

# Hebrews

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 13 December 2016

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ] We have scarcely gotten underway with the epistle to the Hebrews, and we have arrived at chapter 1 and verse 8. And all through this particular epistle, which is very definitely addressed to the Jewish community in the first century, we find that the focus of the whole epistle has to do with the person and work of Jesus Christ.

And the superiority that is vested in him in every way. And it is in comparing the person of Christ with the priests in the Old Testament, with the sacrifices in the Old Testament, with the system in the Old Testament, and all the rest of it.

It is this comparison that the writer of Hebrews is making, how that Christ stands head and shoulders above all of those things in every respect.

The burning issue of the whole first century, once Christ came on the scene and made his public announcement with the baptism of John, the burning issue was the same then that it is today, particularly among the Jewish people.

And that is this. Was Jesus of Nazareth the same one of whom Moses and the prophets did speak and prophesy in the Old Testament?

[ 1 : 33 ] Or was he not? And there were those who vacillated between that issue, that he was and that he wasn't. But the thing I want to point out that's very, very important is there is no middle ground in this.

There is no middle ground in this. Logicians call this the law of the excluded middle. And that means there is position A and there is position B, but there isn't anything in between.

And what that simply means is this. Jesus Christ either is who he claimed to be, or he is not.

He cannot be both. And he cannot be neither. So you have to make a choice. That's the burden of this letter to the Hebrews. It is to encourage the Jewish constituency as to the reality and the veracity of the claims of Christ upon their life and upon the world.

And that was the issue then. And some people, like I said, vacillated and had their doubts. And I find one of the most striking of all, and I call this an example of an imperfect faith.

[ 2 : 47 ] And by the way, I just want to make this point in passing. And none of us has anything called a perfect faith. We all have imperfect faith. We all have faith that is subject to growth and maturity.

And we find numerous examples of imperfect faith in the scriptures. And lo and behold, they are found among some of the most revered individuals that you could even imagine.

And one of them was none other than the second cousin of our Lord Jesus, who actually introduced Jesus to the nation of Israel and baptized him at the river Jordan.

And he introduced him as the Messiah, the Lamb of God. But in the life of John, when things went awry, and he ended up in prison, with the possibility of being executed, which later was realized, John had his doubts.

This is the same one who in the first chapter of John said that That I might introduce him to Israel is the reason I came baptizing.

[ 4 : 01 ] And he was the focal point of his whole ministry. And he said that Jesus must increase, and I must decrease. And he was not at all jealous when some of his followers left following him and started following Jesus.

He as much as told them, that's what you need to do. But when he's in prison, facing execution, his imperfect faith showed up.

And he called some of his disciples to him and said, I need you to go and find Jesus. And you ask him, are you the one who should come?

Or should we be looking for another? Now, if anybody ought to have known that he was the one, it would be John. But John had his doubts. He had an imperfect faith.

And I suspect that every one of us, at one time or another, exercised an imperfect faith. You can go all through Scripture, and you find numerous instances of those whose faith flagged, failed them.

[ 5 : 10 ] Abraham, on multiple occasions, demonstrated that his faith was far from mature. And yet, he grew in his faith and matured in his faith to the point where he was actually willing to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.

His faith had matured to that level. And there are numerous other instances as well throughout Scripture where individuals... And what about Peter?

What about Peter? Talk about an imperfect faith. I mean, this was the same guy who told Jesus, Lord, I don't think you can count on these other guys, because when the going gets tough, they may let you down.

But you can always count on good old Peter. I'll always be there for you. Yeah. And Jesus responded to that by saying, Peter, you don't know what you're saying.

You don't know the power of your own flesh. Before, the cock crows three times. Do you know how long it's going to take for that? About five or six hours.

[ 6 : 17 ] Five or six hours from the time Peter made that boast. The time the cock crows, you're going to deny me three times. And, of course, we know that was the reality. And Peter had an impure faith and a weak faith.

And the point that I want to make, guys, is so do we all. So do we all. We are all at different levels of growth and maturity in our faith and in our understanding. So, the things that come into your life are designed to help encourage you and stimulate you in faith and enable you to trust the Lord more and more and more as you see Him come through for you.

Kevin? Kevin? Yeah. Yeah, Mark. Go back to John. When you said, when you was in jail, and you said, the disciples said, actually, you're the one to come.

Now, when John was baptized, when Jesus came, he said, he told him, he said, behold, there's the Lamb of God. Right? Right. And he said, shouldn't you be baptizing me?

But Jesus told him, you got to do this. Do this thing here to fulfill what? This prophecy. So, John knew then, right then and there, when he baptized me. So, the part that gets me is, why is it when he went in jail, he didn't believe me?

