

(Hebrews - Part 2): He Has Spoken to Us by His Son

by A.W. Tozer

God has spoken to us by His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the heir of all things, and we are necessary in God's eternal plan.

Duration: 36:02

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 1:10, Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:1-3, Revelation 20:10

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by describing a building that is only partially constructed and compares it to the condition of the world. He explains that just as the building is not complete, the world is filled with ongoing problems and troubles. The preacher then discusses the power of music and harmony, emphasizing the unity and fellowship found in Christianity. He also criticizes the rejection of certain aspects of Catholicism and emphasizes the importance of Jesus Christ in creation, redemption, and harmonization. The sermon concludes with a warning against falling for short-term promises and a call to embrace the infinite and eternal triumph offered by Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Hebrews, that first chapter. The writer says, God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by 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 on the right hand of the majesty on high. Now, we have dealt with the first opening lines here, and we come to this part.

God has spoken unto us by his Son, the Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things. His Son, whom we know as Jesus Christ our Lord, God has appointed heir of all things. So we deal this morning with the place of the eternal Son in the Father's eternal purposes.

The relation of Jesus Christ to what the writer calls all things. Now, that phrase, all things, has sometimes, and is sometimes used, has a meaning that's local, and sometimes used in a local way, as when we say, or when the man of God said, we suffer all things, he was simply referring to any old thing, whatever happened to come along. Or when he said, I have made all things to all men, he used the word all things

there again, to mean just about anything that comes across his pathway, whatever he had to be in order to win people, he was that.

But those are local and restricted meanings of those words, all things. The Holy Ghost uses this in a particular way. And I might say that the words all things in the world, they are the theological equivalent of the word universe, as used by the philosophers.

Now, as here used, this is not an easy thing to get a hold of, particularly in this day of comic strips and television, when people have long ago put their minds to rest, and are disturbed only occasionally, in contact time, or somebody gets ill. But there is something here very hard to get a hold of, it's almost as difficult to grasp as the person and nature of the Deity himself. It's a concept having to do with everything that God made in his vast universe, and that everything laid out and made into an order, so that it becomes the garment of the Deity, or the vast living machine through which he expresses himself to the world.

Now, it's not easy, I mean, it is not easy to get a hold of this, I say, particularly in this hour of the, when we preach only the escape element in Christianity. Christianity has now an escape element. Well, we know it has an escape element, nobody is sure of that, I think, than I. And I'm going to escape a much-deserved hell because of Christ's death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead.

I believe in the escape element in Christianity. I think that Christ is a bridge over a chasm, I think he is a lifeboat on a stormy, destructive sea, I think that he is the great physician to heal our souls, I think that he is all that the poets and the hymnists and the scriptures themselves say he is, I believe that all right. But if we emphasize it too much, and particularly if we emphasize it exclusively, we'll never grasp what the scriptures are talking about when it says that God has made his Son, Jesus Christ, to be heir of all things.

And those who use Christianity and embrace it simply for its social and its ethical values, they will never understand it either. For Christianity, in its having only its social aspects, that has to do with our coming together, with our singing hymns, with our maybe going on a church picnic, I don't know if that's scriptural or not. It isn't unscriptural, it's just something we thought of to do.

And it's a social aspect of religion, you know. We get together and we mingle and talk and greet each other and talk about the Lord. They then know the Lord speak often one to another, and the Lord heard it and wrote it down in a book.

He doesn't despise our social aspect of Christianity, and certainly the ethical aspects of Christianity are extremely important in that it has to do with a form of righteousness or standard of righteousness. So it is very important, but even if we place all our emphasis upon the ethical element in Christianity, that we should be good and do good and that's right, but if that's as far as we go, we'll never understand this. And then certainly the playboys of the gospel world that are so very active and very vocal and very rich, incidentally, these days, they'll never know what we're talking about here, because Christianity becomes a way whereby you can have a lot of nice, clean fun and still go to heaven when it's all over.

That's quite popular in the fringes of evangelicalism. I'm afraid that it's got in from the fringes, in closer, into the heart of things, and it's rather taken so that the big leaders today are the playboys, with a grin this broad and all 32 teeth in shining evidence. A man whose face is a little long belongs to another generation.

He's not half. And of course, these playboys, these pathetic playboys of the church who dash about and whip us all into a frenzy of good feeling, they don't know what this is all about, but yet this is what we've got to deal with in the Christian church. And so I say that it's hard for us to get a hold of this, because the emphasis doesn't fall here.

