

Heb. 1:2-4 The Supremacy of the Son (part 1)

Two weeks ago, we looked at vv. 1-2 and the topic of divine revelation, particularly that Jesus is the climax of all God's revelation. In v. 1 we see that, under the Old Covenant, God "spoke" by the prophets. But, in these "last days" God spoke through his Son. There is a finality of the revelation of God in the Son. And this truth sets up the argument of the entire Book of Hebrews. Today, we begin looking at of the reasons WHY Jesus is the climax of divine revelation. In vv. 2-4 and following, the author begins to show the supremacy of Christ above the fathers of the OT, above the prophets, and then, even above the angels. And this theme of supremacy will continue throughout the Book. Look at 8:1 "**Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven . . .**" Today, there is no greater word, there is no greater revelation; in fact there is no one greater! Jesus is supremely supreme! Jesus is majestically majestic! Jesus is preeminently preeminent! Jesus is ultimately ultimate! Jesus is absolutely absolute! In Him we find "***all the fullness of God***" (Col. 1:21) The very things we say about God we say about Jesus. The very things that ONLY God can do, Jesus does! In vv. 2-4 we have 7 affirmations to the supremacy of the Son. We will on consider the first one today: He is the heir. Look at v. 2: "**whom he appointed the heir of all things.**" Let me ask, "What does it mean to be an heir, and particularly, the supreme heir. Consider 3 truths: 1) His appointment; 2) His position; and 3) His inheritance.

1. Appointment. In v. 2 we read: "**whom he appointed.**" Christ was appointed by God. Let's think for a few minutes about this appointment. Have you ever been appointed to do something? Has your boss ever assigned a special task for you? Kids, have your parents ever given you a special job to fulfill? I remember my dad saying to me as I got older, "*Jon, take care of your sister.*" And believe me, I did. I'd like to think that no boy at school wanted to get near her. For I watched over her like a hawk. That was my special appointment. Well, God has appointed Jesus as the heir of all things. So what does this mean?

We see this kind of language concerning Jesus appointment throughout the Scriptures. Ps. 2:6-8: "**As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.**" I will tell of the decree: **The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession."** Ps. 89:7: "**And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.**" Ps 110:1: "**The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand . . ."**" This means there is no greater authority with which such an appointment can be made. And this appointment was made before the foundations of the world. As we note in Ps. 2:7: "**I will tell of the decree.**"

Now, you might ask, "*if Jesus is God, how can God appoint Him?*" In other words, if God already owns everything, how can He appoint Himself heir. Or we might put it another way, "*If the Son, in essence, is the same as the Father (which He is), then why speak in such a way?*" Well, in order to understand how this can be, we must put this "appointment" in the right context. I believe this statement shows us that this appointment is not in reference to the Son of God in his eternal position of the Trinity. But instead, this appointment is in reference to his appointment as savior, as mediator, as the great servant of Isaiah 53:6, who . . . "**was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement**

that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” And what did Jesus, the Son have to do in order to be our savior? He had to come. **“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us”** (John 1:14). This is the incarnation of the Son. The Son of God took on flesh. He is not here referring to his eternal existence as deity. HE is not referring to God the Son in his glory from all eternity. There is GREAT mystery here! But, this appointment has everything to do with his HUMILIATION, in order to be our savior. In other words, this “appointment” is always in the context of Christ taking on flesh, being born (from a virgin), living a life of perfect obedience, and then dying on the cross. Even here in Heb. 1 we see this in v. 3: **“After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high . . .”** You see, the glory of Jesus is the same glory as the father. This is why Jesus can say in John 17:5: **“John 17:5: “And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”**

When he came as the Son of Man, as a servant, to save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21), his glory was veiled in human flesh. And as the Son of Man, He laid down his life on the cross, taking our sins upon himself as a sacrifice. Let me ask, *“What glory do we see in such a death?”* There is absolutely great glory in his death, in what it accomplished. But, in the death itself, his blood flowed from his body. There is nothing more humiliating than the death of Christ. But, for this task, He was appointed.

This appointment includes both suffering and glory. Look with me to Phil. 2:6-9 we read: **“who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name . . .”**

Before moving on, let me say very clearly, the Son of God is supreme in exactly the same way God the Father is supreme. Look at Heb. 1:8: **“But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.”** Only God has the right to ALL AUTHORITY. This is why the Son can be given ALL AUTHORITY. Jesus is equal to God, and in his essence, there is no subordination, there is no lessening of authority, there is no submission. And the same goes for the Holy Spirit. When Jesus says things like, **“the Father is greater than I”** (John 14:28), or **“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all”** (John 10:29), he is referring to his humiliation; He is referring to his work as mediator and savior. He is referring to his position appointed by the Father as Son of Man, as our savior. In this regard, I do not believe Jesus ever gave up ANY of his attributes as deity, nor does He have a lesser authority. In this way, we can say that Jesus is appointed by the Father.