[ 7 : 33 ] I'm saying, that's what the Father has me kind of, you know, like, he knew when he baptized him, you know, and then Jesus told him, like, you just got to do this. It's time to fulfill this.

Yep. It's this prophecy. And then he baptized him. So, there shouldn't have been no shadow, because no matter what, what went down. So, that goes to show about this thing called faith.

So, I'm going to understand a little more about this. Well, so am I. And, and, uh, I've been in this thing called the Christian faith now for, for a little over 60 years.

And, I keep, uh, becoming embarrassed at my ignorance. And, that, uh, uh, the longer I live, and the more I study the scriptures, the less I think I know.

Someone has said that, uh, as we mature in the faith, we come to believe, we come to believe more and more about less and less. And, I think that's really true. Roger? Is it not true that John and Peter and the first believed in him, thought he was going to usher in the kingdom?

[ 8 : 37 ] Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. What's going on? Yeah. And, and, and, and, one of the, one of the, one of the gospels, it's either Matthew 19 or Luke 19.

These things move around on me. You know how that is. But, uh, we are told that, we are told as they neared Jerusalem, Jesus taught this parable.

Because, and this is really important. If you want to really understand the parables, always examine the context, and see what the situation was, that caused that particular parable to be given at that particular time.

And it said, Jesus taught this parable because, as they were nearing Jerusalem, they thought, the disciples thought, that the kingdom of heaven was near.

That when we get to Jerusalem, that's going to be it. Jesus is going to walk in to all the accolades, and he's going to establish that throne. He's going to chase the Romans out. And it's going to be wonderful.

[ 9 : 43 ] And he taught this parable that, that was not the way it was going to be. And they wouldn't get that and understand it until even after the resurrection. So, there's a lot of things that come into

play here.

And here, as we continue on in Hebrews chapter 1, the writer, whomever it might have been, says in verse 8, as he makes this comparison between Christ and the angels, and he says, For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.

Do you know of any angels to whom God the Father ever said that? And of course, this is speaking in reference to the incarnation of Christ.

And this is such a high title, that of his son. Can you think of any angels? I mean, not Michael, not Gabriel, not any of the angels, did God ever use this kind of language to, but only to his own son. And here, the writer is using that as an illustration to present the utter superiority of Christ to all other beings.

[ 11 : 04 ] And again, I will be to him. And this is the Father speaking. This is God the Father speaking in regards to God the Son. And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.

And again, when he brings in the first begotten into the world. And this first begotten is a term that doesn't convey nearly as much to us as it does to the Hebrew community.

But the first begotten in an ordinary family, in the Jewish family, was, I guess what we would call a number one son. And he came in for special privileges and benefits, et cetera, that the other children did not have.

And it was an exalted kind of position that only the firstborn could have. And the firstborn, when he brings the first begotten into the world, and this is again, a picture of the incarnation, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him.

And I would remind you that throughout the Bible, worship is limited to deity. And humans are not to be worshipped, and neither are angels to be worshipped.

[ 12 : 23 ] In fact, that was one of the fallacies in the first century church that had to do with the worship of angels. And it was kind of a cult that developed. And here, this is giving the lie to that, that only deity is worthy of being worshipped.

I remember reading when Peter was summoned to go to the house of Cornelius. down in Caesarea. When he got there, why Cornelius fell down at his feet as to worship him. And Peter said, Stand up! I myself also am just a man.

You know, you worship God. You don't worship any human being. And only deity is worthy of worship. And here, Christ, here, the Father, is commanding angelic beings, spirit beings, to render their worship to the Son.

Because he is worthy. He is deity. And I do not profess to understand this at all. I do not have a handle on the triune nature of the Godhead other than to say that the Scriptures and know that the Bible and know that the Bible is going to be and know that the Bible is going to be and know that the Bible is going to be and know that there is no such word as Trinity in the Bible, nor is there such a word as Bible in the Bible.

[ 13 : 44 ] But what does that prove? It proves nothing. Throughout the Old Testament and the New, the case is established that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God, but there are not three gods.

There is one God subsisting in three persons and all that tells me is that God has a sphere of existence that transcends anything that we mere mortals know.

After all, He is not a human, so there is no reason why He should have to operate as humans do. But unto the Son He says, I'm sorry, verse 7, And of the angels He said, Who maketh His angels spirits.

Now you'll notice some of the other renderings here. It says, Who makes His angels winds. And in the New Testament, the word spirit, wind, air, and breath are all translated with the same Greek word.

Pneuma. P-N-E-U-M-A. And it has to do with air, wind, or breath. And when we have a respiratory disease or a lung disease, it's called pneumonia.

[ 15 : 13 ] And when we put air in tires, they are pneumatic tires. They hold air. And it's interesting that the word spirit is also translated air and wind and breath.