You've got to take yourself by the scurf of the neck and say, now I'm going to think this thing through, I'm going to pray it through, and get a hold of it. Well, God has made his eternal Son to be heir of all things. And the words, all things, I repeat as Paul uses them here, and I say Paul uses them now.

Whoever wrote this book uses them. It means the whole creation of God, seen especially in their ultimate perfection. I've said before, and I apologize for the expression, but God never doodles.

Did you ever sit at the telephone? I do it all the time. I wear out all the time I'm talking. I'm making circles, triangles, squares, and then linking them in, putting a little foundation under them.

Occasionally I draw a bird. And I do all that all the time, but that has absolutely no purpose at all. That's off of the top of my skull, and nobody ever thought it on or planned it.

It is purposeless activity. God never engages in anything that doesn't have a long-range, noble, worthy purpose behind it. Everything in the universe, from the tiny blade of grass on up to the galaxies, they have purpose behind them.

And all things include angels and seraphim and cherubim and powers and ransom men of all ages and matter and mind and law and spirit and value and meaning and life and event. All of this that is, everything that is in any of the various, on the various levels of life and being, it includes it all. And God's great interests embrace these all, and these interests are many.

And God's family is large, and it's widely scattered, and they don't always know each other. They're light years apart, some of them are. And the purpose of God is to bring together and acquaint all things with all other things, all rational beings.

And when that time comes, when that day comes to which the whole creation moves, when that time comes, each will see its essential oneness with all. Now hear me, each will see its essential oneness with all. I got accused one time in a letter of being pantheistic, because I believe in the essential unity of all God's creation.

But I am no more pantheistic than I am communistic. Pantheism teaches that God is all things and that all things are God. And that if you want to know what God is, you have to know all things.

And if you could get all things in your arms, you'd have God. God is all things, all things are God. Of course, that's plainly ridiculous, because God is, while God is immanent in his universe, he is transcendent above his universe and infinitely separated from his universe as being the creator God.

So certainly I'm not a pantheist, and whoever says that needs to have his head examined. I forgot who it was anymore, I forget right away when I get letters like that. After I have written them an alliance letter, you know what an alliance letter is, it's noncommittal.

And I write them a nice alliance letter, which is noncommittal, you know, write half a page and don't say a thing and say, you're in Christ, goodbye. Well, the only true part about it is that we're all one in Christ, even

silly fellows that write letters like that. But now what I led up to a hymn that I want to read with some emphasis, written by that great Scottish Moravian hymn writer and poet and son of a missionary, James Montgomery, who wrote Prayer is the Soul's Sincere Desire, Angel from the Realm of Glory and Hail to the Lord's Anointed, Great David's Greater Son, and many other of the great hymns we know.

And here's one we don't know, but one I've dug out, and I want to read it to you with some emphasis and show you that this man had in mind what I'm trying to teach to you this morning some centuries ago. He says this, "...the glorious universe around, the heavens with all their train, sun, moon, and stars are firmly bound in one mysterious chain." It was a great American writer, philosopher, and poet who said that you couldn't move a seashell on the shore, but it changed the balance of the universe by just a little bit. And here seems to be the same thing said, that sun, moon, and stars, and the universe, and the heavens, and their train, and all moon and stars are firmly bound in one mysterious chain.

"...the earth, the ocean, and the sky to form one world agree, where all that walk or swim or fly compose one family. God in creation thus displays his wisdom and his might, while all his works with all his ways harmoniously unite." Now I like to tell you that the word harmoniously is a good, strong word here, for it shows that in God's universe finally, when sin has been purged out of it, there will be found everything will be consonant with everything else, and there will be universal cosmic harmony. There is now discord and the raucous rattling sound of sin in the world, but that will be purged away.

And when it's purged away, then there will be one harmonious unity of all things that swim and fly and walk and creep and crawl, and that compose one family. You remember that the great English poet John Dryden said, "...from harmony, from heavenly harmony, this universal frame began. When nature underneath a heap of jarring atoms lay and could not heave her head, the tuneful voice was heard on high.

Arise ye more than dead, then hot and cold and moist and dry, in order to their station leaped and music's power obey. From harmony to harmony through all the compass of the notes it ran, the diapason closing full in man." I believe in this, and I think it's scriptural. And he says again, "...in one fraternal bond of love, one fellowship of mind, the saints below and saints above their bliss and glory find." Here is what Christianity has thrown out when she threw out the baby along with the bath water.

