

II. CHRIST IS THE RADIANCE OF THE GLORY OF GOD: Hebrews 1:3

INTRODUCTION. Imagine someone asked you, "Who is Jesus and why should I care?" What would you say. How would you sum up such a magnificent person, the God-man, Christ Jesus? Well if you memorize Hebrews 1:3, you will have an excellent answer.

CONTEXT. The apostle to the Hebrews is setting before these first century Jews the excellencies of Christ and superiority of Him over and against all of the Old Covenant shadows. Christ is better than the Prophets, better than the Priests, better than the Kings, better than Moses, better than the sacrifices, better than the land in Israel, better everything.

God says through the apostle in verses 1 and 2 of chapter 1, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." Then in verse 3 he progresses on to show just who this Son is and how magnificent is His person and work.

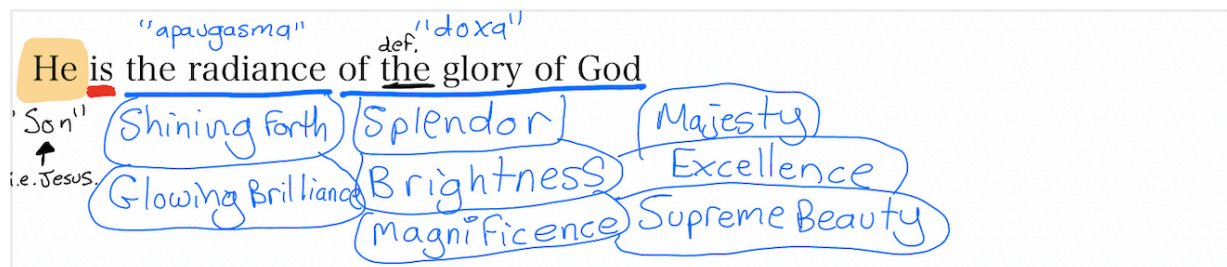
DOCTRINE. *Christ Himself radiates, reveals, rules, redeems, and reigns for the glory of God.*

OUTLINE. That is also the outline for this sermon. Christ *radiates* the glory of God, *reveals* the glory of God, *rules* for the glory of God, *redeems* for the glory of God, and *reigns* for the glory of God.

I say to you, O Come Let Us Adore Him.

I. CHRIST RADIATES THE GLORY OF GOD.

Hebrews 1:3a "He is the radiance of the glory of God" (Heb. 1:3a).



Q. What is the glory of God? A1. The glory of God is His fullness of every perfection, of all excellency and beauty, and of infinite happiness. **A2.** God's glory is the weight and magnitude of all God's perfections.

- The essence and glory of God is chiefly comprehended by reflecting on

His attributes, also called His perfections, because that is how He reveals Himself most clearly to us.

- **The apostle to the Hebrews makes sure we know that Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son of the Father, radiates this essential and intrinsic glory!**
 - **The Apostle John knew this. In John 1:14 he writes,** "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14).
- **Peter, James, and John got a glimpse of this at Jesus' transfiguration.**
 - **Matthew 17:2** "[Jesus] was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light."
- **John knew this experientially yet again when Christ gave to him the Revelation.**
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS:** Listen to these descriptions of Jesus given to us in the Bible. See how he shines brightly with God's glory!
Revelation 1:12-16 "12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength."
 - **Consider also**
Revelation 19:11-16 "11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."
 - **The eternal city of the New Earth is described like this in Revelation 21:23:** "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb."

REPEAT: Christ radiates the glory of God!

But it is also true that

II. CHRIST REVEALS THE GLORY OF GOD.

Hebrews 1:3b "and the exact imprint of his nature" (**Heb. 1:3b**).

and ^{def. "charakter"} the exact imprint of his nature,
_{con.} express image essence

- **Christ Himself says in John 10:38**, "the Father is in me and I am in the Father."
- **Colossians 1:15** "[Christ] is the image of the invisible God."
- **Colossians 2:9** "In [Christ] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily."
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS:** Do you want to know what God is like? Look at Jesus Christ by faith as you read or hear the Bible!