All of those use the same Greek word for translation. You can see a similarity between them. And the thing that they have in common is none of these can be seen. Well, I guess when it's really cold weather.

When it's really cold weather and you breathe, you can see your breath. by and large, it's something that can be experienced, but it is not seen.

And that's what angels are. Angels are spirit beings, but so is God. John 4, 24, God is spirit.

And the best rendering there is to just leave out the A because it's not in the original. it isn't God is a spirit. It is God is spirit.

[16:15] And they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. And what that means, guys, is that you cannot worship God with your body. And you can use your body to serve God and worship in that way.

But the connection that enables you to connect with God is on the basis of your human spirit that makes that connection with God and it's not your body.

So that's where regeneration takes place. But it was unto the Son that he said, Thy throne, O God. Now wait a minute. Who is speaking here?

God the Father is speaking. But who is it that the Father is calling God? It is his Son. How and why can he do that?

And the answer is because the Son, the Son is comprised or has properties or constituents that are of the same character, quality, nature, and makeup as the Father.

[17:19] And this is how and why Jesus could say, he that has seen me has seen the Father. Because I'm just like him. We are two of a kind. And to see one is to see the other.

They are inseparable in that way. And bear in mind, this is the Father who is speaking here as he addresses the Son, and he calls his Son, O God, who is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness, that is your throne, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

And a scepter was an instrument that was utilized by royalty. It was like a wand that was anywhere from 12 to 24 inches long.

It was usually made out of some kind of exotic wood and it was encrusted with precious jewels and stones and things like that of great value.

And if you ever recall seeing a picture of the Queen of England, Queen Elizabeth, for the royal portrait, she is sitting on her throne, she has the crown on her head, and the robes around her, and she is holding across her chest the royal scepter.

[18:42] This is part of the crown jewels of England. And that is exactly what's being talked about here. Christ has a royal scepter.

In 49 of Genesis, when Jacob is dying and gives the prophecies regarding his sons, he said, the scepter which indicated the right to rule and to reign.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes. And that scepter is the badge for ruling and reigning.

And Judah was the royal tribe established by the Lord, and it is through the tribe of Judah that David the king will be born.

And a thousand years later, through that same tribe, Jesus the Messiah will be born and the scepter stops with him. Because the line, the royal line of Judah, ends with Christ.

[19:51] He never married, had no children, so there is no perpetuity of that. He remains the only one who is legally able to hold that scepter and to rule and to reign.

And interestingly enough, when this thing comes down called the reign and the rule of Christ, and the tribulation is passed and the millennium has begun, we are told that Christ is going to rule the world with a rod of iron.

His scepter will be like a rod of iron, and it speaks of the value of enforcement and autocracy because it will be vested in him.

And it will be literally a worldwide monarchy, and Christ will rule and reign in Jerusalem as the regent, the head of the entire world.

And he will be the one entitled to do that. It's a glorious thing to behold, and this is what is coming. this is what is on our way. So he addresses the Son and refers to him as deity, and a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

[21:05] Thou hast loved righteousness, and again this is the Father addressing the Son, Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee.

This is the Father anointing the Son. And the word for Messiah literally means the anointed one. That's what the Messiah is. He is the anointed one. It means the appointed one, the chosen one, the designated one, the hand picked one, the one that is exclusive all to himself and there is no

other like him.

There are not more than one Messiah. There is but one Messiah and this is the one who is the anointed one with all with the oil of gladness above thy fellows and thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth.

Now this is a rather amazing kind of statement because we ordinarily think in terms of the Father as being creator and he certainly was active in creation in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth but at the same time we are told that Christ is before all things and before him nothing existed that was that nothing was made that was made and that all things exist because of him he is before all things and he holds all things together Colossians 1 and Colossians 2 so creation itself is ascribed to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit because it is the Spirit of God that brooded over the face of the waters and we find all three members of the Godhead active in creation and we find all three members of the Godhead active in redemption because it was the Father who gave the Son to be the

[ 23 : 12 ] Savior of the world it was the Son who was willing to be given and Christ on the cross we are told was offered to God through the eternal Spirit and in the resurrection it is Christ himself who raised himself I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it up again and he did and we also know he was raised by the power of the Father and he was raised by the power of the Spirit of God all of these members operate even in all of those most significant phases of Christ's life and all of that is wrapped up in his blessed person and this is the point that the writer of Hebrews is trying to make for those who are open minded at all they've got to consider this information if you cannot refute this must you buy it and to remain uncommitted is to be uncommitted to remain uncommitted is to say no to the evidence that's what

