

The Greatness of the Son

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into Hebrews chapter 1, focusing on the supremacy of Jesus Christ as the Son of God who speaks on behalf of God in these last days. The sermon highlights seven key aspects of Jesus: He is the inheritor of all things, the creator of the universe, the radiance of God's glory, the exact representation of God's being, the sustainer of all things by his powerful word, the purifier of sins through his sacrifice, and the ruler seated at the right hand of God. The significance of Jesus as the ultimate revelation of God and the completion of His work is emphasized, urging listeners to heed His message.

Scripture: Hebrews 1:1, Philippians 2:9, Colossians 1:15, John 1:3, Ephesians 1:18, Revelation 21:23, Psalm 110:1

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Description

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Transcript

We're in Hebrews chapter 1, and we started last week in our study on the book of Hebrews, and we'll read verses 1 through 9, Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1 through 9. God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by 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, having become so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did he ever say, You are my son, today I have begotten you, and again I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. But when he again brings the first born into the world, he says, Let all the angels of God worship him.

And to the angels, he says, who makes his angel spirits and his ministers a flame of fire. But to the Son, he says, Your throne of God is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. Therefore, God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions. I'm not going to recap much on last week, simply that God at different times spoke to the fathers through the prophets, but he has in these last days spoken to us through, or in, or by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things.

Now, remember we said that he's now going to speak about the Son. The whole book is really about Jesus, showing that Jesus is a better sacrifice, that he is a better high priest, that he is better than the angels, which is part of this chapter. But here is a brief expose, just a brief few statements concerning who Jesus is.

And the writer gives us seven things about the Lord Jesus, and I'm hoping that this evening we can get through those seven things in verses 2 and verse 3. So, beginning then in verse 2, he has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things. He has appointed him heir of all things. And so, one of the things we're going to see as we go through the book is that Jesus does not take any position for himself, but the Father gives him these positions, as we just read concerning the angels.

When did he ever say to the angels, you are my son? But to him, he says, your throne is established. And so the Father declares and appoints Jesus as the heir or the inheritor of all things. So, what are all things? Well, you should know by now that there's this very deep theological concept.

All things means all things, everything. The worlds, the universe, the church, all things are his. He receives and inherits everything.

And there are many scriptures that deal with us. The other thing about Hebrews is that every statement that is made, not only is it based on the Old Testament, but it's also based on various other statements in the New Testament. And so, every thought in the book of Hebrews is confirmed, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

And in Psalm 2, verse 8, he says, ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession. Obviously, prophetic concerning the Lord Jesus. So, he's going to give him the nations and the ends of the earth.

Everything in this world is going to be given to him as his inheritance. Now, that's wonderful. I think that everybody dreams about having some long-lost uncle somewhere who's left them a million dollars.

And I have many uncles like that. I get emails from Nigeria almost every day telling me about some uncle or aunt who left me a million dollars. Obviously, that's not true.

And there is something more important than material inheritance. And in the book of Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 18, remember we touched on this again very recently, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened. Paul is saying, I'm praying that you will understand that you may know what is the hope of his calling and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

I've heard many preachers preach on this verse speaking about the inheritance that we get. No, this is not about what we get. It's about what he gets.

It's his inheritance, not our inheritance, his inheritance. And what is his inheritance? The church, the saints. And he says, I'm praying that you may understand the riches of the glory of his inheritance, what he's getting.

Now, we look at the church and we say, well, you know, the church is beset by trouble and heresy and divisions and all sorts of terrible things and sin, and the list goes on and on and on. But remember that he is preparing for himself, in the book of Ephesians, a glorious bride without spot and without blemish. That is what he came for.

That's what he died for, is that he might gain for himself a bride. And that bride is going to be glorious once he has finished with her, not because she is glorious in of herself. And when the world looks at the church today, it has many accusations to bring against the church.

But when he's done with us, he's going to have perfected us individually, he's going to have perfected the church, and he's going to present us to himself a glorious church without spot and without blemish. And Paul says, I want you to understand how important you are in the scheme of things, not because we are important, but because he redeemed us, and he is purging and cleansing us, and he is preparing us for himself a glorious bride. And so, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints? That's what it's all about.

Remember that as we go through the book of Hebrews, and we're going to wrestle with these concepts of him being a son, that in him becoming man, becoming flesh, and dying on the cross, he really did not gain anything in terms of position, or of power, or of glory. He had all of those things to begin with. He is God from all eternity.

