

Hebrews 1:5-14
Worship the Superior Son of God
2017-08-06
Jesus is superior to angels and worthy of worship

In 1972 the Doobie Brothers sang “Jesus is just alright with me, Jesus is just alright, oh yeah Jesus is just alright with me, Jesus is just alright I don't care what they may say I don't care what they may do I don't care what they may say Jesus is just alright, oh yeah Jesus, he's my friend; Jesus, he's my friend He took me by the hand; Led me far from this land Jesus, he's my friend Jesus is just alright with me, Jesus is just alright, oh yeah.” The song has some great harmonies, good guitar riffs, and a pretty catchy beat. It got them up to #35 spot on the Billboard Hot 100. But, may I suggest that it's lacking some, theologically? Specifically with regard to its Christology? It certainly isn't up to par with the Jesus presented to us in Scripture, especially in the book of Hebrews. In Hebrews we learn of the superiority of Jesus; superior to angels, superior to Moses, brings a superior covenant, makes a superior sacrifice. But the Doobie Brothers weren't the last ones to sing this song. In fact, it saddens me to tell you that this song has been picked up by Christian bands as well. It saddens me because the song doesn't go far enough in its demand to recognize Jesus as great, exalted, superior, **worthy** of worship and praise. But I wonder if this is telling, that we have been so *influenced by the world that we are content with this downgraded Jesus, one who is just alright, a friend, but nothing more?* Or do we hold to a **Jesus that is far superior, and worthy of worship?**

Scripture Passage: Hebrews 1:5-12

As we come to our text this morning, it's imperative that we understand something about the occasion for the writing of this letter. The book of Hebrews was written to a group of Christians with a Jewish background that were struggling. They were beginning to feel pressure from the society around them to conform, to give in, give up, to not be so passionate or emphatic or exclusive in their worship. Jesus, he's alright, he's cool, but keep him unobtrusive, undemanding, downgraded. Otherwise, the troubles will only increase, the persecution will only intensify. Is Jesus really worth it? Is Jesus really **worthy**?

The more we learn of Jesus, the higher regard we have for Jesus, the more we will live to glorify Jesus.

Jesus is superior to angels and worthy of worship.

Jesus has a relationship (name) that is superior (vv.5-6)

1. **v.5** “*For to which of the angels did God every say, ‘You are my son, today I have begotten you?’*” - The author of Hebrews, who is unknown to us, works in our text this morning to show the superiority of Jesus to the angels. He begins with a rhetorical question, one that has an obvious “no” for an answer. His question comes from **Psalm 2**, a messianic psalm, one which anticipates the messiah that God would send. Was there ever any angel that God declared to be his begotten Son? No! Jesus has a superior relationship with the Father.
 1. Begotten - This doesn't mean that Jesus was made or created, because he is eternally existent with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. The author in this passage is speaking even more specifically about Jesus in his exaltation. Following his incarnation, his life and death, he was resurrected and ascended into heaven, where he is now exalted at the right hand of the Father and has this superior title of Son, begotten of the Father.
 1. Paul recognized the same thing about the begetting of the Son, tying it to his resurrection and exaltation. In **Acts 13:32–33** “*And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, “‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you.’”*”
2. **v.5b** “*I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.*” - **2 Samuel 7:14**, spoken to David concerning the kingdom. It had a partial fulfillment immediately in the direct descendent of David, his son Solomon. But it had a more distant and more complete fulfillment in Jesus, also descended from David.
3. **v.6** “*And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says...*” - When Jesus is called the firstborn it doesn't mean that he was created, but firstborn was also a relational term, speaking of status, of authority, of position. This is the same thing Paul communicates in **Colossians 1:15** “*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*” And what is it that God says about his Son who is in the position of authority over all creation?
 1. “*Let all God's angels worship him.*” - This is taken from **Deut. 32:43** or **Ps. 97:7**, where the angels are referred to as *elohim*, or gods, which is one way the OT speaks about angels as heavenly beings. And what is the relationship between the Son and the angels? They worship him.