I mean when I say there's no middle ground here this is not the thing where you can kind I've often said Jesus Christ is not the savior of the world kind of he didn't come back from the dead kind of he did or he didn't again the middle is excluded you've got to be on one side or the other and that's the point that is going to be made throughout this epistle it is folks who are reading this you've got to get off the dime you've got to make up your mind either you are with Christ or you are not and this is precisely what our Lord meant when he said he that is not with me is against me because there is no middle ground and to not accept him is to automatically be in a rejection mode and people need to understand that there is no middle ground you say this is written to the Jews but in an earlier chapter where

God hardened the heart of the Jews makes it very difficult for Jews to read this and agree or disagree because it had heart of heart yeah well this involves you're right and if you bring Romans 9 10 and 11 into play we've got the complexity here between the volition of man and the responsibility that God holds us to for the decisions that we make and at the same time the adequate information being given that enables people to make decisions for when he says that blindness in part has happened to Israel Paul said that in Romans he said that blindness in part what does that mean that means not the whole Jewish nation that's blinded but blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in man and he himself is perfect proof that it is not the entire nation of

Israel that is blinded because the apostle Paul as Saul of Tarsus was very much a spiritually sighted individual and he wasn't blinded so it isn't as if all of Israel is blinded but nationally speaking there's no question but what the nation is set aside in judicial unbelief and that again involves the human volition thing that is very powerful and that God respects in ways that sometimes are scary and the thing that is scary about it is that God by virtue of his giving you the power of volition is committed to letting you have your own way that ought to scare you to death that God is committed to letting you have your own way God has given you the ability to say to him no thanks

I'll try it on my own that's a scary proposition but that's what volition does volition puts the ball in your court it makes you a responsible moral individual and it is the reality and the presence of volition that becomes the focal point and the basis upon which God will judge and devalue us it is because we have this thing called volition the power to choose and no one is going to be able to stand before the almighty and say well it wasn't my fault I couldn't help it I was so weak on and on and on that stuff is not going to fly because we have the power to make decisions and we can plead weakness all we want to but it's not going to fly and the almighty is not going to accept it John yeah out of the psalms right yeah yes it is absolutely and and

[ 29 : 15 ] I'm sure many of them did I'm sure many of them picked up on it's interesting that you bring that point up because I'd like to share something with you in connection with that and it's in Matthew 22 and this is a perfect example also of what you're talking about John when in verse 41 when the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them saying what think ye of Christ whose son is he now you've got to remember that Jesus is the one speaking here but he's speaking in the third person he's not saying who do you think I am because they'd already made it clear they didn't think that he was the Messiah so he's taking the burden off of himself as it were and he's putting it back on them and he's saying well you are aware even though you do not believe that I am the Christ you are aware that the Messiah the Christ is spoken of in the Psalms and I'm sure they would have all nodded yes yes and he goes on and says whose son is he what think ye of Christ whomever you believe this person to be even though you don't think he has come yet when he does come whose son will he be they say unto him the son of David he'll be David's son now he'll be David's son removed from David a thousand years but still in that direct ancestral line from David the king he's saying he'll be a direct descendant of David the king and then he says to them okay how then does David in spirit call him lord saying the lord said unto my lord sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool and I think this is psalm 2 what are they going to do with that Jesus said if David then called him lord how is he his son I mean how can how can the messiah be David's son when David lived a thousand years before the messiah was born what do you do with that and no man was able to answer him a word neither does any man from that day forth ask him any more questions I shouldn't wonder every time every time they did verbal combat with the lord they always came out on the losing end because this is one who had the presence who in his very presence was the truth and the way of the life and there was just no way they could contend with that it's an amazing thing Kevin I mean everybody's got their own diagnosis on things but God made it very clear from the very beginning that the number three is one of the most important number to the Bible because three is completion three is complete and everything that was done it was even in three even the bad stuff like when Peter denied Peter couldn't deny Christ no once or twice even in the transfiguration there was three people up there on top of the mountain even Moses and God told you and showed you that Moses he made it in when he was up on top of the mountain Jesus he made it clear a lot people and so many number three but it all is based around like us in redemption the water the blood the spirit and all of this is based around just one thing from what you said in the beginning to show us that the father son and the spirit and humanity is body soul and spirit and we are we are a trinity ourselves so it's a beautiful thing as I've often said and I hope you just keep this little saying tucked away in your heart because you'll find it come true so many many times that everything in the bible is connected to everything in the bible it's all interrelated all interconnected it all ties together there are times when the connection may escape us but that doesn't mean there isn't one it just means that we haven't been able to see it yet but part of our growth and grace is making those connections and understanding and appreciating them hey guys [ 34 : 42 ] I really appreciate you being here this morning we'll have a new sheet for you next week and don't forget your copies of this article here I think you'll find it very enlightening you can pick up one on your way out