



3: A Word Worth Listening To

"...His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"

Hebrews 1:2 – 3

So we have God's last word in Jesus. Now, to show us how much weight that word should carry, the writer of the Book of Hebrews goes on on to tell us about who Jesus is. He tells us seven things about Jesus in these verses.

Jesus Is The God Appointment Heir Of Everything

Jesus is the "heir of all things" but don't think of a son receiving his inheritance when his father dies. In the Bible, to be an heir of something just means to be given possession of it. So what this means is that Jesus has been appointed by God to take ownership of everything: it all belongs to Him; God has given it to Him. By God's decree Jesus is sovereign Lord of the universe."

Jesus Made Everything

"Through whom also He made the worlds". Jesus was the agent through whom God made the worlds. But didn't the Father create everything? There is no conflict here with what is said in Genesis 1, the Father did create everything but He created through Jesus. What this means, and the point here, is that Jesus possesses all the creative power of the Father.

The word translated "worlds" points to the physical creation but it also points to the ages of history. Jesus was not just active in the original creation of the universe, God also made the ages through Him. In other words, through Jesus God laid out and is working out the course of history.

Jesus Holds Everything Together

"Upholding all things by the word of his power." The word translated "upholding" means both to sustain and to rule, or administer. Jesus holds the universe together and also administers the rules that govern it. He does it by the "word of His power." He speaks; it happens.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."

Colossians 1:15 – 17

Jesus Is The Brightness Of God's Glory

Jesus is the brightness of God's glory and that is something that could only be said of someone who is Himself God.

Sometimes, when the Bible speaks of God's glory it's just talking about the physical manifestation of His presence but here the glory of God is the sum total of everything He is. To say that Jesus is the brightness of God's glory means that in Him we can see everything that is true of God. He is a perfect representation of His Father.

Jesus Is The Exact Image Of God

The R.S.V. brings out the meaning of the phrase, "The express image of His person" very well: it reads, "He bears the very stamp of His nature," Jesus is the exact representation of what God is for He possesses all the attributes of God in full measure.

"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Colossians 2:9

Jesus Made Purification For Sins

Next the writer drops in what will become a main theme in the Book and one that he will develop much more fully: Jesus' sacrifice for sin. He uses lots of different phrases when he writes about Jesus' sacrifice — phrases that we have become familiar with by use. Jesus made "propitiation for sins" (2:17), He bore sin (9:28), He offered a sacrifice for sins (10:12), He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (9:26), He brought about redemption from transgressions as the mediator of the new covenant (9:15). Here Jesus is said to have "made purification for sins": He took away the defilement of sins, and the aorist tense that's used tells us that He did it once and for all: what He did need never be repeated.

He "made purification for sins" is an expression that's only found in the Book of Hebrews. A literal translation of it would be "after having wrought for Himself cleansing for sins" It suggests the idea of someone acting upon himself and in his own interests. The idea is that Jesus made purification for sins by His own act: acting upon Himself (offering Himself as the sacrifice), and for Himself (acting in His own interest).

Jesus Is Enthroned In Glory

Jesus "Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Sitting is the posture of rest: the implication is that His work is done (the writer will come back to that idea later). To be seated at the right hand of a king is to be in a position of dignity and honour. "The Majesty on high" is God. To call Him the Majesty on High emphasises His greatness and elevates our sense of Jesus' greatness.

- *How has thinking about these verses changed your view of Jesus?*
- *What does what you have learned from these verses mean for everyday life?*
- *In what way can Jesus be said to have acted in His own interest in offering Himself as a sacrifice for sins?*