He has all the glory and all the power that God has. So, what did he get out of his suffering on the cross? He got the church. That is what he didn't have before.

That's the only thing he didn't have before, and that is what he gains, and that is what his inheritance is. And so, he is the inheritor of all things. So, the heir, or inheritor, of all things.

So, the angels are not going to inherit. In a sense, we're not going to inherit while we inherit eternal life, and heaven, and all of those things. And really, our inheritance is the Lord Jesus.

While we are his inheritance, he is our inheritance. When we chase after earthly inheritances, and people can't wait for their granny to kick the bucket so that they can get some money, and this is just the sad reality of life, we have an inheritance which is far more glorious than money and gold. We have an inheritance that's far greater than even heaven itself.

We have the Lord Jesus as our inheritance. So, he is the heir of all things. The second thing is, he is the creator.

Through him, through whom? Through Jesus. Also, he made the worlds. Through him, he made the worlds.

Notice, he doesn't say the world, but the worlds, the universe. And my mind boggles, and it should do the same for all of us when we consider the size of this universe. We don't have a clue how big it is.

And, you know, they've been traveling to Mars, and eventually landed on Mars after, what was it, three years or something, of traveling at incredible speeds just to get somewhere in our own solar system, let alone in the galaxies beyond that, which are unreachable, which are light years, and light millennia away. It just goes on and on and on and on. And he made all of those things.

He made all of those things. And he made them by his word, which we're going to see in a moment. So, he made the worlds.

He is the creator. Now, some Christians will argue about, did Jesus create or did God create? But remember that in all of these things, Jesus is God. We cannot separate them to that extent that one is doing, that Jesus is doing something that the Father does not do, and that the Spirit does not do.

And while it's clear, it says that through whom he made the worlds, through Jesus, God. So, the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, used—it's not a good word, but it's the best word I can come up with—Jesus as the agent of creation. So, he was the one who created on behalf of the Father and the Spirit.

It's not like he did his own thing. You know, there are Christians, there are preachers who create this impression that Jesus is out there, he's just making the world, he's doing his own thing. No, Jesus is acting in absolute concert, in absolute agreement with the Father and the Spirit.

And while we see clearly that the Father has a different role, in a sense, the Son has a different role, the Spirit has a different role, they are completely one in essence. They are completely one in purpose. They are completely one in every detail.

And, you know, it's hard to come up with explanations for these things. But, you know, when my finger presses the button, we say, well, it was my finger that pressed the button. But was it just my finger, or did my mind work through my finger? And can you separate the two and say, well, my finger's just—and we know that there are people who are sick, who are not well, where the muscles act independently of the brain.

And that's not healthy. But in a healthy person, these things operate together. My hand does not operate contrary to my mind, and it doesn't do its own thing, but it is an extension of my mind.

Maybe not always, when I try and catch a ball, it just doesn't work. But you get the point. And, of course, the relationship between Jesus and the Father is far better than the relationship between my eye and my hand.

My eye and hand doesn't always coordinate too well, but the Father and the Son are perfectly coordinated. So to say, well, you know, it was Jesus creating. No, Jesus was creating as God, and as an extension, as the agent, as the one who was actually doing the work on behalf of the Father and the Son.

But he is the one who did the work. In John chapter 1 verse 3, all things were made through him. Notice again, it doesn't say all things were made by him, but it was made through him.

Is there a difference when it says all things were made by him, and when it says all things were made through him? Yes, there's a difference. The difference is that, again, he is the agent. He is the one who is doing the work, but God, the Trinity, is working through him.

So he's not doing his own thing. God is working through him. So all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.

Now, remember that the writer is setting the scene. He's trying to get us to understand that God has spoken through Jesus. The problem is that many unbelievers have a low view of Jesus.

Oh, you know, he's the baby in the manger. Oh, yeah, he died on the cross. And while those things are true, we forget that he is God, that he created everything.

He is the creator, and that nothing was made without him. That's the one that God is now speaking through. That is the one who is better than the angels.

That's the one who is better than Melchizedek. That's the one who is better than the high priests, who is better than the earthly sacrifices. He is the creator himself.

When I was a young Christian, we used to have a song, and I can't remember, but we used to sing about this amazing thing that this great creator became the crucified, became the one who died in my place. Not just another man, not just a prophet, but God himself, the one who created the universe, died in my place upon the cross of Calvary. And so all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.

