

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **The Supremacy of God's Final Revelation**

Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-3

Code: 80-280

In spite of all the clamor and the clutter and clatter of Christmas, there is really a no-distraction in my life, and I hope yours, that can take me away from the true wonder of this season. What captures me at this time of year is what captures me all the time and it is the preeminence of Jesus Christ. And I hope that's true for you. I hope you can see past all the peripheral things, all of the distractions, intentional and unintentional, to the glory of Christ. I want to help you to do that.

We've been studying in the gospel of Luke and looking at the person of Christ sort of event by event, conversation by conversation, day by day as He lives His life. I want to pull back. If that is the worm's-eye view, I want to give you the bird's eye view, I want to give you the overview of who it is that we're dealing with when we talk about Jesus Christ. And to say it simply and to declare the meaning of Christmas is to say that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. This is the heart of the Christian message and the Christian faith. God came into the world in the form of a baby, His name was Jesus and He lived a sinless life and died a substitutionary death and rose from the dead and ascended to heaven where He sits at the Father's right hand waiting some day to return to earth and establish His eternal Kingdom. Jesus is God in human form. Nothing less than that will do as a consideration of who He is.

And the Bible, of course, is filled with this reality. It is not obscure. It is not marginal. It's not even limited in its presentation. It is all over the pages of Scripture, unmistakably. Isaiah, for example, revealed to King Ahaz and to his royal house, "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel." When Jesus was born Matthew records that He was given the name Immanuel which means "God with us." And so the prophet said there will be a supernatural event, virgin conception, virgin birth and a child who is God with us. The whole reality of the birth of Christ is then laid down in Isaiah 7:14, a baby will be God, a baby born to a virgin. The prophet later reinforced this reality in Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." A child born who is the mighty God. A child born who is the eternal Father. There is no other explanation than that He is both God and Man.

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, wrote this familiar verse. Micah 5:2, "But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of these shall He come forth unto Me that

is to be ruler to Israel." And then this, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." A child would be born in Bethlehem to rule in Israel who was eternal. The only eternal being is God, therefore again Micah asserts and affirms that this is the birth of God in human flesh. Only God is from everlasting. So the Old Testament establishes beyond equivocation, beyond doubt that this child who was born in Bethlehem is Himself God. Little wonder then that it is Matthew who tells us the prophecy is fulfilled and His name is Immanuel.

There are a number of other ways to view this unmistakable reality that is at the core of our faith. For example, God said, "I, even I," Isaiah 43:11, "I, even I, am the Lord and beside Me there is no Savior." God states that He alone is the Savior. Later in Isaiah 45:22 He said, "I am God and there is none else, look unto Me and be saved all the ends of the earth." God then says there is no other God, there is no other Savior. And yet the angel said when Jesus was born, "Call his name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins." The only way there can be only one God and Savior and Jesus be God and Savior is if they are one and the same. The angels informed the shepherds, "For unto you this day is born in the city of David a Savior." Who is it? "Christ the Lord." Only God can save and Christ can save, therefore Christ is God. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," says the book of Acts. Only the name of Christ.

The Apostle Paul identified God as our Savior. Turned right around and identified Jesus Christ as our Savior. In the Philippian jail, the jailor asked Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved and your house." Jesus is the only Savior. God is the only Savior. Therefore Jesus is God.

In fact, the Samaritans in John 4:42 rightly said that Christ is the Savior of the world. And when Simeon, the old man in the temple saw the baby Jesus, he said, "This is God's salvation." No one can save but God. Jesus can save, He's God.

God also in the Old Testament identifies Himself as the Redeemer. In Isaiah 43:14; Hosea 13:14 God says He alone is the Redeemer. Jesus, however, was also considered the Redeemer. Zacharias, the priest, said He was the Redeemer. Anna the old woman in Luke 2 said He was the Redeemer. Paul called Him the Redeemer. Peter called Him the Redeemer. The apocalyptic living creatures in the book of Revelation and the 24 elders in Revelation 5:9 called Him the Redeemer. God alone can redeem. Christ can redeem. God alone is Redeemer. Christ is Redeemer. Therefore unmistakably He is God.

Furthermore, in the Old Testament Jehovah claimed to be the Holy One...the Holy One. He was so acknowledged by the angelic seraphim in Isaiah 6 as holy, holy, holy. And yet the angel Gabriel said to Mary that the Holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God. Here Jesus is holy, as God is holy. Even the demons called Jesus of Nazareth the Holy One, Luke 4:34.

