

2—Hebrews 1.1-4—The Radiance of God’s Glory—Part 2

I. Introduction

- A. As we look at these four verses again this morning, I will add to the previous introduction. There I mentioned how God spoke in creation and took the chaotic, formless, and emptiness of the world and brought order and good but mankind rebelled against God and sin entered the world through one man and death spread to all men because all sin.
- B. Everyday I open up my folder on my desk and look at the prayer list and I see chaos. I see cancer that I cannot cure. I see those who need to rehabilitate through the slow grind with little progress that I can’t help endure. There are those who need to be kept safe that I cannot protect. Those that have a body that’s failing them that I cannot restore. Sickesses that we wait to see where it goes. Loved ones claiming to be Christians who continually walk in unrepentant sin that seem to be walking on the Cross of Christ and dishonoring his Name and the witness of the church. There are those who are not believers that we want to see repent and believe in Christ for which we can only plant the seed and trust the Lord to give it growth. All of this is chaos and impossible to change apart from God—the God described here in Hebrews 1:1-4.
- C. These are massive truths to rest in and stand on. Let’s just lavish ourselves the glory of God.

II. Main Point

- A. Let’s focus on the God who speaks

III. Outline

- A. The glory of the God who Speaks
- B. Trusting in the God who has Spoken through his Son
- C. Responding to the God who speaks

IV. Exposition

- A. I want to take some time to think about the God who speaks from a few different angles—the glory of the God who speaks.
 - 1. On the basic level, we relate speaking to life. God spoke creation into existence so let’s glory in the living God who speaks.
 - a) If someone is unable to speak then we conclude they are not alive.
 - b) The God who spoke and has spoken is the living God. This is extremely important. I’m assuming everything I said last week about God’s nature but this week the emphasis is on God’s self-revelation through speaking. And this communication is clear and sufficient.
 - (1) In Isaiah 44, God speaks to the people about the foolishness of forming idols. Why? Because some were cutting a tree down to create an image of a god, and then with some of that same wood, they would cook their meals, and the rest they built a fire to warm themselves. And then they bowed down and pleaded to a piece of wood and asked it to save them.
 - (2) A similar thing happens in Jeremiah concerning idolatry.
 - (a) It says this in Jeremiah 10:3–5 ³ the customs of the peoples are vanity. A tree from the forest is cut down and worked with an axe by the hands of a craftsman. ⁴ They decorate

it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move.⁵

Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.”

- (b) The God we serve speaks. He lives..he exists. In other words, yes fear him not idols and false gods.
- (3) But what is idolatry? My guess is that question is harder to answer for us than those who Isaiah and Jeremiah were speaking to. So, let me give it a shot to help us.
 - (a) Let's try to form a definition first.
 - i) We commit Idolatry when “we come to rely on for some blessing, or help, or guidance in the place of a wholehearted reliance on the true and living God.” (John Piper).
 - (1) We call some of these things superstitions or luck but we seem to rely on them for blessings or maybe more so to avoid some sort of curse or bad luck or maybe more common language these days..bad karma.
 - (a) By the way, I'm glad God doesn't act according to our definition of karma. If so, getting what we deserve lands us all in the eternal fire.
 - (2) How about the god of the rabbit's foot in your pocket?
 - (3) Knocking on wood or crossing your fingers or throwing salt over your left shoulder
 - (4) Not walking under ladders or seven years of bad luck for breaking a mirror.
 - ii) There are other more complex forms of idolatry that we rely on.
 - (1) Our careers to provide for us or good planning for retirement.
 - (a) We should work and we should plan for retirement but they are not what we rely on. All of that can be gone in an instant.
 - (2) How about the strength of our bodies to protect us or we trust in our governments to provide a strong military to defend us.
 - (3) Some may have a bunker full of weapons and ammo waiting on the collapse of our government and the takeover to begin or Armageddon. When will the food and oxygen and the fuel run out?
 - (4) Maybe we rely on the wisdom of the world to lead us.
 - (5) Or we may rely on doctors to save us.
- (4) There are many more and maybe even some more important ones that I can't think of but you get the idea.
 - (a) The God who spoke creation into being is the only one who can be trusted and relied upon for help, blessing and salvation.
 - (b) To rely on knocking on wood for a favorable outcome is idolatry and deserves eternal death.
 - i) I wonder how you will respond after hearing that. Those who instinctively knock on wood may catch yourself in the coming days what will you do?
 - (1) Well the preach said this is idolatry and I guess I shouldn't do it.