2. Position. Next, notice the superiority of Christ’s position. He is the “HEIR.” An heir has a special position that no one else has the right to. I think we understand the meaning of this term. My children are the heirs of my estate. Because they are MY children, they have a special position that my neighbors do not have. They have a particular honor that all the other children in the world do not have, at least as MY heir. In the same way, God has appointed Jesus as the “Heir.” He is the Son.

A good example is Jesus parable in Matt. 21. He speaks of a master who plants a vineyard and hires workers to keep his property and work the land. And when the season was right for the harvest, he sent servants to collect the fruit. But, they beat, and stoned, and killed these servants. So, he sent other servants and they did the same. And in v. 37 Jesus says, “**Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’**” Why do you think they will respect the son? Because He comes with the authority of the Father. He comes with dignity and honor and dominion, not as a servant, but as the heir. And then in v. 38: “**But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’**” To be the heir means to be the Lord. In Gal. 4:1 we see this comparison. “**I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything . . .**” The word “owner” is *kurios*, which means Lord, hence, “**OWNER of everything.**”

As we’ve seen, Jesus as the Son from eternity already owns everything. For He is the creator of the world and the one who upholds the world. (See vv. 2-3) Only God can do this! He is already the owner. This is why He can say in John 5:19 : “**For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.**” Or, in John 16:14-15: “**He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine . . .**” But, as we’ve already noted, this honor of being appointed the heir is in reference to Jesus as the savior, the mediator. Again, it is not as though the Son does not own everything already. There is no competition between God the Father and God the Son. Both are equally sovereign. The difference is only in manner. The Father does all things “by” the Son, and the Son does all things “from” the Father. This is such a mystery! But I believe this has everything to do with what theologians have called the “eternal generation” of the Son (which we can discuss outside this sermon).

To be the heir in this regard has everything to do with his work as savior. Do you remember Peter’s first sermon in Acts 2. Based upon the cross and the resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God, he says, “**Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.**” Again, in Phil. 2, we see his humiliation, his obedience, his death on the cross. But, then what happens? Vv. 9-11: “**Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**” At the end of the day, The Son is the Heir. This makes Him the Lord. And He is the possessor of all things. And through Him, all things come down to us.

3. Inheritance. In v. 2 we see that He is the “**heir of all things.**” As God, He is equal to the Father in essence. And as creator he owns it all already. I think we get this. When I die, my children will hopefully get a house and a car and if we have any money left over, they will get that. It won’t be much. But consider the kids of a rich man. When Donald Trump dies, his kids are going to get a lot, millions and millions of dollars and millions and millions of worth of assets. And these things are earthly. But everything God owns Jesus owns. And from this perspective, He owns his possession now, which is everything in the universe. But there is so much more to the meaning of this phrase.

In this context, Jesus' inheritance has everything to do with his special "appointment," his mission. This is the plan of God revealed "**in these last days**" (v. 2a). This is Jesus' work as savior. Mark 10:45: "**But even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life a ransom for many**" (Mark 10:45). Concerning his name, the angel says to Mary, "**You shall call his name Jesus, for He . . . shall save his people from their sins**" (Matt. 1:21). Because of his special appointment, the God-man, God-incarnate, the Son of Man, the mediator, the savior, has been given an inheritance that He did not have before (though it was planned from eternity). What did he do? He humbled himself. He took on flesh. He was obedient unto death on a cross, taking our sin upon himself as his very own. And then He rose from the dead. And right before He ascended to the Father, He says to his disciples and to us in Matt. 28:18: "**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**" He says this after he finished what he came to do, save sinners . . . We are his reward!

Remember Ps. 2:8 which we read earlier. God says "**Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.**" I think of Isaiah 53:11-12. After speaking of God's "servant" who come and bear the iniquities of his people he says, "**Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. THEREFORE, I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong . . .**" Why? "**because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.**" And just after these verses in cp. 54 we read: "**Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out . . .**" This is the most beautiful truth. Though the Son is the heir of all things, his most precious inheritance are those he saves! We are the "firstfruits" of the ALL THINGS. And Yes, He will inherit a redeemed world. And there will be a new heaven and a new earth. But, the ALL things he has inherited begins with US.

Application: We are joint heirs with Christ. Look at Gal. 4:1-7: "**I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.**"

Application: Our inheritance is secure. If you are in Christ today, there is nothing anyone can do to take away your inheritance. Jesus finished everything He came to do. And now He sits at the right hand of God as our great high priest. This means ALL God's promises are fulfilled in Christ. We are merely waiting for his 2nd coming. Rom. 8:31 ff. "**What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or**

sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Application: Our inheritance only comes through suffering. Rom. 8:15-17: “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

Application: Only Christians receive an inheritance. Heb. 9:15: “Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance . . .” Also in Heb. 11:7-8: “By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Only those who are united to Christ by faith will receive what God has promised to give in Christ.