Furthermore, Isaiah asserted that the everlasting God, the Lord is the Creator of the ends of the earth. And yet the Apostle John says that Jesus is the Creator and nothing was made that was not made by Him. And the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1:16 said He made everything that is. God alone is the Creator. Jesus is the Creator. He is God.

It was David, it was Hannah, 1 Samuel 2:2, who acknowledged God to be their rock, their strength, their foundation. And yet it is Christ, according to 1 Corinthians 10:4, who is the spiritual rock. It is Christ, Peter says, who is the rock of offense. It is Christ who is the chief cornerstone. Again if God is the rock and Christ is the rock, Christ is God.

Interestingly, throughout the Old Testament the saints addressed their prayers only to God...only to God. No one but God. You will never find anybody in the entire Old Testament praying to an angel. You will never find anybody in the entire Old Testament praying to a person dead or alive. All prayers are directed at God, and God alone. And yet you come to the New Testament and Stephen, Spirit-filled, at his martyrdom in Acts 7:59 and 60, lifts up his voice in a prayer and he says this, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And he prays to Jesus cause Jesus is God.

When Simeon saw the baby Jesus, he identified Him with the biblical quote out of Isaiah 42:6, "A light to light the nations and the glory of Thy people, Israel." Simeon said, "This is the light that comes into the world to light the world." And yet Isaiah said God is the everlasting light, Isaiah 60 verses 19 and 20. In the eternal picture of the city of God, the New Jerusalem in its final glory, God is the glory of heaven but the Lamb is the light of it. God is the light and Christ is the light.

God is all glorious. In fact, He Himself says in Isaiah 42:8, "I am the Lord, that is My name, My glory will I not give to another." God says, "I will not give My glory to another." And yet Jesus was the glory of God. We read John 1:14, "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

Unmistakably then...and I've just given you a few suggestions...unmistakably what we celebrate at this time of the year is the coming of the eternal God into the world as a baby. This is the great story, the great truth, the great reality of Christianity. There is only one God and He came into this world one time in the form of a man, Jesus Christ. This astounding miraculous reality fills both Old and New Testament but particularly the New. There could be many passages considered on this occasion and through the years there have been many. I've been doing this for about 35 years, I'm not running out of passages. Galatians 4:4, "When the fullness of time came God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the Law in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law that we might receive the adoption as sons." That passage speaks of God sending His Son into the world. Or Philipians chapter 2 where it says that, "He existed in the form of God but didn't regard

equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant made in the likeness of men, became found in appearance as a man, humbled Himself, became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross." That too speaks of the incarnation all the way to the death of Christ.

Then there's that wonderful passage in Colossians 1 where it talks about God's Son, verse 15, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. "For by Him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers, or authorities, all things have been created by Him and for Him and He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything." That's another great chapter, great section on the preeminence of Christ.

But there's yet another text to which I would draw your attention. If you will, open your Bible to Hebrews chapter 1...Hebrews chapter 1 and I just want to look at these opening three verses briefly. This is another one of those passages in which God with an economy of words has spoken vastly about the glories of Christ. The excellencies of Christ here presented for us are staggering and unmistakable in their clarity. Here is a high and lofty exaltation of the Lord Jesus establishing firmly He is deity and His absolute preeminence.

Let me read the first three verses. "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 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. 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."

This is just so rich, so full. And I hope you can grasp a little of it. Let's begin with a look at the preparation for Christ in verse 1...the preparation for Christ. "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways." Two things to note, the substantive in the verse, God, and the verb "spoke." God spoke, that sets Him apart from all the dumb idols in the world, doesn't it?, who cannot speak because they do not exist. God is not silent. God is not impersonal. God is not detached. He is not speechless. God had to speak or we would never know Him. We would know about Him through our human reason, we can look at the world and know something about His power, something about His intelligence, something about the vastness of interests that He has, something about His amazing variety, something about His beauty, something about His order. All of that can be observed by His handiwork, just as not knowing an artist, I may see his painting and draw conclusions about him. I can certainly say something about his deftness, his dexterity, his sense of order, his sense of beauty, his creative abilities. But that's all we would know. Oh, except the fact that we have within us a moral sense and so we can know that the God who made us is a God of morality and so we can know something about Him from His creation and

something about Him from that which we know to be right and wrong within us. We know He's a moral God and He's an amazingly intelligent and powerful God. But we could never necessarily know Him.

