

### **Why settle for Good Enough? Hebrews 1:1-3**

**Intro:** Throughout the history of the Hebrew children they always seemed willing to trade the best for the good. Example: Moses leads them out of bondage to the Egyptians, but when they are in the wilderness and Pharaoh and his army is coming after them they turn to Moses and say, ***“They told Moses, “Weren’t the cemeteries large enough in Egypt so that you had to take us out here in the wilderness to die? What have you done to us, taking us out of Egypt? Back in Egypt didn’t we tell you this would happen? Didn’t we tell you, ‘Leave us alone here in Egypt—we’re better off as slaves in Egypt than as corpses in the wilderness” (Ex 14:11-12). Again when they started getting hunger in the wilderness they said to Moses, “... “Why didn’t God let us die in comfort in Egypt where we had lamb stew and all the bread we could eat? You’ve brought us out into this wilderness to starve us to death, the whole company of Israel”” (Ex 16:3)! They really didn’t have it that good; they just felt it was better to trust in what they had in Egypt than to walk by faith. This is the pattern over and over in their history. When they were ready to go and possess the promised land they sent 12 spies in to the land 10 pessimists came back and said we can’t defeat them; the people are giants and make us look like grasshoppers, but 2 optimists said but look at the size of these grapes, besides with God we can surely defeat those giants. What did they do? They decided to take the good rather than the best God had to offer.***

The same is true with us today; we read and say we believe the Bible. We read how God performed all these miracles and yet when it comes to our own struggles we decide to trust in what we know we can trust – ourselves rather than trust God. Time and time again we will turn to what we can do on our own rather than to turn to God and see what He can do if we just trust Him.

This is the person the book of Hebrews is written to; one who’s faith is such that no matter how many times God has proven Himself in the past every time a new situation comes up they turn to the same old way. Trusting in what they have rather than trusting in God’s better. They are willing to settle for the good rather than trust in the best. The writer of Hebrews is telling us, “By continually looking to the earthly way to get things done we no longer have to “walk by faith;” faith in a God who created the word, faith in a savior we can not see. One of the key themes of Hebrews is faith and a key verse is 10:38, ***“Now the just shall live by faith...”*** From beginning to end the writer is telling us why we can trust Christ as God’s better way.

The first three verses of this book provide a fitting introduction to the book. The Holy Spirit of God moves the writer to start right out by saying, ***“Lets have a Heart to Heart Talk.”*** It tells us why placing our faith in Christ and then continuing to walk by faith from then on is better, in fact is God’s very best.

#### ***[Read Hebrew 1:1-3/pray/release Jr Church]***

Hallmark cards slogan that is, ***“When you care enough to send the very best.”*** The writer of Hebrews is telling us the same thing. The best God had to offer was His Son Jesus Christ. Our faith isn’t in some distant, unknowable, unreachable god who is nothing more than an idea. Our faith is in the real Son of God; therefore we, unlike the Hebrews before us can look to Jesus and know that all He says can be trusted. He validated all the OT teaching and introduced a new and better object of our faith.

Why should we place our faith in God’s very best, Jesus?

**Because Jesus...**

#### **1. Spoke the Very Mind of God We Can Trust His Message** Vv. 1-2a

- a. Dan Crawford was a pioneer missionary to Africa. He was setting one day in the doorway of his tent writing a letter. A little African boy stood for a long while staring in astonishment at the strange white man’s even stranger occupation. At last he could stand it no longer.

“What are you doing, white man?” asked the little boy

The missionary explained that he was writing a letter; he was committing his thoughts to paper. The boy digested the information for a moment and then said, “Ah! I know what you’re doing.

You're putting thoughts in prison."

"Ah, no!" exclaimed the missionary with his ready wit. "You're wrong, son. I'm not putting thoughts into prison. I'm setting thoughts free!"

