

Heb. 1:1-6 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

*5For to which of the angels did He ever say,
“YOU ARE MY SON,
TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”?
And again,
“I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM
AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME”?*

*6And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says,
“AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.”*

I struggled this week trying to find inspiration for something to share this morning. Exegesis verse by verse, passage by passage through the New Testament suits me. For one thing I never have to waste days scratching my head wondering what passage to teach. That's a blessing.

Plus I'm caregiver while my dear wife recuperates from surgery. All men need to do this at some point in order to re-affirm to their help mates how blessed they are to have them.

Friday is usually my day where I sit down and collate all of the thoughts and study during the week and begin writing out the manuscript of what will be shared on Sunday morning. But last Friday my mind was still empty at 3:00 on Friday afternoon. So I threw in the towel and set up a card table to wrap christmas presents Pam has gathered for everyone.

I had read several good things. A critical comparison of the geneologies in

Matthew and Luke and why they are different. Fascinating stuff but not something I felt I could keep you all spellbound with (not that that will happen in any case)

I read a lovely devotion about Mary, the mother of Jesus. Fascinating young woman, and I'm sure there are some sermons in her "magnificat" when she visited her near relative, Elizabeth. Classic old testament prophecies on a grand scale from a girl in her teens. Clearly the voice of God glorifying Himself through her mouth.

Ultimately we'll spend a very short while on a topic that should be on everyone's thoughts as 2023 comes to a close and we launch into 2024 if it please the Lord to continue tarrying.

I hinted at my topic when I spoke of Mary's great magnificat. Prophetic words that rival the likes of Isaiah and Jeremiah, from a teenage girl who may well have only been 15 or so years old.

My point is, by comparison, how incredibly shallow we have become. Our wisest men we can produce speak as if fools compared to a 15 year old girl who grew up in a hick town in the hills west of the sea of Tiberias.

Christmas in America is a blow out of unbridled materialism and squandered wealth the likes of which the world has never seen or witnessed in all of history until now. A quote from Jesus;

Mt. 6:25 *"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"*

Ouch! How much of a hypocrite can I be? I know I'm going to gather with my beloved ones and we'll have a world class feast, and we'll even enjoy a glass or two of wine or eggnog, and we'll rip open presents full of beautiful things we don't need. I'm going to do all that with a clear conscience.

Ne. 8:10 Nehemiah said, *"Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

Pete Seeger said; *I To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*

2A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

3A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

I know it wasn't really Pete Seeger. Just seeing if you're listening. It's from the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3. God, in His wisdom has made seasons of life for us to honor and glorify Him. The point is that God blesses us with seasons.

It's OK to enjoy your family and have a feast. Savor it while it lasts. All of the other things in that list are waiting just around the corner.

The one thing I want to bring to the front though is something Jesus said in

our passage we're not going to study in depth this morning, that rises above everything else in importance.

Mt. 6:25b *Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*

If you're lucky enough to be in that season where your family draws close around you and everyone is healthy and happy, enjoy it. Savor it. But remember that Jesus calls us to a depth beyond what the world considers it's norm.

His question is rhetorical. Let me re-state the obvious. Life is more than food and the body is more than clothing.

Life, with a capitol L.

That's a hard argument to make if you've not been born again spiritually. If you've not been quickened from the spiritual dead and made alive together with the Lord Jesus Christ, that's an empty argument.

For the rest of the world the feast is all there is. The orgy is all there is. Television revolves around contests. Win a contest, be a rock star. Win a contest be the worlds sexiest dancers. Win a contest be a world renowned baker. Chef. Win a contest be the worlds most desirable date. Bachelor, bachelorette, golden bachelor.

Apparently, our minds can't imagine anything beyond the world watching us be the best glass blower, knife maker, whatever else they come up with next. It's all so shallow I'm literally revulsed.

And for those of us who are never going to be awesome enough to actually compete on TV, there's Facebook. I may not be pretty enough to be the golden bachelor, but 40 people clicked on a little thumbs up "like" button because of something I posted. That's supposed to fill me up with satisfaction? Wellness? Joy? My cup runneth over because I got likes on facebook? Is that what we've been reduced to in this land of ours?

Mt. 6:25b *Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*

Years ago when my girls were in their young teens, we made some trips to Mexico with other church youth groups.

We were concentrated east of Tijuana over a hundred miles, going into Mexico at Calexico. It was green farm land watered by what was left of the Colorado River.

The people there are deperately poor. But I noticed something and I wanted my kids to see it.

In the USA our wealth has made us dysfunctional. Teenagers here are slitting their wrists over whether they can have the latest style of new shoes. People are killing each other if someone cuts them off on the freeway. We can't light a public Christmas tree in some capitol without Hamas supporters and jew haters having a riot. We've all gone stark-raving nuts it seems.