We threw out Catholicism, Romanism, and when we threw out Romanism, we threw a lot of things that were true, but because Romanism believes it, we don't. I've never been able to understand that type of mind, that if a crew chef likes grapefruit, I won't eat grapefruit. And if a crew chef says it's nice weather, I deny it right there.

Now, there's nobody can think less a crew chef than I do. When I see that head of his, I always think it would look wonderful on a tray with an apple in its mouth. And that's what I think about him, and that's what I think about Communism.

But the point is, even the devil admires some things that you can admire. No, no, no, the devil is bad, all right, completely bad. But if the devil likes a sunny day, I'm not going to hunt a wet one just in order to be mean.

So I can't see why, just because the Catholics believe in the communion of saints and the Anglicans believe in the communion of saints, that we, whatever we are, I never know what to call ourselves. We're evangelicals, we're full gospelers, we're whatever we are. I don't see why that we should throw this thing

out.

The communion of saints is a scriptural doctrine. The saints below and the saints above, their bliss and glory find in one fraternal bond of love, one fellowship of mind. Here, that's the saints below, in their house of pilgrimage, thy statutes are their song.

There, that's the saints above, through one bright eternal age thy praises they prolong. Lord, may our union form a part of that thrice happy whole, derive its pulse from thee, the heart, its life from thee, the whole. Now, the whole hymn written about this thing that I'm talking about now, the unity of all things, and when we see that in the day of Christ's triumph, when he returns again and the consummation of all things is reached, we will see that everybody is necessary in God's eternal plan.

We all throw ourselves down and say, I'm no good and I'm not necessary, and we certainly know there's no man indispensable. The Lord will find somebody else if you won't do it. We all know that, but we also know that in the eternal plan of God there cannot be anybody that is not essential.

I don't often tell stories that are told. I make my own stories, so you haven't read them somewhere before, you know. But I remember hearing one time of an orchestra that just had one piccolo note, and it just beat, and that was all there was to it.

The whole orchestra and the whole symphony, and there a fellow sat there looking bored, and when he got the knock, beep, he said, and that was it. He pulled up and went home. But they say that this old maestro was leading his orchestra all full, woodwinds and strings and all the rest, and they were going along swimmingly in rehearsal, and suddenly he tapped the thing and stopped it and said, where was the piccolo? Nobody else noticed the piccolo hadn't peeped.

He hadn't noticed it, but it was necessary to the fine ear of the composer and the director if it was to be a whole symphony that one piccolo note had to sound. You may only be a little piccolo note, and maybe not think you amount to anything, but you will find in that day when God brings all things to light that you are necessary, and we'll all in each see our necessary place, our necessary relation, and all futility will go out of the universe. You know, it's futility that brings on heart attacks and drives us to psychiatrists and makes us miserable and makes grouches out of people.

It's futility, meaning what's the use of it all? What's the use and that expression, what's the use? Why? It runs through all the world. The question, why? Why am I here at all? Why was I ever born? Why did I happen into the world? Was I a biological accident without any planning behind me? Well, I might have been as far as my parents are concerned. I never asked them about it.

But I'll tell you one thing, I was not as far as God was concerned. Because God is running his world and being a sovereign God and being in charge of all things, he has to have all the parts to make his eternal and divine symphony. So I'll know, we'll all know, and the futility will go out of the universe, and each person will know that he is unique with unique value that nobody else could possibly give to the symphony.

And we'll see that we're indispensable in the grand scheme. Now, as things stand now, we're in a state of incompleteness. And things are incomplete.

Because they're incomplete, we're like a half-completed cathedral. A buddy sent me a photograph, very proudly sent me quite a large photograph of the new church in Chicago that they're building. And he said, I

thought you'd like to keep up on the progress of the building.

Well, honestly, don't tell it now and gaff, but I thought it was rather a messy looking affair. You know, trucks standing around, piles of dirt here and lumber over there and one end open. It just didn't look like anything.

But that's because if there's only about one-third built in your first week in November, they're going to dedicate it. Then it will be a thing of beauty. And everybody will say how wonderful it is.

Even that grass around it, dirt and sand now. So that's the condition the world is in. That's why you don't get one trouble settled until two others' troubles settle out.