- b. That is exactly what God did when Jesus came.
- c. The writer begins by dividing the history of mankind into two segments:
  - i. Before Christ – **"...in time past..."** V.1
    1. During this time, God used prophets to reveal his message to the people.
      - a. The *prophets*, special spokespersons for God who wrote many Old Testament books, as well as key people who did not write (such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).
      - b. 2 Peter 1:20-21 explains that believers today can trust the prophets' words: **"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."**
    2. God had used many approaches to send his messages **"...at sundry times and in divers manners ..."** [**at many times and in various ways**] to people during Old Testament times.
      - a. God had spoken to Isaiah in visions (Isaiah 6),
      - b. To Jacob in a dream (Genesis 28:10-22),
      - c. To Abraham and Moses personally (Genesis 18; Exodus 31:18).
      - d. God taught Jeremiah through object lessons (Jeremiah 13)
      - e. He taught the people through a prophet Hosea's marriage (Hosea 1-3).
      - f. Elsewhere, He revealed his direction to the people through a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21)
      - g. Guided them in decision making through the Urim and Thummim (see Exodus 28:30; Numbers 27:21).
      - h. They shouldn't have found it hard to believe that God was speaking to them; only they found it hard to believe that He was doing it through His Son.
  - ii. After Christ – **"...in these last days..."** V. 2a
    1. But now God was speaking to them through His Son; but why?
      - a. Because it was time; Galatians 4:4 tells us.
      - b. The same God who spoke through their forefathers had now spoken to them through His Son
      - c. If they found it beneficial to trust the message of the forefathers – **A good way**
      - d. How much better for them if they now trust God's **Best Way**
      - e. His Son was speaking the very mind of God.
    2. He had demonstrated down through the ages or in **"...times past..."** that natural man was really incapable of fully understanding His mind
    3. So He found it necessary to visit man in person; the person of His Son Jesus.
  - iii. Initially, He told us He would be coming and He was providing as much information as man could handle until finally, **"When the fullness of time..."** came He sent His Son so He could **Speak the very mind of God so we could trust His message.**
  - iv. The senses of man, marvelous as they are, are incapable of reaching beyond the natural world.
    1. For us to know anything about God, He must tell us.
    2. We could never know God if He did not speak to us.
    3. Thus, in the Old Testament, the writer reminds us, "God ... spoke."
  - v. **ILL:** Man lives in a natural "box," this box encloses him within the walls of time and space. Outside of the box is the supernatural and somewhere deep inside himself man knows it is out there. But in himself he doesn't know anything certain about it. So someone comes along and says, "We must find out about the supernatural, the world 'out there.'" And a new

religion is born. Those who become interested run over to the edge of the box, get out their imaginative mental chisels and start trying to chip a hole in the edge of the box—through which they can crawl, or at least peer, out and discover the secrets of the other world. That, figuratively, is what always happens. The Buddhist says that when you have worked and thought yourself into Nirvana, all of a sudden you are out of the box. You have transcended the natural and have found your way into the supernatural. The Muslim says basically the same thing, though in different words. So do all the other religions—Hinduism, Confucianism, or whatever it may be. These are all attempts by man to escape from the natural to the supernatural, to get out of the box. But the problem is, he cannot get himself out.

- vi. By definition, natural man cannot escape into the supernatural. We cannot go into a religious phone booth and change into a superman; we cannot in ourselves or by ourselves go beyond our natural existence. If we are to know anything about God, it will not be by escaping, or climbing, or thinking, or working our way to Him; it will only be by His coming to us, His speaking to us. We cannot, by ourselves, understand God any more than an insect we hold in our hand can understand us. Nor can we condescend to its level, or communicate with it if we could. But God can condescend to our level and He can communicate with us. And He has.  
God became a man Himself and entered our box to tell us about Himself, more fully and completely than He was able to do even through His prophets.
- d. All of man's religions reflect man's attempt to make his way out of the box.
  - i. The message of Christianity, however, is that **"the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"** (Luke 19:10).
  - ii. When God burst into the box, He did it in human form, and the name of that human form is Jesus Christ.
  - iii. That is the difference between Christianity and every other religion in the world.
  - iv. That is why it is so foolish for people to say, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe or what religion you follow."
    1. It makes every difference.
    2. Every religion is but man's attempt to discover God.
    3. Christianity is God bursting into man's world and showing and telling man what He is like.
  - v. Because man by himself is incapable of identifying, comprehending, or understanding God at all, God had to invade the world of man and speak to him about Himself.
  - vi. Expound means **to give a detailed description and explanation of a theory or viewpoint or an explanation of the meaning and implications of a written text.**
  - vii. Jesus was sent so we could know God's mind
- e. You want to know what is on God's mind? Look to Jesus.
- f. And He is the One God sent so He could have a **heart to heart talk** with us so we could full understand the mind of God.
- g. This is the one in whom we are asked to place our faith; faith for salvation, but also faith for our every need.