Now we get to a little bit more difficult ideas in verse 3. Who, Jesus, being the brightness of his glory, the brightness of his glory. The word brightness here, the best word I can use for you is the outshining, the outshining. I don't know if that's a real word, but I think you understand what I'm meaning.

They have a very fancy English word, which I won't bother you with. But the outshining of his glory, the brightness of his glory. John says, we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the father.

We beheld his glory, and obviously speaking about Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus does not reflect the glory of the father. Jesus is the glory of the father.

We all understand there's a difference between the sun and the moon. The moon simply reflects the light of the sun. But the sun, through an atomic fission process, and I'm going to come back to that technical thing in a moment, generates this vast amount of energy, and light, and heat, and the moon simply reflects that back.

Jesus says, I am the light of the world. Jesus does not reflect the glory of God. Jesus is the glory of God.

Jesus is the sun, S-U-N, not the moon. Remember, Moses went and spent time with God, and he comes down from the mountain, and his face is shining. And they say, cover your face, because this is too glorious.

But Moses is not radiating, he's not outshining the glory of God. He is simply reflecting the glory of God, because it says that that glory would fade away. So when he had been in God's presence, that glory was bright, and over time that glory would fade, and then he would go back into the presence of God, and that light would, that shining would be there in all its strength.

Moses is simply reflecting the glory. Jesus is the glory. The light shines from him.

Remember, the book of Revelation says that the new Jerusalem has no need for the sun and the moon. There is no sun, there is no moon, because he is the light of the city. He is the light of the city.

And so, I don't know how this translates into mechanics, but clearly Jesus, not only in a spiritual sense, radiates the glory of God, but in a literal sense, he radiates the glory of God. And he gives light to the world, not just in a spiritual sense, or in an intellectual sense, but he gives light to the world in a physical sense. Remember, if we go back to creation, the first thing that God does is he creates light and darkness,

but only two days later does he create the sun.

So where did the light come from in the first couple of days? He is the light, and so he physically radiates and shines the light and the glory of God. So he is the brightness of his glory, the brightness of his glory. And of course, this is what awed John, because he says we were able to actually see that glory.

Now, obviously what John saw was toned down, because no one can see the Lord, the Scripture says, and live, because his glory is so radiant, so glorious, so powerful, that we would just be consumed. If you've ever seen a moss fly into a lamp or into a candle, and in fact, in the old days, they used to have these big spotlights that came out of the Second World War. They still use them at Hollywood and things like that.

Massive arc lamps that send these huge—and I remember in the Air Force, watching the moss fly into that light. They're not even touching the flame. The flame is enclosed inside a big glass light thing.

But just into that ray of light, and they are vaporized instantly. It's just smoke, gone. And if we were to come into God's presence, we would be vaporized, literally, in the same way.

And that's why we need new bodies, so that in the new life, in the life hereafter, we would be able to stand his presence. We'd be able to survive being in his presence, because in these bodies, we will never be able to. That is his amazing glory.

Now, the next thing is that he is the express image of his person. The express image of his person. The Greek word here is a word that is translated exactly the same in English, character.

Now, I'm not saying character in the sense of personality, but character in the sense of A, B, C, characters that we write with. That is the Greek word, exactly the same as English, character. So, he is the character of his person.

Now, what does that mean? The Greek word character refers to a seal. Remember that those days, rich and important people would have a seal, often in the form on their ring, and it would be an engraving of his mark, or of his—today, we would call it a logo or a crest. And so, that would be engraved on his seal, and then when he sealed a contract or a letter, they would put wax on the letter, and they would press the seal down, and that would leave an imprint in the seal.

And the imprint is exactly the same as what is on the ring. That is the character. That is that word that is being used.

In other words, if you look at the seal, and we understand that in a seal in a seal like that, the one is reversed. So, in the ring itself, or in the seal, what are valleys will be peaks in the wax. So, again, the illustration is limited.

But, if you've seen the seal, you know exactly what the—if you've seen the wax, if you've seen the imprint, you know exactly what the seal looks like. There's no question about it. And that's the word that he is using here.

So, God, in a sense, imprinted himself. And you can look at Jesus, and you see God. And didn't Jesus say that over and over, especially in the Gospel of John? If you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

If you've heard me, you've heard the Father. I do nothing that I don't see the Father do. And so, he is that imprint, the express image.

The word—the translators, obviously, it's difficult to translate some of these concepts, and that's true in any language. So, he's not just the image of his person, but he is the express image. And, again, our English changes today when we use the word express.