I might know the painting that a man paints. I might have a list of the man's ethics and moral standards, but that doesn't tell me everything about the man. And it certainly couldn't constitute a relationship with him. The only way I could ever know God is if God speaks. That's why the Bible says the world by wisdom knew not God, it knows about God but not God. The natural man understands not the things of God. The things of God can only be revealed by the Spirit of God. Only when God speaks can we know Him. And He does speak. We do not have a God who is silent, He has spoken and He has spoken in this book. God spoke long ago.

By the time the writer of Hebrews is writing this, it's been at least 400 plus years since God stopped speaking in the Old Testament. But God spoke long ago to the fathers, to that prior generation in the Old Testament era and He spoke in the prophets and He spoke in many portions and in many ways. He spoke *polumeros, polutropos*, a little play on words. He spoke *polumeros, polutropos*. What does that mean? In many portions, many different books, many different paragraphs, many different sections, the Old Testament 39 books, and sometimes in those books there are other books, such as the Psalms, where there are many, many books within the book of the Psalms. And there are other sections in books and there are elements within those books that are historical and some are parabolic and some are illustrative and some are analogies, and some are symbols. God spoke in many different portions, He spoke in many manners. Sometimes He spoke through dreams and visions. Sometimes direct voice out of heaven, sometimes in types and symbols and that's just meant to sum that all up. And collectively it comes to be the Old Testament.

The Old Testament is God speaking to the fathers, the prior generation, by means of the prophets, the preachers, the speakers, the writers who wrote down His revelation. And God spoke progressively, didn't He? The Old Testament is not going from error to truth, but it is progressive. It goes from incompleteness to completeness. There's a big difference. The nature of the Old Testament revelation is that it's all true, but it's not all complete, it builds...the history, the poetry, the laws, the prophecies. God's revelation in many portions through many means begins to accumulate and build until you have the full revelation of the Old Testament which is the preparation of the coming of Messiah. You see Him there as early as Genesis 3:15 where He is called the seed of the woman who will crush the serpent's head. You see Him as the one who will take the scepter out of Shiloh later in the book of Genesis. You see Him as the prophet that would come like Moses. You see Him as the one who will come out of the loins of Abraham. You see Him as the one who will fulfill the promises of God to David, He will be David's greater Son. You see Him in all the sacrifices from God's first killing of an animal in the Garden to cover the sinful Adam and Eve. All the way through the sacrificial system you see the pictures of the coming Messiah who will give His life for sinners.

The prophets spoke of Him, hundreds of specific prophecies some of which we commented on already this morning.

And so, the Old Testament began from incompleteness to its completeness as a preparation for the coming of the Christ. The fathers simply represent the Old Testament people, the prophets, the messengers to whom God spoke who then proclaimed His truth and by the Holy Spirit's inspiration wrote it down. You can say of the Old Testament what Peter says, "This did not come by private interpretation but holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit and they wrote down what God wanted written." That's why Paul can say, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." And both those verses refer to the Old Testament.

So God did speak and He didn't speak marginally and He didn't speak briefly and He didn't speak in a limited fashion and He didn't speak unclearly. The Old Testament is crystal clear, it lays out the nature of God, it lays out the nature of man, it lays out the problem of sin, it lays out the promise of redemption. And it presents the coming Redeemer, it's all there...it's all there.

So we see the preparation for Christ in the Old Testament. Then comes the presentation of Christ, look at verse 2. "God, who did speak, in these last days..." That refers to the Messianic time, the time since the coming of Christ. "...Has spoken to us in His Son." He once spoke through human prophets, and now He's spoken in His Son. No prophet has ever grasped the whole truth, only Jesus is the whole truth. The prophets got a part of it. One prophet a little here, another prophet a little there. None of them got it all. Twelve minor prophets, five major prophets, a total of 17 prophets, you go to those books and you read a little bit here, a little bit there. Samuel was a prophet, Moses was a prophet. Moses got the five books of the Pentateuch and on and on you go, and God was speaking. But none of them really had it all. They were all, in a sense, given bits and pieces and fragments of the revelation of God. But when Jesus came, He was the full revelation of God, fully revealed. Jesus revealed God by being God, no longer in diverse manners, no longer in diverse ways, no longer in bits and pieces and fragments stretched out over 1500 years, but now God speaks in one person, in one time in history, "In these last days God has spoken in His Son." He is the full revelation of God. When He spoke, God spoke. When He acted, God acted. He is the full revelation of God. He even said, "If you seen Me, you've seen the Father."