REPEAT: Christ radiates and reveals the glory of God!

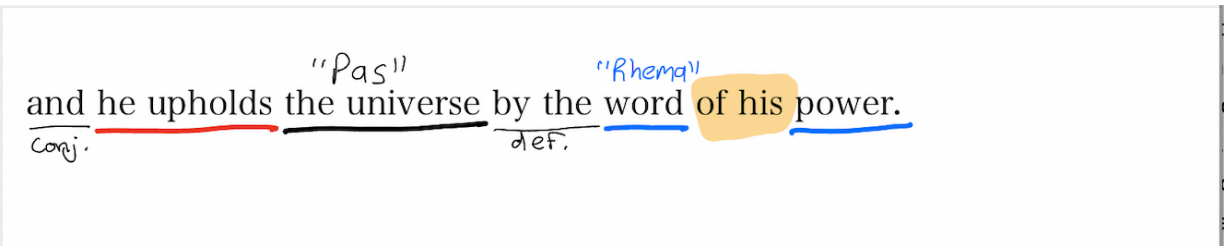
TEST YOURSELF BY THESE TRUTHS.

- **(i) Unbelievers do not see the radiating glory of God shining in Jesus Christ!**
 - **2 Corinthians 4:4** "In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."
 - **Q. Do you see, with the eyes of faith, the glory of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures?** Do you read about Him and wonder? Do you hear about him and spiritually salivate? Do you see what the Apostle says here in Hebrews 1:3 and say, "Yes and amen!"?
 - **TRIAL.** If not, at least to some degree, you can be sure you are not a Christian yet, no matter what you profess.
 - **EXHORTATION.** If you do not see Jesus as glorious, go to the Scriptures and read as you go to God in prayer, asking Him to shine light in your darkness!
- **(ii) True believers on the other hand, do in fact see the radiating glory of God shining in Jesus Christ!**
 - **2 Corinthians 4:6** "God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

- **Q. Do you see, with the eyes of faith, the glory of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures?** Do you read about Him and wonder? Do you hear about him and spiritually salivate? Do you see what the Apostle says here in Hebrews 1:3 and say, "Yes and amen!"?
- **If you do, praise the Lord.** Praise the Lord because that is evidence that He shone in your heart to give that light. That is evidence that you are in fact a believer. Do not neglect such a great gift!
- **You can see by faith the radiating glory of the Lord Jesus Christ,** therefore go see it often in the Word read and preached, in the Lord's Supper, and in prayer!

III. CHRIST RULES FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (King).

Hebrews 1:3c "and he upholds the universe by the word of his power" (Heb. 1:3c).



- Christ does this by both His preserving and governing providence.

I) Christ upholds the universe by the word of His power by His **Preserving Providence.** He sustains and supports all things.

- **At the creation, Jesus did not wind up the universe like a watch and then let it go so that it has all been playing out for thousands of years.**
- **Christ is intricately involved every second of every day in every thing and in every way! What we call the laws of nature are simply the observable and ordinary ways** "he upholds the universe by the word of His power."
 - **If Christ were not upholding the universe by the word of His power,** the whole of creation would not just collapse morally, it would collapse physically.
 - **Paul says in Colossians 1:17,** "[Christ] is before all things, and in him all things hold together."
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS:** Jesus is the reason the world keeps spinning, we keep breathing, and the sun keeps rising. If Jesus took His hand off of the steering wheel of the universe for even one tiny second, everything would unravel.

