

The Gospel
The Greatness of Jesus
Hebrews 1:1-3

December 2, 2018 a.m.

HDBC

This Christmas season at HDBC, I want us to focus our attention on the fact that Christmas is **good news!** It is not simply about a baby being born in Bethlehem. It is not just about shepherds and wise men. It is not even simply about God becoming one of us. It is about God becoming one of us with a specific purpose in mind.

Christmas is about **The Gospel**, the good news that God has sent His son to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. It is about Jesus becoming the one who could and would pay the penalty for our sins to provide a way for us to once again be right with God.

This Christmas, we will focus on the Jesus, as the centerpiece of **The Gospel.** We will look at the one born to Mary and Joseph, through **Gospel eyes.** We will consider the Christmas story as it relates to the plan of God to save the world. At the heart of that plan is Jesus, who's birth we celebrate.

He is the most misunderstood person in all human history. No other person has generated more conversation, controversy, or conflict than this one man.

Born contrary to laws of nature; Reared in obscurity; Lived in poverty;
Lacked formal education. In infancy he startled a king;
As boy he puzzled scholars; As man he challenged the laws of nature;
In death He altered eternity for millions. He was no mere man, Son of God.

The book of Hebrews is all about the supremacy of Christ over all others. **In Hebrews 1:1-3** we see four things that reveal the absolute greatness of Christ. Four things that he does which make Him the greatest man who ever lived.

1. He Reveals God

Jesus reveals God in three ways.

A. As the Living Word (1-2a)

God formerly used the prophets to declare His word to us.

In many portions and many ways.

That phrase speaks of the grand diversity of God's speech in the O.T. He utilized a variety of devices to instruct his people. He spoke to Moses at Sinai in thunder and lightning. He whispered to Elijah in a still small voice. He spoke to Daniel and Ezekiel in dreams and visions. He appeared to Abraham in human form and to Joshua as a great warrior.

God used human instruments to reveal His truth. Through those instruments he used many methods and literary devices. Poetry, history, narrative, stories, law, prophecy, doctrine.

But his revelation was still lacking. It was true but incomplete. God's full and perfect revelation was awaiting the coming of the Son of God. Jesus became the living revelation of God. So, along with the written revelation we also have the living revelation. Jesus is the ultimate word of God.

B. As the Radiance of His Glory (3)

Radiance pictures light coming forth from something. Jesus is the glory of God sent among men.

C. As the Representation of His Nature (3)

Impression made by a die or stamp. He is the perfect imprint of God in time and space.

In Colossians Paul wrote that he is *the image of the invisible God*. You can only see the invisible God by looking to the visible Christ. He perfectly reveals God. If you want to know what God is like, look to Jesus. He Reveals God.

2. He Rules Creation

A. Heir (2)

A heir is an owner. In our experience ownership happens at the death of the parent. Clearly a different perspective because God never dies. Jesus is the rightful owner of all things.

B. Creator (2)

He is the agent of Creation. Nothing came into being apart from Christ.

World - Not *kosmos*. It is the word *aionas*. Commonly translated ages. Jesus not only created the physical earth and universe, but also **time and space and energy**.

The word wonderfully portrays the nature of the ever-expanding, constantly changing universe and indicates that each expansion, each change is the result of His creative work. Everything that is in the universe and makes the universe work was created by him.

Stephen Hawking, wrote in his book, A Brief History of Time, that our galaxy is an average-sized spiral galaxy that it is over 100,000 light years across (about six hundred trillion miles). It is only one of a hundred trillion that can be seen through modern telescopes. Galaxies contain one hundred trillion stars. The distance between these galaxies is about three million light years.

Jesus created it all.

C. Sustainer (3)

Upholds – To support or to maintain. It is present tense.

If the physical laws of the universe varied we would have a problem. The surface temperature of the sun is 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit. If we were a little closer we would burn up. If we were further away we would freeze. Earth is tilted at an angle of 23 degrees which gives us the four

seasons. If it were not tilted, vapors from the oceans would move north and south and develop into monstrous continents of ice.

If the moon did not retain its exact distance from the earth the ocean tides would inundate the land completely, twice a day. If the ocean floors were a few feet deeper than they are, the carbon dioxide and oxygen balance of the earth's atmosphere would be completely upset. If the atmosphere thinned, many of the meteors which now harmlessly burn up when they hit the atmosphere would constantly bombard us.

Were he to take his hand off for one moment, the entire universe would lapse into chaos.

Stanford University is the site of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. It is a two-mile long atom smasher originally built in early 1960s. With it scientists hoped to learn the secrets of matter and discover what is in the miniature world of the atom, the neutron, and the proton, etc.

Some amazing things have come out. They are discovering a complexity they never dreamed of, and they are finding particles that they cannot even invent enough names for.

But one thing they are consistently discovering is that there is some strange force that holds it all together. They do not know what to call it, and they do not know how to identify it. They talk about a kind of "cosmic glue" that holds things together.

If you want a name for the force that holds the universe together it is very simple: His name is Jesus. He sustains the universe by the word of his power, or as Colossians puts it, "all things are held together by him.

1. He Reveals God
2. He Rules Creation

3. He Redeems People (3)

He had made purification of sins.

What a statement!! He took the penalty for our sins, thus purifying us. This was an incredible act of love and sacrifice. Unlike the O.T. priests who had to come again and again to offer sacrifices, He did so once and for all. His one act of purification was sufficient.

In one act he dealt a death blow to the power of sin. He robbed hell of millions of potential inhabitants and opened the door to Heaven for those who would trust Him.

4. He Reigns on High (3)

sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

After Calvary he sat down on the right hand of the Father.

A. He Sat Down

Great contrast to O. T. Priestly service. No seats in the temple or tabernacle. The priests were always standing. Always working. Never completed. Jesus, the perfect high priest is able to sit down because he has completed his work.

When he declared *It is finished* just before he died on the cross, it was a statement of a completed task. He had finished the assignment. He had completely paid the debt for our sins.

B. Right Hand

Notice where he is sitting. Place of honor and of majesty and of power.

Remember Phil. 2. He was **super-exalted**. Restored to the place of honor and dominion that belongs to him.

Also reminds us of his great work of intercession. He is there, perpetually making intercession for us. Those whom He has redeemed are the beneficiaries of his intercessory work next to the Father.

Jesus is Greater than all others.

He puzzled the trained doctors of his day.

He walked upon the stormy seas and spoke them into submission.

He never wrote a book, but all the libraries of all the world could not hold the books necessary to tell everything about him.

He never practiced medicine, but he healed more broken bodies and broken hearts than all the doctors of all the ages.

**He is the star of astronomy,
the rock of geology,
the lion and lamb of zoology**

Throughout history great men and women have come and gone, yet he lives forever.

Herod could not kill him.

Satan could not seduce him.

Death could not destroy him.

The grave could not hold him.

He is supreme over all others.