To Noah it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To Abraham it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To Jacob it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To David it was revealed that the Messiah would come from one of his sons. To Micah it was revealed the town. To Daniel it was revealed the time. To Malachi it was revealed the forerunner. And everybody got their bits and pieces, each knew only in part until Christ came and He was God in whole, full of grace and truth. In Christ the revelation of God is complete, not in the drifting hues and separated color but Himself the pure light of God uniting

in one person the whole spectrum of the glory of God's disclosure. The many and partial revelations are over. The shadows are replaced by the substance. And so Christ comes as the fullness of God. That's why 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "All the promises of God in Christ are yes and amen." Everything resolves in Him.

When you come to Christ you're not just talking about another prophet, another person, another holy man. You're talking about God in human flesh in whom God has fully revealed Himself. Everything God wants us to know about Himself is manifest in Jesus Christ. He is God's living and final revelation. And the four gospels give us the record of His arrival and ministry and life and death.

The book of Acts talks about the spread of that message and the building of His church. All the epistles tell us the meaning of His life and death and resurrection and ascension. And the book of Revelation tells us that some day He will come again to establish His eternal Kingdom. The whole of the New Testament is about Christ who is the full and final revelation of God.

To understand the breadth and height and depth and length of that, we come now to the third section in this brief passage, from the preparation for Christ and the presentation to the preeminence of Christ. And that really begins in the middle of verse 2, the preeminence of Christ. Here we find that He is the end of all things, because He is the beginning of all things and He is also the center of all things. He is the heir of all things, which makes Him the end. He is the creator of all things, which makes Him the beginning. And He is the upholder of all things, which makes Him the middle. So when we talk about the preeminence of Christ, that's what we're talking about.

I know there are those who said He's a good teacher. Some think He's a religious fanatic or a fake. And on and on it goes. But the fact of the matter is, Scripture couldn't be more clear because here in this passage we find out who He is by seven excellencies of His person...seven of them, seven being in the Bible often used as a number of completeness. The writer under the inspiration of the Spirit chooses seven excellencies to describe the preeminence of Christ.

Number one, He is heir of all. Look back at verse 2. "God, after He spoke, has spoken in His Son whom He appointed heir of all things." Heirship follows Sonship. He is the Son, the King, the eternal Son of God, the second member of the Trinity. God has designed the whole of creation in the end after its final redemption to be given as a love gift to Him. He will be the heir of everything. God only had one Son, only one and therefore He inherits everything. God's determined purpose in redemption, God's determined purpose therefore in creation, God's determined purpose in the unfolding of the history of the universe, of the material universe, is that He might gather together a redeemed humanity, gather together all of those whom He has planned to redeem from before the foundation of the world to give them to His Son as a gift of love. He is the heir of everything.

It's amazing when you think about it...amazing. He gave up everything. "He who was rich became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich." Rich? He was as rich as God is rich and He became impoverished, setting aside His prerogatives as God and humbling Himself, He came into this world and took the form of a servant, born in a stinking stable in a feed trough in obscurity, as far as the world was concerned, hated, and sought after to be killed along with the rest of the babies in that era who were perceived as a threat to Herod. He lived a life in an obscure and non-descript place called Nazareth for 30 years, no one really knew who He was. In His ministry He said He had nowhere to lay His head, the foxes had holes, the birds had nests, He didn't even have a place to lay His head. He was a Galilean carpenter, crucified naked and bleeding like a criminal on a cross and even the clothing that He had that He wore on His back was taken away from Him and He was left hanging there naked while the soldiers gambled for His clothes. He became impoverished for us.

But in the end, He's going to inherit everything. This is temporary. This is only momentary. He will inherit everything. God's whole purpose in creation was redemption. And his whole purpose in redemption was to express His love to the Son by giving Him a redeemed humanity. Some day when it's all over, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus as...what?...Lord, every knee will bow wherever, in the earth and under the earth, above, below, wherever conscious beings exist, they will bow the knee to Jesus Christ willingly or unwillingly. And He will become heir of all things.

He is not only the heir of all, but He is the heir of all rightly because He's the creator of all. Look again at verse 2, "God, not only appointed Him heir of all things, but God through Him made the world." He literally was the agent through which God created. John 1:3, "Everything that was made was made by Him and there was nothing made that wasn't made by Him." He made everything. He made all things, as I read earlier from Colossians chapter 1, that incredible statement in verse 16 that says, "All things have been created by Him and for Him. He is the heir of all because He is the source of all, the Creator of all."