- **Christ is like the mighty Atlas who holds the world on His shoulders.**
 - Jesus is the reason the Sun rises and sets each day. He is the one who changing times and seasons. Jesus Himself is the one who keeps the Sun just where it is, not too far away to freeze us, and not too close to fry us. Christ is the one who causes the rain to fall, the wind to blow, and storms to begin and cease.
 - **Matthew 5:45** “He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (**Matt. 5:45**).
 - **He is the reason there is oxygen to breathe and water to drink.** Christ, as Ruler for God’s glory, intimately and intentionally causes the seeds to grow and the harvest to be reaped. “He upholds the universe by the word of His power.”
- **Christ is not only like the mighty Atlas, He is also like the nursing mother who feeds and cares for those who could not otherwise care for themselves. And we are all helpful and unable to survive without the Christ’s Preserving Providence!**
 - He causes the animals to reproduce and upholds them every second of their lives. **Psalms 147:9** “He gives to the beasts their food.” (Ps. 147:9). He then offers them to us after their killing for meat.
 - **Christ is the sovereign influence being the farmer who grows your food. Acts 14:17** “He did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness” (**Acts 14:17**). He also sovereignly influences the processor who prepares your food, the shipper who transports it, and the cook who prepares it; He even gives strength to your mouths and stomachs to chew and digest it for your good. **Psalms 136:25** “He...gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever” (Ps. 136:25). “He upholds the universe by the word of His power.”

II) Christ (also) upholds the universe by the word of His power by His Governing Providence. *He orders and presides over every meticulous detail of history.*

(i) Governing authorities are planted and uprooted by Christ. Daniel 2:21 “He removes kings and sets up kings” (Dan. 2:21).

(ii) Calamities are caused and avoided by Christ. Isaiah 45:7 “I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things” (Is. 45:7).

“He upholds the universe by the word of His power.”

(iii) **Eternal life is sovereignly given by Christ. John 5:21** "the Son gives life to whom he will" (Jn. 5:21).

(iv) **Predestination, in both choice and in outcome, is rooted in Christ to the praise of God's glory. Ephesians 1:11** "In [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works *all things* according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:11-12).

"He upholds the universe by the word of His power."

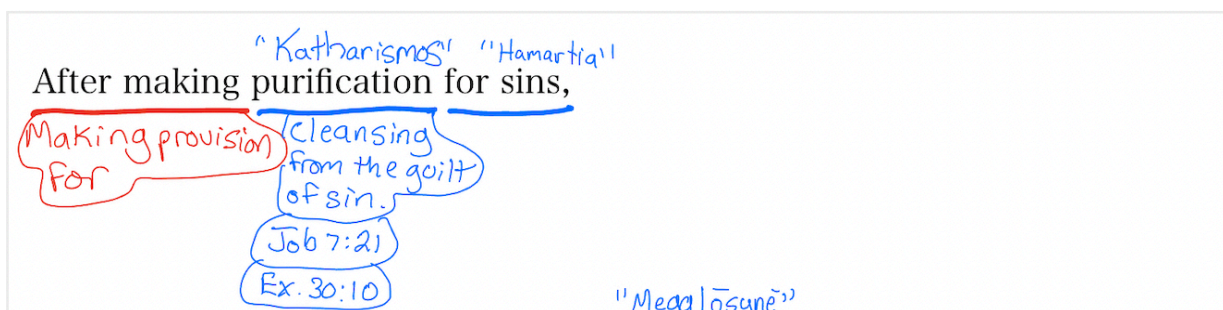
(v) **Christ governs all things ultimately for the eternal good of His people and the ascribed glory of God. Romans 8:28** "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

REPEAT: Christ rules for the glory of God! He upholds the universe by the word of His power by both His Preserving and Governing.

USE THIS TRUTH FOR COMFORT, BELIEVERS.

IV. CHRIST REDEEMS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (Priest).

Hebrews 1:3d "After making purification for sins" (**Heb. 1:3d**).



I) Christ is a purifying redeemer by being the Lamb without blemish or spot.

- Always have you sinned; never did He sin.
- **1 Peter 2:22** "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:22). **1 Peter 1:18-19** "You were ransomed. . . with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

II) Christ is a purifying redeemer by being His peoples' propitiation.