In Mexico, the families are intact. There's a mom and a dad and kids, and they may be living in a cardboard box, but the families are a unit. The kids are out making up games because they have no toys. Kids honor moms. Moms honor dads.

It's not perfect. I'm not delusional. But you go 60 miles over that border and it's a lot healthier than what we've got here. Our wealth has driven us mad. We are unbelievably shallow. And those poor folks will walk over hot coals barefooted to get here to the land of dysfunction.

I'll say it again. *Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?* Mt. 6:25b

So, let's move beyond food and clothing. Stuff and barns. Let's talk about the source of the life that is deeper than all the surface stuff. The stuff is a

smoke screen Satan throws up so you can't see the real clearly.

I want to look very briefly this morning at Hebrews 1 as a Christmas text. One of the most marvelous passages in all the bible.

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

Our God speaks. He reveals truths to us that are unknowable. Things that can't be found out. He's been doing that, on His schedule, since creation.

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

In old times He spoke in many different ways to many different prophets.

The old testament consists entirely of revelation from God, to His prophets. Moses. Isaiah. Daniel. Jeremiah. Ezekiel. David. Job. And many others.

He didn't write it on secret stones. He spoke to men. All kinds of different weird ways. Some very unique.

But ultimately, it was the plan of God to send His Son into the world, as a man, and also fully God, in order to die in our place.

The story of Christmas is the story of the advent of God, born as a man.

The writer of Hebrews and the apostle John approach the advent of Jesus the same way. God revealed Himself to us, in a way that no prophet could do. He came as a tiny baby, born of a virgin, and dwelt among us. God with us.

John says; *In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God,*

and the word was God.

The greek word is logos. In the beginning was the logos. We translate it all kinds of different ways in different passages, but the underlying meaning is that of communicating an idea. Revelation. Our God speaks.

That's exactly what the writer of Hebrews is saying. 1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,

The prophets could tell us about God. Jesus was God with us.

Add Paul to the chorus. Colossians 2:9 *For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,*

God wants to reveal Himself to us. He wants us to see and understand His Glory. He uses the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New testament to tell us about Himself.

But the Son is Him. In John 14 after spending 3 years with Him, Philip still doesn't get it.

7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father '?"

We're currently enjoying Paul's letters to the churches together in the Word of God, but we began over 10 years ago with the premise that we would be looking at the Gospel stories about Jesus 2/3rds of the time.

When you study Pauls letters and the prophets discourses, it's an important connection with doctrine, it's God telling you about Himself, but when you study the gospels, it's like looking at a picture of God directly. It's like

being in a room with God. The more we know Jesus, the more we know what God is like.

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

God reveals Himself. No man will stand before God and say; I never knew you. Creation alone is enough to silence every claim of ignorance. So much so that Paul tells us in Romans 1 that wicked men actually have to suppress the truth. Hold it down like a force.

Ever wonder why large cities are generally more wicked than rural country localities? It's because the more wicked and the more you want to suppress God, the easier it is to accomplish that away from His creation. Cement jungles block out God's creation. Suppressing the revelation of the beauty of His creation is easier in a dirty concrete and stucco city.

God reveals Himself. Men suppress and ignore that revelation on all possible levels. Ro. 1:18 Wall yourself up in a concrete box. Burn the book. Ban the book. Ignore the book. Reject the book. Disparage the book. Laugh at God's book. And then stand before God and tell Him, nobody reached out to me.

The author of Hebrews is going to tell us 3 things about Jesus in this opening salvo. See it there in verse 2.

2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

He is the Word of God. He is a picture of God. He is the visible communication of who God is, both spoken and seen.

He is heir of everything. He owns the world. Think of it this way. Before

Jesus, there was no matter. Nothing made of solid elements. Jesus not only owns everything, it's all His....

He created everything that is. As R. C. Sproul likes to say, there are no renegade molecules in the universe. No renegade atoms. No elements that aren't his possession. They all belong to Him.

I love the old joke about Satan telling God creating man from dirt wasn't such a big deal. He could do it. So God tells Satan, OK, go ahead, create a man from dirt. And Satan grabs a handful of dirt and God says, Whoa whoa whoa, what're you doing? And Satan says, I'm creating a man out of dirt. And God says; Get your own dirt. It's all His.

Both the passage here in Hebrews and the one in John 1 take us for a parallel swim in the deep water. I'm in over my head, but then, so is everybody else. These things are just barely fathomable to our little created brains.

