

And This Will We Do, If God Permits
An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**
Chapter 3: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ
Hebrews 1:1-4
26: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ: Part 11

WAOY Tuesday 02/03/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse-by-verse journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and today I want to continue to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** taught about the Preeminence of Jesus Christ. So let's open our Bibles and read **Hebrews 1:1-4** again together:

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.
3 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.

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking at the seven *excellencies* that the writer of **Hebrews** shows us in the second half of verse two and all of verse three, so let's read those verses again together:

2 ...whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
3 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,

Now in these two verses we can see seven very powerful *excellencies* about Jesus that we need to examine very closely. Those seven excellencies are:

1. His Heirship
2. His Creatorship
3. His Brightness, or Radiance
4. His Being
5. His Administration
6. His Sacrifice
7. His Exaltation

And on the last broadcast we began to examine the third excellency that the writer of **Hebrews** lists for us here, which is that Jesus Christ is the Brightness (Radiance) of God's Glory. And I want to continue to look at this third excellency on today's broadcast. So let's look again at the first part of **Hebrews 1:3**:

3 And He is the radiance of His glory ...

So, from this we can see that the writer of **Hebrews** is saying here that Jesus Christ is the Brightness of the Glory of God. Now there is much being said and written today about the Glory of God. But just what *is* the Glory of God? How does God view His Own Glory? You see, there is an overriding principle about God that we need to understand, and that permeates all through everything that God does... and that Principle is this:

God does all that He does for His Own Glory.

That is the reason why God does what He does in the Universe. From creating all things, to tearing things down, to saving unworthy sinners, to judging the wicked: God does everything that He does throughout all of His Creation, so that He alone will get the maximum amount of Glory. Now when you first hear that, you may tend to think that this sounds *odd*. It may even appear that I am making God out to be egotistical by what I just said, but please hear me out.

First of all, we must come to the conclusion that Man is *not* the center of the Universe; God is. Man is not the most important thing in all of God's Creation... God is. God is infinitely wiser and infinitely more important... more lovely, stronger, and more valuable than anything else that He made, or anyone else that He made. So we are not the best and we are not that which God values the most.

Now there *is* a religion, however, that does teach that Man is the center of the Universe... that Man is the most important thing in all of Creation and that the Glory of Man is the most important thing that there is. And that religion is called Humanism, but it *isn't* Christianity.

Biblical Christianity teaches that all men are sinful; they are fallen; they deserve God's Wrath and damnation because of the continued wickedness of their depraved hearts. It is only because of God's Mercy and Grace that any human is saved... not because he earned it, not because he is worthy of it, and not because he deserves it, and certainly not because of any inherent Glory that Man possesses.

We must understand that the battle between who is glorified - God or Man - is the titanic struggle that has occupied the earth for over 6,000 years. And because we are fallen and because we are sinful, because we are depraved and ruined, we seek to rob God of His Glory and take ownership of that Glory for ourselves.

So sinful, fallen man goes about to make himself worthy of the Glory that only rightfully belongs to God. And he engages in techniques that are specifically designed by satan to steal the Glory that belongs to God and gives that Glory to Man. And we do that naturally, by nature, by *default*, without having to be taught how to do it. It comes naturally to us; we don't even have to consciously *try* to do it. It automatically flows out from a sinful and fallen nature, which is part and parcel to what it means to be lost and fallen.

And you hear signals of this ungodly effort to rob God of His Glory and take ownership of it ourselves in our daily conversations all the time... as we talk about "self" constantly. It is very common today, even in Church, unfortunately, to hear people talk about seeking to become self-fulfilled, or to build up their self-worth or self-esteem. And they talk about self-assuredness as though these terms were godly things that believers should pursue.

Of course, all of that talk about “self” comes from the ungodly foundation of *self-righteousness*: a righteousness that is, in fact, the very epitome of *unrighteousness* and one that pertains to the self of Man. It is a “glory”, if you will, that does not come from God and does not honor God but comes from inside the ruined nature of a fallen, sinful human being. We are being taught in our day to “look inward” and to tap into that “inner power”... to get in touch with our “inner strength” as though we humans possess something inherently good or valuable.