- **1 John 2:2** "He is the propitiation for our sins."
- **The anger of God is rightly inflamed against every sinner** until justice is satisfied by Christ's substitutionary death. But justice being satisfied for those who take refuge in Christ by faith, now we get God's open arms and loving smile.
- **Where once we could only expect God's sword of vengeance**, we who are in Christ now experience the embrace of God's peace and goodwill.
- **Christ is the Lamb that was slain in place of His people, by which He drained the cup of God's wrath and then refills it with His favor.** "Christ made purification for sins."

III) Christ is a purifying redeemer by being His peoples' expiation.

- **Isaiah 43:25** "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS: Let me tell you a story about the scapegoat.**
- **All of you, hear me.**
 - If you are united to Christ by faith, He has redeemed you by Expiation. He has removed sin's stain and pollution from you.
 - **The sins you have committed, no matter how wretched, do not describe you anymore.**
The sins that have been committed against you, no matter how vile, do not define you anymore.
 - **Beloved, Christ the scapegoat has taken all your sins on His back and run them out into the desert of forgetfulness!** "Christ made purification for sins."

IV) Christ is a purifying redeemer by being His peoples' High Priest.

- **Christ is not just the Lamb without blemish**; not only the Lamb that was slain; not just the scapegoat who runs our sins away into the wilderness; Christ is also the High Priest that applies the blood of the sacrifice to us and forever intercedes on our behalf.

REPEAT: Christ redeems for the glory of God!

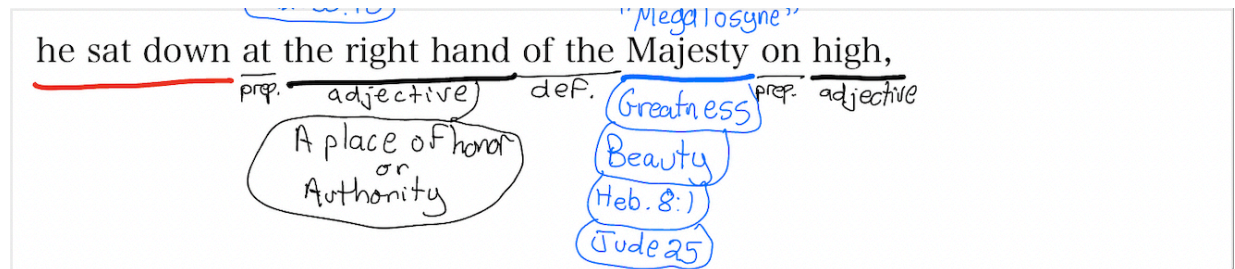
USE THIS TRUTH TO FURTHER STIR UP YOUR LOVE FOR CHRIST.

- **This Christ who both Radiates and Reveals the glory of God, and who rules the universe by the Word of His power, became a human being so that He could purify you from your sins. O the love of God in Christ Jesus**

our Lord! How can you not but love Him, believer?

V. CHRIST REIGNS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (Enthroned Lord).

Hebrews 1:3e "he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (**Heb. 1:3e**).



- **GILL:** "[Christ's] sitting here denotes the glorious exaltation of him in human nature, after his sufferings, and death, and resurrection from the dead; and shows that he had done his work, and was accepted, and was now enjoying rest and ease, honour and glory, in which he will continue; and the place of his session, as well as of the habitation of God, at whose right hand he sits, is on high, in the highest heavens."
- **CALVIN:** "As [Jesus] ought to be loved on account of his redemption, so he ought to be adored on account of his royal magnificence."

REPEAT: Christ reigns for the glory of God!

USE THIS TRUTH FOR EXHORTATION.

Christ reigns at the right hand of God until all His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. So go get after glorifying Him by proclaiming His Law and His Gospel, and by taking dominion of yourself, your home, your vocation, and the nations for His glory. Christ is seated; His physical work in the flesh is done. But we are standing; we must make hay while the sun is shining. Get after it; stay after it. Christ is worth it.

Now that, I hope, you understand Hebrews 1:3, do not wait for someone to ask you, "Who is Jesus and why should I care?" Go and tell them "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