The world is like triplets. Poor mother with triplets. She gets one asleep and the other wakes up.

And then number two is about ready to be rocked to sleep. And then number one wakes up. And so it goes.

She never quite has them all asleep at once. And the poor world is like that. If you settle one problem somewhere, a strike is settled in Toronto.

It'll burst out in Chicago. And if they manage to get it settled there, they'll walk off the job in New York. And he didn't get crew chef to smile.

In Vienna, he'll be frowning in Berlin. And if you can get Laos settled, why, they'll break out in Vietnam. All over the world, trouble is.

Because we're in this incomplete state, you see. The eternal purposes of God that lie out yonder, vast before us, so vast that it took God to think it. These eternal purposes, this vast eternal scheme of God, I say, lies out there.

But to us, it's all mixed up. And the devil has come in like vandals. They come in on a constructing job and upset things and throw around things and dump nails around just to be mean.

So the devil is mixing things up while God's building his cathedral. But he's building it all right. You just keep patient and trust in God Almighty and look to Jesus Christ, the one into whose hands all things are put.

And it'll take shape one of these days under the wise hand of the great architect and builder, and you will see that things have been all the time moving on toward the grand completion. But we don't see it, I say, because our understanding is faulty. At best, we are seeing through a glass darkly, and at worst, we're stone blind.

So the result is, we see and experience only segments of things. We can't see God's hand in things. We can't see angels, nor clouds of witnesses, nor the spirits of just men made perfect, nor the church of the firstborn, nor the general assembly, nor the shining row on row of principalities, nor the shining ranks of powers.

We don't see them, and we don't see the glory that will be ours in the day when we lean on our bright groom's arm and are led into the presence of the Father with exceeding joy. We see it only by faith and imperfectly, and we dimly see it. And the result is that the devil sometimes discourages us and says, You

will believe all right, but look, everything is going to a pot all around you.

I say, Yes, they dumped a lot of sand in here on the lot, and it doesn't look good, and the roof isn't on yet, and it rained last night, and everything's messy, and the world's all confused. But God has made his Son, Jesus Christ, heir of the universe of all things, and by all things, he means everything put together in an orderly fashion and made into a cosmos. Now, he says he made him heir of all things, but not as men make their sons heir.

When you inherit something by virtue of being made an heir, when you inherit something, you inherit that which you had not had previous possession of. And you, a phonetic brethren will notice the preposition dangling there, but not as with men. When we receive an inheritance, it's something that we have not had previously the possession of.

But it's not so with him who is the Lord. Jesus Christ is the Lord. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

All things were in the beginning with God, and all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Before there was an atom or a star, before there was a galaxy or a microbe, before there was light or motion, before there was matter or mass, he existed. He was.

He would have been if there had never been any creation, for he was the self-existent God. And so all things belonged to him. Everything is his.

The very nails they drove in his hands belonged to him. And the very whip they whipped his back with, he had made the material in the beginning and said, Let be, and there was. The very blood that ran from his veins he himself had created in the mysterious chemistry of life when he made man on the earth.

So he had already all things, but what he means here is that all things by whom all these things he made the world, he is the father of the everlasting ages instead of the everlasting father. The father of the everlasting ages, and by ages we don't mean time only, but we mean what I've been trying to say, an ordered universe thought out and arranged. He is the father of this everlasting age.

In the book of Ephesians, the man of God says this, Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he, God, might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ. That's the first chapter of Ephesians, and in that tenth verse it says that God is gathering together, and by gathering together he doesn't mean raking together as you would leaves on the October. He means bringing all things together as an architect brings them together to make a cathedral.

He means bringing all things together as a composer brings notes together to make a symphony. So, all things are to be correlated in Christ, and they take their form from him, and their order by him, and their place in him, and their meaning from him, and they are united and displayed in and by him. So, Jesus Christ is God-creating, Jesus Christ is God-redeeming, Jesus Christ is God-completing and harmonizing, and Jesus Christ is God-displayed.

We don't say it like that now. I remember once hearing about a fellow preaching a sermon. I just heard him preach it.

I didn't hear the sermon. Sometimes that's a good way to get something from a sermon. Just hear that it's been preached and not have to listen to it.

I heard that a man preached this sermon, and I thought it was so full of meaning that I remembered it. He said the trouble with the world was that things were out of place. He said, for instance, Satan's out of place.