2. Why is it that the author is so concerned to show the superiority of Jesus over angels? Is it because the Christians he was writing to were prone to worshipping angels? I don't believe so. He wasn't trying to tear down their high view of angels, but to show that Jesus is far superior to the angels. I think they probably had a pretty solid understanding of angels and their position and work; more solid than many in the church today. I think too often we've formed our doctrine of angels from Hollywood and Hallmark cards more than from Holy Scripture. **A quick point of application here, this should encourage us in our study of Scripture, to not assume we have our doctrine right, but to study and confirm it according to what the Bible teaches.**

1. Angels are created beings (**Neh. 9:6, Ps. 148:2-5**) that are forever distinct from humans. Nobody dies and gets their angels' wings. Angels aren't in the form of chubby little babies floating around, but are powerful beings that carry out the purposes of God. They're often unseen, existing in the spiritual realm, but when they do appear to people they most often strike fear into their hearts (**Num. 22:31; Matt. 28:5**). The word angel means messenger, both in the OT and NT, and this helps us to understand what they do - they act as God's agents to help carry out God's will. They announced to Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son, John the Baptist (**Luke 1:11-13**), and to Mary about Jesus (**Luke 1:26-33**). They wipe out armies that oppose the people of God (**2 Chron. 32:21**), battle against demonic forces (**Daniel 10:13**), and will announce the return of Jesus (**1 Thess. 4:16**). But our greatest interest this morning is that they are worshipers of God. As great as angels are, even they are committed to the worship of Jesus. That's the point of the author of Hebrews.
2. **Revelation 5:11-14** *"Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!'"* And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, *"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"* And the four living creatures said, *"Amen!"* and the elders fell down and worshiped." **Revelation 19:9-10** *"And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'"* And he said to me, *"These are the true words of God."* Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, *"You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God."* **Revelation 22:8-9** *"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.'"*
3. **If the angels are so concerned with the right worship of God, shouldn't this be an indication to us that we should be as well. Worship is more than just the singing of some songs on Sunday morning. Worship encompasses all of life. We've often said here at Pillar that it's not if you will worship, but what you will worship. We are created as worshipers. The testimony and concern of angels, these great heavenly creatures, is the right worship of God. We've only scratched the surface of the Bible's teaching on angels this morning, and more study will work to impress on us to an even greater degree the worship of God alone.**

Transition: Jesus is superior in relationship as the Son of God, but he is also superior in character.

Jesus has a character (attributes) that is superior (vv.7-12)

1. **v.7** *"Of the angels he says..."* - Angels are servants of God, ministers carrying out the purposes of God.
2. **v.8** *"But of the Son he says..."* - The author now shows that Jesus shares a character with God that is unique to God. He has qualities and attributes that only God has.
 1. **Sovereign** - God speaks of the Son as God, and refers to his throne. Jesus is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and is sovereign over his creation. **Verse 10** tells us that Jesus was the agent of creation, laying the foundation of the earth and forming the heavens. He is sovereign, as only God is.
 2. **Eternal** - His throne is forever and ever. **Verse 11** tells us that his creation will perish, but he will remain. **Verse 12** tells us that his years have no end. He is eternal, as only God is.
 3. **Perfect** - **Verses 8-9** tell us that his scepter is a scepter of uprightness and that he loves righteousness. The scepter was a stick that represented the authority to judge or to rule. To have a scepter of uprightness means to rule with a concern for what is right, what is straight and true and just. He is perfectly just and righteous, as only God is.
 4. **Unchanging** - Immutable. **Verse 12** tells us that he is the same. What a great comfort this is, that Jesus doesn't change with the tide of popular opinion or the streams of time. His purposes of old are his purposes forever, his plan of redemption won't be abandoned, the terms won't be changed.