We think of something happening fast, an express train, or an express letter, which today, I believe, is now going to take two weeks to get somewhere. But it's not express in that sense. Express in the sense that it is the exact, the exact image of his person.

So, he's not saying he is the image of what God looks like. This is one of the problems we have, is we try to put God in our shape, and we say, well, you know, God has long white hair, or, you know, he has blue eyes, or whatever. No, he doesn't.

He's a spirit. That's not what Jesus is portraying. If you've seen Jesus, you saw Jesus born a Jew, and he certainly didn't have blue eyes, and he certainly didn't have blonde hair.

So, that's not what he's talking about. He's talking about his person, the express image, the exact image of his person, of who he is. When we speak about someone's person, we're meaning who is that person? What is his personality? We, same word, his personality.

We've seen his personality. We've seen his grace. We've seen his love.

We've seen his intolerance for sin. We've seen his mercy. We've seen his compassion.

We've seen his long suffering. We've seen his love for those who are lost and going astray. So, we've seen in Jesus the person of the Father, the personality, the character of the Father.

Then he says he is upholding all things by the word of his power. We came across this idea not so long ago, elsewhere. So, he says he creates, or he created.

Now he says he upholds all things by the word of his power. Let's just deal with that word of his power. You can just as well translate it, his powerful word.

It's just a language thing. By his powerful word. Now, how did he create? By his word.

He spoke, and things came into existence. Now he says he is upholding. Now, he's not upholding in the sense of Atlas.

If you remember, there was this Greek mythological figure who carried the world on his back. He's not upholding the world in that sense, but he is upholding all things, not just the world but the universe. He is keeping it going.

He is sustaining it, and he's doing so by the word of his power. Now, I'm going to digress and come to an idea which I think I've shared with you before, but which is, which helps me understand this concept. Everything that we look at, we know is made up out of atoms.

And so while things feel, and we say this has substance, it is made up of atoms, whether it's gold or wood or whatever, it's made up of atoms. And you can look at these things under these big powerful

microscopes. And inside the atom, there are different components, and nucleus, and electrons, and neutrons, and these things are spinning around.

And they, in different combinations, make up different things. I hope there's no physicists present here. But that's, those are the building blocks of everything.

When you think about it, what is gold, or what is anything? It's just energy, because these things are spinning around, and they're in tension at the same time. We, of course, have a macro picture of that in the universe the same way as the earth and the planets spin around the sun and rotate, and they stay in their orbit. We have exactly the same kind of thing.

The problem is that what keeps it going? We say, well, that's just nature, just the way it is, just evolved that way. No, it says that he upholds all things by the word of his power. So how did he create? He created by speaking.

And in his speech—and remember, it says he's powerful word—as he speaks, energy goes out, and that energy creates atoms, and the atoms come together and create various things around. But at the end of the day, it's all just energy. You say, well, that's hard to understand.

It is hard to understand. But you know, we've become a little clever as human beings, and we've learned about a thing called atomic fission, or splitting the atom. And what we do is we go in there and we harness that energy that's in uranium, because it's unstable, it's easy to do it with that, but you can probably do it with anything else.

And we get at that energy that's in there, and we use that to create a bomb that will destroy an entire city. But we also use that energy to create electricity, steam, and then electricity. And you know, when we begin to look at that, we begin to get an idea of the immense power that is locked up in everything that we see and touch.

And that's his word. The United States has a whole bunch of aircraft carriers, two different classes, the Ford class and the Nimitz class. They are nuclear-powered.

Inside of those aircraft carriers is a power source, two power sources, actually. Each one is about the size of this pulpit. That's all.

So two separate ones, the size of this pulpit. That uranium generates enough power to run that aircraft carrier, which is the equivalent of 12,000 houses, a small city. That's how much energy that ship consumes.

6,000 men, catapults that shoot the planes up, and hooks that, or lines that catch the planes, and lifts that keep them, and electricity to drive the propellers at amazing speeds for such a huge thing, three football fields long. And it all comes out of two things the size. And when does it run out? 20 years.

Each of those carriers run for 20 years on that fuel source. Can you imagine that power that will power 12,000 houses for 20 years in two things the size of this box? That's the power of God. That's the power of God.

That's his word that has given energy and put energy into these things. And he upholds all things, keeps it going. Now you can imagine what happens when he withdraws his word.

And the scripture tells us what's going to happen. Everything is going to burn up with intense heat. It's all going to disappear.

It's all going to... What's going to... Why? Because he's withdrawn his word. So he's upholding all things by the word of his power. Remember the context.