He belongs in the lake of fire, and he's walking up and down in the earth. Sinners are out of place. They belong with the devil in hell, and they're walking up and down in the earth, beating their chests.

Christ is out of place. He's sitting on the Father's throne, sharing the throne with the Father when he belongs on David's throne, ruler and king of the universe. And Israel's out of place, scattered throughout all the world.

When Israel belongs back in the land we used to call Palestine, the Dr. Sneed faithfully called Palestine until he died. And that we know as the Holy Land or Palestine, well, Israel belongs there. But instead of being there, Israel's scattered all over the world.

The church is out of place, in that the church belongs with her bridegroom in the Father's house. But she's scattered all over the world, struggling and praying and laboring and suffering. Men are out of place, in that little men sometimes are on high jobs, and big men sometimes are doing menial tasks.

I'm sure there would be headlines that high for days to come if God Almighty would suddenly say, Now I'm going to put all men who are in top jobs where they belong. There would be nations where Prime Ministers and Presidents and Senators would be found walking behind a plow saying, Giddy up! And there would be men who are delivering milk every morning at your doorstep who would be found to be Josephs in wisdom. But they're mute and glorious Miltons, and they are the fellows that never found themselves.

The great sometimes have humble jobs, and the mighty jobs are filled with men who aren't worthy of them. I've been personally ashamed. I wouldn't allow anybody else to say this, but being an American I can say it.

I've been personally ashamed of three or four Presidents in my lifetime. I have been ashamed of them, you know. They're in the office and everybody talking about them, and they go somewhere and meet other men from other nations, and I'm ashamed of the man that represents me.

I used to be ashamed of that little batty rooster down there in Missouri. But he didn't belong there, you know. He was a haberdasher.

Of course he went bankrupt selling ties, but he belonged somewhere else. And then Christians are out of place. Oh, brother, you're out of place.

You're getting kicked around, and you're having to work hard, and you want to pray and fall asleep because you've worked all day, and things don't go right. You're struggling and wondering, but you're just out of place. That's your trouble.

You belong in the Father's house, and you're here in the devil's house. You're here in the world which the devil has temporarily taken over and besmirched. It's God's, but Satan has taken it over for the time.

So if we could get Satan where he belongs, sinners where they belong, our Lord where he belongs, Israel where she belongs, the Church where she belongs, men where they belong, and Christians where they belong, we'd have that universal symphony after which the whole creation groans. All things. He is heir of all things.

So now in conclusion of the Christian, let me say that your present level of life decides your place then. That is, the Lord has given us a certain amount of sovereignty. He sovereignly gave us a certain limited sovereignty.

He with absolute sovereignty allowed us to make certain decisions. And you will decide in some measure your place, working along with God and his eternal purposes. If you're faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many.

That does not in any wise contradicting God's plans, it's explaining them. And I'd like to say this, that I want to testify that the wisest thing I ever did in my life, I've done some really unwise things. I made a fool of myself a few times, oh not a few times, quite frequently in my time, that a man with an IQ of six and seven-eighth would have been ashamed to be caught doing it.

And yet, I did it. But I did one thing one time that I'll never regret, when I cast in my lot with Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, the one through whom God spoke to the universe and to us and to Israel and to the prophets and to the apostles and to the reformers and to the missionaries and to the pastors and to the people, the one he called his son, Jesus Christ our Lord. When I threw my lot in with him, I did the wise thing.

For as I said last Sunday night, in the Bible, wisdom isn't necessarily having a high IQ. Wisdom is living in the light of consequences. It's acting with eternity's values in view.

And so a very humble, uneducated man, who's never read much and never thought a great deal, he's been too busy, and like the man with the hoe, the weight of the ages of labor have rested upon him. Still, he was able to do that one wise thing, throw his lot in with the one who can't lose, Jesus Christ the Lord, into whose hands God has put all things to redeem them to draw them together, to harmonize them, to place them, perfect them, and then come and display them. You belong to him.

Don't fall for such short-range nonsense as communism and the new order. Don't fall for any political party that promises you two chickens in every pot and two cars in every, what do you say up here, garage? Garage, we say down there. All right, don't for the life of you fall for any of this, for it's short-range.

To say nothing, they can't make good on it, and if they did, it would only be while you live. But Jesus Christ calls us not only to a short-range blessing, he calls us to infinite and eternal triumph. Follow Christ, and you'll never have cause to regret it.

Amen.

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