5. With these characteristics it's shown that Jesus is not just greater in rank than the angels, but he's in a different category altogether. They are created, he is divine Creator. The deity of Jesus is critical when it comes to staying the course of the Christian life. Jesus is called the founder and perfecter of our faith in **Hebrews 12:1-2**, a passage which exhorts the reader to run with endurance. But to undermine the deity of Jesus is to erode the foundation for our perseverance. **Do you want to stay anchored firmly in your faith? I think each of us this morning would affirm that we do. Then meditate on and grow in your understanding of Jesus as deity; as sovereign, eternal, perfect, and unchanging. This is really the big theme of the book of Hebrews, that since Jesus is superior we can trust him, we can hold firmly to him, we can endure suffering and hardship and persecution for him, so that we can glorify God by knowing him and making him more fully known.**

Transition: Jesus is superior in his relationship, superior in his character, and lastly this morning we see that he is superior in his role.

Jesus has a role (work) that is superior (vv.13-14)

1. **v.13** is another rhetorical question, which helps us see how this passage is packaged together. Again the question should bring a response of, "Not a single one." No angel is seated at God's right hand, and no angel ever will be. Angels are worshiping and working before the throne of God. But Jesus has finished his work (**v.3**) and so he is seated. He is superior in his role.
 1. Putting the foot on the neck of the enemy was a symbol of triumph over the enemy. **Joshua 10:22-24**
"Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me from the cave. And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, 'Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings.' Then they came near and put their feet on their necks."
2. **v.14** "Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" - Jesus is seated, but the angels are serving. Who do the angels serve? They serve God, but they serve for our sake, those who are to inherit salvation. They minister both by preparing the way for salvation and in protecting and preserving after salvation.
 1. **Acts 8:26-28** Philip is instructed by an angel to go so he can minister to the Ethiopian eunuch, who is saved.
 2. **Acts 10** an angel appears to Cornelius and instructs him to send for Peter, who then preaches the gospel to Cornelius and his household, resulting in their salvation.
 3. **Acts 12:1-11** an angel is sent to free Peter from prison, where he was awaiting execution.
4. In these examples we see that the angels are always working in their role to bring focus, attention, and worship to Jesus. Just as the recipients of this letter to the Hebrews had a good understanding and high view of angels, so should we. But the author's aim was to encourage them in an even higher view of Jesus, we should be encouraged in that same way.

Conclusion: Is Jesus just alright with you? Or is Jesus exalted, superior to even the highest created beings, in a different category altogether? Is Jesus your object of worship, the focus of your life, the rock of your salvation? Is Jesus so highly regarded by you that you will willingly, and even gladly, obey him and abide in him, even if that means things are harder for you in this life? The Hebrews were suffering hardship, persecution, shunning by their countrymen, aside from the regular difficulties of daily life. But Jesus, far superior to angels, was worthy of their devotion and worship, and is worthy of our devotion and worship today as well.

Family

Table Talk



August 6, 2017

Family Discussion

1. Jesus - the name above all names!
The writer of Hebrews, through inspiration by God himself, wants us to know who Jesus is. Who is Jesus? Try making a list of what you come up with after reading Hebrews 1:1-12.
2. You probably noticed verse 4 - Jesus is superior to angels. What does it mean to be superior?
3. Each day we must remember the superior position of Jesus Christ! It is through this knowledge we can trust Him, rightly worship Him, and come humbly before Him. Read the listed Scriptures in #3 and rejoice over the truth of who Jesus is!

GOD'S TRUTH

Jesus is superior to angels and worthy of worship!

Key Verse



"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him"
Colossians 1:15-16

Scripture Memory: Colossians 1:15-16

TABLE READING

Lead your kids into God's Word...

1. Hebrews 1:1-12
2. Hebrews 1:4
3. Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:1-2; Revelation 5:11-14

"AND THESE WORDS THAT I COMMAND YOU TODAY SHALL BE ON YOUR HEART. YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND SHALL TALK OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, AND WHEN YOU WALK BY THE WAY, AND WHEN YOU LIE DOWN, AND WHEN YOU RISE. YOU SHALL BIND THEM AS A SIGN ON YOUR HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN YOUR EYES. YOU SHALL WRITE THEM ON THE DOORPOSTS OF YOUR HOUSE AND ON YOUR GATES." - DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9 (ESV)