

JESUS IS BETTER: letter to the Houstonians

Sermon Study Guide | Part One: Better than Angels | 9/10/17 | @pastorerichuffman

PURPOSE OF THIS SERMON SERIES

1. To become more familiar with the Bible through a study of Hebrews
2. To convey the stark differences between the Gospel of Jesus and religions of men
3. To inspire people to believe Jesus (as opposed to just “believing *in* Jesus”)

WHAT IS HEBREWS?

1. What makes Hebrews unique among other Bible books?

2. What is the core message of Hebrews?

TWO KEY QUESTIONS

1. What makes Jesus different?
 - a. Why does this question matter?

 - b. How do you answer this question?

 - c. Play devil’s advocate and make a list of reasons why someone might think Jesus is really no different than any other great man or religious leader.

2. What difference does Jesus make?
 - a. How, if at all, have you seen or experienced the difference Jesus makes?

 - b. What are the arguments to be made against the idea that Jesus makes a difference?

KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 1:1-4

In the past God spoke to our ancestors ***through the prophets*** at many times and in various ways, ***but in these last days*** he has spoken to us ***by his Son***, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ***The Son is the radiance of God's glory*** and ***the exact representation of his being***, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided ***purification for sins***, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much ***superior to the angels*** as the name he inherited is superior to theirs.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What does the author mean when he says “these last days”? What was the difference between God’s approach “in the past” and “in these last days”?
2. What do you think of the claim that Jesus is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being”? What are the implications of such claims about Jesus?
3. How did Jesus provide purification for sins? Which sins?
4. What does the purification for sins have to do with being superior to the angels? What’s the writer’s point?

SUMMARY

Hebrews 1:1-4 provides the author’s thesis for his entire book. In it, the author insists that Jesus isn’t to be treated like just another gifted teacher; Jesus is the Son of God, the exact representation of God’s being. His Gospel isn’t just a list of laws; it’s God with us, spilling His own blood to make peace with us by the forgiveness of sins - all sins! Jesus’ identity is what makes him different, and forgiveness of sins is the difference he makes. What are your thoughts about this teaching? What questions and doubts remain for you?