- (2) Or, this is idolatry and I have belittled the glory of God and trusted something made out of wood that does not speak and can do nothing to change this situation. O God I throw myself on your mercy. Please forgive me.
2. Interestingly, as we move on thinking about the glory of the living God who speaks, we can rejoice that he has spoken in many different ways at many different times.
- a) If I were to do a survey among the congregation, we would likely find a variety of differences when it comes to what you like or dislike to read, and how you process and learn things.
- (1) Like history, you either love it or hate it.
- (2) God has spoken many different ways. And by that I mean, through songs, stories, history, law, wise sayings, letters, miracles, and poetry.
- (a) Obviously, we ought to read all of God's revelation but frankly there are parts of it for which help others differently.
- (b) The Psalms are often the place where hurting people go to hear a word of encouragement and the letters of Paul for clear doctrine.
- (c) While the Scriptures are the only source to know God's way of salvation, we are told that nature itself reveals, even speaks, the glory of God.
- i) Psalm 19:1–2 ESV ¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ² Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.
- b) Additionally, God has spoken through many prophets and messengers.
- (1) Let's say one person told you something versus ten people told you something different than the first person but it was all ten said the same thing. Which one is more believable?
- (a) The Bible has many authors with one unified message. If you compare the Koran which only has one author which one is more believable?
- (b) I didn't mention this specifically, but when we talked about God has spoken through his Son in these last days that meant there would be no more Scripture added to the Bible.
- i) Fittingly, the Bible ends with these warnings: Revelation 22:18–19 ESV ¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.
- ii) That means the addition of the Koran that was finished around 632 A.D. is not only an addition but it's from a single author that is NOT in unity with the Bible.
- iii) The same is true for Joseph Smith's Book of Mormons.
- iv) We believe God has spoken in these last days completely and finally through his Son.
- (1) What or who are you trusting in?
- (a) Your rabbit's foot has never spoken nor will it ever.
- (b) You can knock on wood all day long the rest of your life and it will never change anything.

- (c) You can go to the doctor and they can perform all kinds of amazing things and we should go but we are never to put our ultimate trust in humanity.
 - (d) Your body will die someday but what about your undying soul?
 - (e) In whom will you trust to save your soul?
 - c) I want us to see the beauty of the living God who spoke and has spoken through his Son finally and sufficiently.
 - d) I want us to repent of the foolish things we rely on that cannot save us.
 - e) Let us listen to Christ and lean on him. He sufficient to save.
- B. Now let's see why we should trust in what God has spoken through his Son.
1. As we come to the Lord's Table today, let's hear the good news that came to us through the eternal Son of God.
 2. Last week we talked about the Son was appointed heir of all things.
 - a) In particular, he is the Son of Psalm 2. If we think of this in comparison to Adam whom God gave dominion over everything in the garden but lost it by rebelling against God, then Jesus is the second Adam coming to reclaim and redeem and restore God's creation.
 - (1) In other words, though God made everything good, man's rebellion brought back the chaos and the emptiness. The fallen and sin cursed world needs a Savior.
 - (2) Therefore, the heir of all things has dominion over all things.
 - b) But now let's think about this a little more. If he is heir of all things, then no one else is, right?
 - (1) If the Father has given the world to him, then no one else can take it.
 - (2) He is Lord. He is the reigning risen King who will judge the world.
 - (3) What will the heir of all things do to all the inhabitants of the world?
 - (4) What will the heir or landlord do with my land?
 - (5) To circle back to the section on what God spoke long ago through the prophets, to keep the land Israel had to keep God's covenant.
 - (a) The law was how they maintained the covenant.
 - (b) When they are unclean they had to make sacrifices to God.
 - (c) As you know, God's people could not maintain the covenant.
 - (d) Eventually, after speaking to them over and over again through the prophets, God removed them from the land and allowed it to just be desolate or formless and void like the beginning.
 - (e) The question is, how in the world will God fix this problem.
 - i) And problem is not with God and his law but rather the hearts of men.
 - ii) As the prophet Jeremiah plainly declared, man needs a new heart and new covenant.
 - (6) What will the heir of the world do with his land and the people?
 - (a) He was sent to redeem his people and restore the land to them and he would rule and reign over them forever.
 - (b) But how?
 3. As many thought concerning the promised messiah of Psalm 2 who is also the Son of Psalm 2 who is the Son of David, that he would be a man.