God has spoken through Jesus, the same Jesus who spoke the worlds into being, the same Jesus who has this tremendous power. We've only spoken about two things this size, and yet the whole universe is made up of that kind of power. It's unbelievably big, and yet that's the power of his word.

And yet he has spoken to us. Then he says, the express image of his person upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins. When he had by himself.

You see, he didn't take an animal and help and got the animal to purge our sins, like the priests would do. Remember, we're going to cover all of these things. The priests could not... Those sacrifices could never take away sins.

All they could do was cover sins for a while, until the cross. But Jesus doesn't get an animal by himself. He becomes the sacrifice.

He is the sacrifice. Because remember that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. There is no other way.

And even though he has this powerful word, he cannot speak away our sin. The sin has to be paid for. And so he had by himself purged, cleansed, washed our sins.

Again, you can see he's in the same sentence, talking about this mighty God who created, who upholds all things by the word of his power, and yet he purges our sins. And we say, well, did he have any business doing that? You see, here's the problem, is that we have brought God down to our level. And we say, well, he really had to die for us.

No, he didn't have to do anything. He could literally have withdrawn his word, and the universe would have collapsed in one go. That would have been the end of everything.

But because of his love for us, he said, I'm not going to destroy everything. I'll die, and I will wash their sins away. And so by himself, he purged our sins.

And then the final one, he has sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. So I'm going to give you those seven before I deal with the last one. So he is the inheritor.

He is the creator. He is the radiator. He is the representer.

He is the sustainer. He is the purifier. And he is the ruler.

He has sat down. There are two things I just want to bring out of this part of the verse, and there are many other things. But two important things.

We're going to see this concept later on in the book. The priests in the Old Testament could never sit down. There was no chair except the mercy seat, which is where God positioned himself, for want of a better word.

But there was nowhere for the priests to take a break, to rest, to sit down. And in fact, Hebrews will deal with us in detail where he says that they stand daily ministering. Why? Because the work is never done.

But he has sat down. Why has he sat down? Because the work is done. He made one sacrifice, and Hebrews deals with this.

Having made that one perfect sacrifice, he sits down. It's done. No need to continue to make sacrifices.

No need to continue to burn the flesh of animals on the altar. No need to shed that blood over and over and over. It's done.

There's no need to be standing anymore. He sits down, signifying that the work is finished. The work is complete.

Remember those words on the cross, tetralestai, it is finished. It's done. It's paid for.

But there's another aspect here, and that is that he has not just sat down, but he has sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. The majesty on high is just a polite way to speak of God. He has sat down at the right hand of God, of the Father.

The right hand, right through scripture from the Old Testament, right through to the book of Revelation, is always the position of power. Remember the disciples were arguing who's going to sit on the left, who's going to sit on the right. But he has sat down at the right hand.

He's not just sat down in a lazy boy, but he has sat down in the throne of God, henceforth waiting for his enemies to be made his footstool. He is the ruler. He is the king of kings.

He is the sovereign. The work is done, and he has been exalted. Remember that Paul writes about this, because he humbled himself, became obedient to the death of the cross.

God has highly exalted him, given him a name which is above every name, that the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord. And so this is the one through whom God has spoken. And remember the point that I raised last week, and obviously we're going to come back to this again and again, chapter 2 and verse 1, therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard.

Because God has not spoken through prophets, but God has spoken through the inheritor, through the creator, through the radiator, through the representative, through the sustainer, through the purifier, through the ruler. This is the one through whom God has spoken, therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard. Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you above all for Jesus. Lord, there is no end to knowing that his glory, knowing the magnificence of his person. And Lord, we struggle to even comprehend these ideas.

And Lord, with my limited ability to speak, Lord, I struggle to express the things that I feel and see concerning the greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. But Lord, I pray that you'd open our eyes that we might see him. Create within us, Lord, a desire to know more of him.

Lord, because we can never know enough, there is just so much of him. Lord, I pray that you'd help us to want to know him more, to want to know him better, to want to know him deeper. And Lord, that as the

point of this chapter in Hebrews is that we might listen to such a great one.

Lord, this is not a president of a great country who is speaking. This is not a general of a great army. This is the great creator who is speaking to us.

Lord, I pray that you'd help us to bow before him in worship and in obedience, to hear his voice, to obey his voice. In Jesus' name, I pray. I pray, Lord, that you'd go with us, keep us, protect us, bring us together again safely on Sunday, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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