Why should we place our faith in God's very best, Jesus?

**Because Jesus...**

2. **Speaks with the Authority of God so we can trust His Message** Vv. 2b. In the person of Jesus Christ, God found a perfect vehicle of expression. He simply translated Deity into humanity, or, as John puts it, **"The Word was made flesh..."** (John 1:14).

*Jesus, as God's Son...*

- a. **Has an Inherited claim to all things**
  - i. God has had other heirs.
    1. Abraham, who was one of them, entered Canaan as heir to everything he saw, yet he wandered all his days as a homeless stranger in the very land God had promised him.
      - a. It was rightly his and yet he never possessed it.

- b. He was buried at last in a cave, the only piece of real estate in Canaan he ever owned.
- c. Nevertheless, every stock and stone was his, every bird and every beast from the Delta of the Nile to the Euphrates.
2. The same was true of Jesus.
  - a. He lived in this world as a pilgrim and a stranger, heir to it all, yet not having received the promises.
  - b. Even the tomb He was laid to rest in was borrowed.
  - c. But now the will has been publicly read:
    - i. He is **"appointed heir of all things."**
    - ii. The world in its entirety has been given to Him, and, as executor of the divine will, He is coming back to enforce its every clause.
- ii. Christ's claim to all things is not only inherited;
- b. **He has an Inherent claim to all things**
  - i. **"He made the worlds"**
  - ii. Therefore, as Creator, they belong to Him
  - iii. **ILL:** One day a man needed a black and white picture of the heavens to include in a book he had written. So he went to the nearby planetarium to get one. After leafing through several files of photographs, he finally selected one, a magnificent shot of the Orion Nebula. He asked the planetarium director what the charge for the photo would be. "There's no charge," he replied. When the man displayed surprise, he added with a twinkle in his eye, "We don't own Orion!" He hastily changed the subject when the man asked, "Sir, do you know the One who does?"
  - iv. Jesus made the worlds and lays claim to them all by inherent right.
  - v. We are told that He is **"...the brightness of his [God's] glory, and the express image of his person..."** and that He upholds **"...all things by the word of his power..."**
  - vi. When Isaiah was called to the prophetic ministry, he was given a vision of that glory.
    1. He saw a throne high and lifted up.
    2. He who sat on that throne was so glorious that the shining seraphim, the sinless sons of light, hid their faces in their wings; they dared not gaze upon **"...the brightness of his glory."**
    3. Saul of Tarsus was won to Christ when that **"light... above the brightness of the [noontday] sun..."** Acts 26:13 burst upon him.
    4. He was blinded by **"the brightness of his [Christ's] glory."**
  - vii. Not only does Christ reflect **"...the brightness of his [God's] glory..."** Christ is the **"...express image..."** of God's person.
    1. The phrase **"...express image..."** refers to something **"engraved"** or **"impressed"** like a coin or seal that bears line for line all the features of the instrument making it.
    2. The idea is that of a dye press.
- c. He upholds all things **"...by the word of his power..."**
  - i. Our words, at best, are only legislative, meaning we can establish laws that need to be enforced;
  - ii. His words are executive; meaning He speaks and it is done.
    1. In creation He said, **"Light be!"** and light was!
    2. This same executive power was evident when He lived on earth.
    3. **"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"** (Matt. 8:2), said the leper to Him one day. **"I will; be...clean"** (8:3), said Jesus.
    4. He said to the storm **"...be still..."** at the water became calm.
    5. It was the word of His power as the Son of God, that He came and said, **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."** John 14:13
- d. **Ultimate Authority:** God revealed himself by speaking through his Son. In our day, when tolerance is the cry from every corner, any claim for religious authority meets stubborn resistance. Hebrews claims that God spoke through his Son as the complete revelation of himself. When Jesus was revealed in his true glory at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13), Moses and Elijah

appeared with him. Jews regarded Moses and Elijah as the two greatest prophets. Moses represented the law, and Elijah represented the prophets. These two men had performed many miracles and were great leaders. Yet, God's voice from heaven said, "**You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**" (Mark 1:11 nkjv). Jesus Christ should be our highest authority for faith and daily living. Don't allow any religious leader or teaching to diminish the words of Christ.