John tells us the same thing the writer of Hebrews tells us. Listen to John 1: *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.*

The first thing we want to see is that the Word becomes evident at the beginning of all creation. And He was with God, and He is God. Co-equals. The Word who is the Son is also God.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

The Word, the Logos, the Son of God, co-equal with God, has caused everything that is created, to exist. It all belongs to Him. And just to confuse you further, Paul says in;

Col. 1:16,17 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or

authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Me and Pam are guilty of watching that stupid show, Big Bang Theory. It's a comedic poke at the emptiness and un-knowing of secularism that has nothing else.

The big bang, if there was one, was when Jesus Christ spoke all things into existence by the word, the Logos, of His power. Exnihilo. Out of nothing.

The secular big bang theory requires something to pre-exist to go bang in the first place. The Word of God puts that flight of fancy to death. Jesus always existed with God. He spoke everything into being that now exists. It all is in Him.

Paul says all things have been created through Him and for Him. *17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together*

In Him all things hold together. In Him all things hold together.

You know, we live in an age where we study sub atomic particles. We know about the building blocks of everything. But ask some scientist to explain what holds those positive and negatively charged particle in their perfect orbits. What *is* the so-called "nuclear glue"?

Isn't it amazing that a man wrote the answer to that question 1950 years ago, and he didn't really understand what he was saying (or did he), and it's right there for anyone to read, and modern secular "so-called" science rejects the answer. *In Him all things hold together.*

Beloved, scientific discoveries do not disprove God. Indeed the more science shows us, the guiltier we are in suppressing the truth in order to facilitate wickedness.

Listen again to John's amazing sentence. *3 All things came into being*

through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Now listen again to what the author of Hebrews says; *1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.*

Can you get a little glimpse of the 'big picture'. Jesus spoke everything that is, into existence. He owns it all. He holds it all together. And ultimately, all of it, even the things He will judge, will come together and shout "GLORY" to Him. All of it.

This thing with Satan, and Adam, and the fall. Sin and rebellion. It's just a temporary set-back. A fart in a whirlwind. And when He's done with it, it also will give Him glory.

Now listen to the author of Hebrews as he continues, and see if it doesn't sound like an echo in the room.

Hebrews 1:3 - 4 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

The three authors and 3 books I've quoted this morning span a roughly 50 year period written by 3 authors who were half a continent apart from each other. Yet, they're all saying the same thing. How is that?

The obvious answer is there is one author in control of this book. The Holy Spirit of God revealed these things which are unknowable to His servants who wrote them down.

At least one of them, John, and perhaps the author of Hebrews too, walked

on this earth and spoke with the Son of God . . in person. Paul met Him in person also, on the road to Damascus.

So, He was holding the molecules, the atomic structure together, and at the same time, sitting around a camp fire somewhere in Judea with his disciples, having some fun and I'm convinced, making some jokes with them. You think Jesus and the disciples didn't laugh on occasion??

Did you ever notice we work best . . when we're laughing at ourselves and each other just a bit.

The point of the Book of Hebrews was to show the Jews, systematically, that Jesus, basically, trumps everything.

He's better than the angels. He's better than Moses. He's better than the sacrifices. He's better than everything! He **IS** the visible, walking, talking, revelation of God to man.

So, look with me at the next few verses real quick, and we'll wind this back down to earth. Small things. Like you and me, and Christmas.

*5 For to which of the angels did He ever say,
"YOU ARE MY SON,
TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"?
And again,
"I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM
AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"?*

*6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says,
"AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."*

Listen to Isaiah, God's prophet, speaking for us the very words of God.

Isaiah 9:6 - 7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called

*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7
There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the
throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with
justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the
LORD of armies will accomplish this.*

God of very God, came to earth. He didn't ride in on a sunbeam and land on the pinnacle of some temple with black hair and yellow saffron robes.

He was born of a woman. But under special miraculous circumstances. He had no earthly human father. The seed of the woman was made alive by God Almighty. He was born of a virgin. He was separate from Adam's race. Born of God.

A tiny baby. Wrapped up in cloth. Laid in a manger. And when that was done, a great shout went up in heaven.

Luke 2:13 - 14. A familiar passage to us. *And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."*

There are several instances where overwhelmed men fall down and worship an angel. And the response is universally the same. Worship God! The angels only worship God. And they instruct men to Worship God.

This is the one time in all eternity that a birth of a human being is accompanied by shouts of Glory in Heaven, by the angels.

Go out from here. Enjoy your feasts. Enjoy ripping open the boxes with the stuff inside. More stuff.

But also, think about the big picture. Jesus, who made everything that is, for His own Glory, holding all things together, laying swaddled in cloth, in a manger, with the armies of God shouting His worship! Pretty spectacular

stuff!