guest who had been at

⁴ ibid pg.38,39

the hotel for dinner that night was interviewed by the media, and Indian born English actor. He described how he and his friends were eating dinner when they heard gunshots. Someone grabbed him and pulled him under the table. The assassins came striding through the restaurant shooting at will until everyone, so they thought had been killed. This man however found himself miraculously alive. When the interviewer asked him how it was that everyone at his table and everyone in the room was dead, and yet he was alive. His answer was sobering, *"I suppose it was because I was covered in someone else's blood, and they took me for dead."*

a) *Slide#27* This is a perfect metaphor of God's gift through Jesus for everyone of us.

B. *God has spoken to us...*and what an awesome statement it was.

1. *Have you* heard His voice through His Word?

C. *See that you do not refuse Him who speaks.* 12:25 *Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to the One who is speaking. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, we will certainly not escape if we reject the One who speaks to us from heaven!*

1. *Do you* know His Son? *He is God's final word...there is no other.*