Why should we place our faith in God's very best, Jesus?

Because Jesus...

3. **Speaks with the Power of God we can trust His message V.2c – 3**

a. **He has the Power to Overcome all things**

- i. Christ not only created the universe, he also *sustains* it, "**And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**" Colossians 1:17.
  1. He does this by preserving and delivering the universe until he inherits it.
  2. Christ spoke the world into existence (Genesis 1–2), and he supports the world with His omnipotent word (11:3).
    - a. Christ doesn't physically hold up the world, as was said of the mythical Atlas, but he guides the world toward its appointed future—the time when he will receive it as his inheritance (1:2).
    - b. Because Christ sustains everything, nothing in creation is independent from him.
    - c. All things are held together in a coherent or logical way, sustained and upheld, prevented from dissolving into chaos.
    - d. In him alone and by his word, we find the unifying principle of all life.
  3. He is transcendent over all other powers.

4. **Stressful Times:** Jesus was God's agent in creating the world, Colossians 1:16 tells us that "**...by Him all things were created**" (nkjv). As followers of Christ, we may give easy agreement to this truth but deny it in practice. We may believe that Christ knows and controls the laws of heaven (pertaining to salvation and spiritual growth), but you act each day as though your financial, family, or medical problems are beyond his reach. If Jesus could create the universe, then no part of life is out of his control. We shouldn't exclude Jesus' wisdom and the Bible's guidance in our complex problems of life. No expert, professor, doctor, lawyer, or financial adviser knows more about your ultimate security and well-being than Jesus does. Go first to God for advice. Talk to him in prayer and listen to him in his Word. He can sustain you in times of stress. From that perspective you can evaluate all the other wisdom and help made available to you.

b. **He has the Power to Forgive all sins.**

- i. "**...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...**"
  1. Jesus cleansed his people from the ugly stain of sin.
    - a. Sin destroys our ability to know or approach God, but when God purifies us from our sins, he cleanses our record.
    - b. He regards us as though we had never sinned and clothes us in the righteousness of Christ himself (2 Corinthians 5:21).
  2. The word "*purged*" means "*to provide purification*" for - He provided purification for our sins.
    - a. This idea captures the underlying theme of this letter;
    - b. Christ's superior sacrifice for sins
    - c. No sacrifice for sin could be greater than the sacrifice offered by the Creator—his death on a cross.
    - d. Jesus cleansed the world from the domination of sin and took the penalty for our individual sins by dying in our place.
    - e. No other penalty needs to be paid. We can be completely clean because of what Jesus has done.
  3. After providing purification for our sins the text says he "**sat down on the right hand...**"

- a. This signifies that the work was complete and portrays his exalted position.
  - i. Earthly priests would stand and keep offering sacrifices.
  - ii. Their work was never finished.
  - iii. Christ's sacrifice was final and complete.
- b. This is a quote from Psalm 110:1; in this quote the writer combines two truths:
  - i. God's greatness – "...**Majesty on high.**"
  - ii. Jesus' position – "...**right hand...**"
- c. Because of Jesus' position next the "...**Majesty on high**" He has access to all the power of God.
  - i. Remember, just before He ascended to heaven He said this, "**...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth...**"  
Matthew 28:19
  - ii. This means that He has the power to do all things - forgive
  - iii. And He then transferred this power to us; "**And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**" Luke 24:49
- d. Christ's position on God's right hand pictures:
  - i. Power and authority over heaven and earth.
  - ii. He not only has the authority to save; He has the power to save.
- ii. **Forgiven:** The book of Hebrews links God's saving power with his creative power. In other words, the power that brought the universe into being and that keeps it operating is the very power that removes (provides purification for) our sins. God created us, maintains us, and can forgive us. No sin is too big for the Ruler of the universe to forgive. He can and will forgive us when we come to him through his Son. Be honest with God; confess your sins to him. He will forgive and cleanse, "**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**"<sup>1</sup> John 1:9.

**Conclusion:** How is your faith? Are you like the Hebrew children in the wilderness? Do you find yourself continually turning back to some old way that has always been good enough? Today reason in your heart that you will trade the good enough for God's best. Begin today to strive to walk by faith.