- a) Right? Genesis 3:15—a son will be born to crush the head of the serpent.
- b) Psalm 2—God will put all of that Son’s enemies under his feet.
- c) And certainly, Daniel foresees a Son of man receiving an eternal Kingdom.
- d) Indeed, we cannot hide the fact that the promised messiah will be a man.
- e) But the problem is no man or messiah or savior or king or any person has kept God’s law.
 - (1) So they die. That’s the penalty for sin.
 - (2) If that man is like the rest of men, then what good is that?
 - (3) That’s the thing—many missed the fact that he would be more than a man.
 - (a) Really many of the Christmas passages answer that like Isaiah 9—he will be the wonderful counselor and mighty God.
 - (b) Or the passage in Micah 5:2 “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days”
- f) Well, our Hebrews passage answers that question too.
 - (1) The heir of all things is the creator of all things there in verse 2.
 - (2) The heir and creator of all things is the radiance of God’s glory and exact imprint of this nature.
 - (a) One cannot be the radiance of God and not be God.
 - (b) One cannot be the exact imprint of divine nature and not be of divine nature.
 - (3) This appointed heir and Creator of all things who is the radiance of God’s glory or the God-Man or the God incarnate must also see it to its end.
 - (a) We’ve read of messiahs who came but could not see it to the end. The best among those were David, Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah but all them failed. All of them came to an end. No one has been able to save to the uttermost. No one has taken the seat of David’s throne FOREVER!
 - (b) But Hebrews says this one will carry it to the end by the word of his power.
 - (4) But all of that is for nothing if there is no one to live in the land and rule, right?
 - (a) How can there be? If God is just then all of creation is fallen and broken. We are separated from God. We all have a death sentence against us.
 - (b) We are impure. We are sinners. We need our hearts cleaned.
 - (c) So, God sent his Son to take on flesh that he might take the death sentence for his people.
 - (d) The new covenant is a covenant in the blood of this Son.
 - (e) He is the one who makes purification for sins.
 - (f) And the way the God-Man did that was to offer himself as the perfect sacrifice for eternal salvation in an eternal covenant.
- g) The reason why what God has spoken through this Son is better rests on the who this Son is namely that he is the Son of God and Son of Man.
 - (1) His coming in the flesh has spoken.
 - (2) His perfect obedience to the Father has spoken.
 - (3) His death on the cross has spoken.

- (4) His resurrection from the dead has spoken.
- h) If we repent of our sins and throw ourselves upon his mercy by faith, we are forgiven of our sins and we are counted righteous.
 - (1) That fixes the greatest problem of the world. His payment for our sins and our union in him by faith has reconciled us with God.
 - (2) We are now joint heir of all things with the Heir of all things.
 - (3) Our sins have been made pure through the blood of God's Son.
- i) We can come to the table today in a right legal relationship with the God of the universe.
- j) We can freely confess our sins and daily failing to the one who made an end of all our sins.

C. Responding to God's final word through his Son

- 1. When you want to give up, hear the clear word that has been spoken through this Son.
- 2. The God who spoke is the one, true and living God. If he speaks; he also hears. Pour out your heart to him.
- 3. When your life seems chaotic, rest in the sovereign God of all to give peace and speak life into your emptiness.
- 4. When you don't want to pray like I did Wednesday morning, I simply told the Lord that—I don't want to pray and I don't know why. Make me want to pray. And when I could not find the words, it came to mind to pick up the hymnal and sing.
 - a) I sang two songs and my heart was refreshed. The first one was "Praise to the Lord the Almighty" and "A Mighty Fortress is our God."
 - (1) The line in the first one that got was the third stanza—"Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee, surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee. Ponder anew what the Almighty can do if with his love he befriend thee.
 - (2) And the second song second line—"Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing; were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing; dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is he; Lord Sabaoth, his name, from age to age the same, and he must win the battle."