And of course the goal of all the false teaching of self-righteousness is that Man can become great in the earth, that Man can fulfill all his dreams and “be all that he can be”... that Man can be made much of and do great things, and become important and well thought of and praised and, yes, *worshipped*. And the fact that this kind of unbiblical teaching attracts such a large following today does not mean that it is true. No, it only proves how fallen we really are. And that is why when I talk about God being more worthy than we are, it offends so many.

But contrast all of this effort to bring Glory to Man with what Scripture teaches. For example, please look at the reason that God says why He chose us for Salvation in **Isaiah 43:6&7**.

**6 “I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’
And to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’
Bring My sons from afar
And My daughters from the ends of the earth,
7 Everyone who is called by My name,
And whom I have created for My glory,
Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.”**

So we can see here that the only reason, the main reason, and the paramount reason as to why God chose any of us for Salvation... rescuing us from our own inherent sinfulness, is one single reason:

“For my Glory!”

And all throughout the Scriptures, God is not bashful about this as He repeats it often, using various ways and forms, but always saying the very same thing: **God does all that He does for His Own Glory.**

For example, in **Isaiah 48:9**, God said that the reason why He withholds His Anger from his Chosen people - even when they sin against Him - is *not* because of any Glory that they possess but simply for His Own Name's Sake, which is just another way of saying "For My Glory".

God said in **Isaiah 66:5** that the reason why some of the people of God were rejected was because of the sake of God's Name, or in other words, for the sake of God's Glory. Even the Apostle John taught in **1 John 2:12** that the reason why God forgives us is for His Name's sake or for God's Glory. And on and on it goes... this same thread runs all the way through all 66 Books of the Holy Bible:

God does all that He does for His Own Glory.

So even though we are mostly interested in what will benefit *us*, God is passionate about His Own Glory and is passionate that He is magnified, and that He is loved and honored, and feared and worshipped and obeyed... and that His Glory is above every other glory in all the universe.

And this goes so far as to govern how and what and why God does what He does. In other words, if God could do one thing or the other, the deciding factor as to why God did that thing but did *not* do this other thing is that by doing *that* thing... by answering prayers to the extent that He did... by raising up or casting down that thing in the way that He did it... God would receive the maximum amount of Glory, or else He would not have done it.

In other words, a very important characteristic about the God of the Bible is that God is not reluctant. God does not do things out of coercion; God is not forced into doing something that He really doesn't want to do. No, God is absolutely sovereign over everything, all the time, and God always does what brings Himself Glory.

And we also must understand that God is under no obligation to inform us about His decisions. He doesn't owe us an explanation. We are the ones who have every reason to trust that what God does is best... we have no reason to doubt His Judgment or His decision-making process. And God has absolutely no reason to feel obligated to answer to us.

So many times when God does something, it may not look to our human eyes that the decision that God made is best. In fact it may look like God has abandoned us or that He is asleep or that He has forgotten about us. So we are left during those times to trust in the Character and Nature of God as revealed in Scripture; God is Good and God is Love, and God is Wise and Effectual, doing all things after the counsel of His Own Will and all to His Own Glory. And we are left with trusting in the Promise of God that all things work together for good, and God will never leave us nor forsake us. After all that is what **faith** is all about... trusting that God is exactly Who He said He was, and that God will do exactly what He said He will do, regardless of how it looks and regardless of how it affects us personally.

Faith is not a tool to manipulate God into doing what you want Him to do. Faith is the power to rest in Christ, Who is the very Brightness of God's Glory, even when things don't look good at all because you *know* - you don't *guess*; you don't *wonder*; you don't even just *hope* - you *know* that the only reason that what happened to you happened, is because God either wanted it to happen, or because God allowed it to happen. And if your Heavenly Father who loves you allowed it or wanted it, the Promise of Scripture is that it will work together with everything else in your life for the greater good of the Glory of God. And ultimately, God will be glorified by that thing that happened to you, which is all that believers live for anyway.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.