This establishes His absolute preeminence unmistakably. Man has stained His creation. Satan has usurped His creation for the time. But He made it good originally and He will redeem it back again to goodness. There will come a glorious appearing of the children of God. There will come a restoration of this material universe, and finally a replacement with a new heaven and a new earth in which will dwell righteousness forever.

Please notice the word "world" there. Very often in the Greek the word for world is *kosmos*. *Kosmos* is an opposite word to chaos and it means a system or an order, as chaos means disorder. That is not the word here. The word here is *aionas*[?] which means ages...ages. He's not saying here that He just made the world, that is the earthly system. He is saying He created the ages. That is to say He created time and space, He created force and action and matter and all that constitute the material realm of time and space. Christ made it all. He is the preeminent one, He is the Creator. He is the heir of all because He's the Creator of all.



I know that's why I hate evolution with a passion. Not just because it's stupid, that's enough to hate it, but because it robs the glory of the Creator. Sir John Eckals[???] Nobel laureate in neurophysiology said some years ago in Chicago that the odds, after he had received his Nobel laureate award for science, he said the odds were against the right combination of circumstances occurring to evolve intelligent life on earth. And what were those odds? According to him, four hundred thousand, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion to one. However, he said, "It is fantastically improbable but I believe it occurred, however, don't expect it to occur anywhere else." I mean, it's as if people who are normally intelligent when it comes down to acknowledging the Lord Jesus Christ as the Creator can't see it at all. And I understand that. The God of this world has...what?...blinded their minds. I mean, I don't even believe for one second that my little heart that beats eight-hundred-million times in a normal life developed out of primeval slime. My heart and your's pumps enough blood to fill enough railroad cars from New York to Boston. Just take a...just take a half-inch cube of my brain and it will contain all the memories of a lifetime. And how in the world does my ear transfer airwaves to fluid without any loss? I mean, it's so bizarre and as soon as you put that in the evolutionary basket, you have just robbed the glory of the Creator. I'm no cosmic accident.

And if you want to look at the big picture, just think of the sun. You could put a million, two-hundred earths in it and still have room for four and a half million moons. Massive fireball in the sky and it's a relatively small star among the billions that are out there. He is the Creator of all of it.

Third thing that's said here, verse 3, He is the radiance of His glory. He is heir of all. He is Creator of all. He is light of all. I don't know another way to say that. The word "radiance" is...it's a great word, really, it's the word *apaugasma* and in the Greek language it means "the brightness." It means the radiating light. It isn't the lightbulb, it's the light that comes off of it. It is the radiance of the glory of God. He literally is God shining. And that, of course, is what 2 Corinthians says in chapter 4, one of my favorite passages, I usually write this passage when I autograph my name. "God said, 'Light shall shine out of the darkness,' and the God who said that is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." If you want to know the glory of God, the light of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

What does this mean? Jesus is the shining forth of God. He is the radiance of God. He is the manifestation of God. That is to say if you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus, there He is. This is saying that He manifests the attributes of God. It's not talking at this point about nature, it's talking about radiance, it's talking about disclosure. Understand it this way, the brightness of the sun is not the sun. Nobody has ever seen the sun. You've never seen the sun, I've never seen the sun. All we ever see is what comes off the sun in the massive gaseous fiery explosions that go on. That is not, in a sense, the sun, but it is that which emanates from the sun that gives us light. So here we

see Jesus as the full radiance of God. And just as the radiance of the sun lights the earth, warms the earth and produces life and growth, so in Christ God's glorious light shines into our hearts to give us life. The brightness of the sun is the same nature as the sun, it is as old as the sun, never was the sun without its brightness. And the brightness cannot be separated from the sun. And yet the brightness is not the sun. And so it is with Jesus Christ. He is the same nature as God, He is as eternal as God, He is the shining forth of God, He is indistinguishable from God and yet He is a person distinct from God as well. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, he that follows Me will never walk in darkness." Without Him the sun goes out. Without Him there is no light. Malachi said at the end of the Old Testament, "The next event, the sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams," and that was the prophecy of the coming of Christ.

The fourth excellency of Christ that is presented here, and I don't know any other way to say this than to say that He is not only heir of all and Creator of all, and light of all, but He is, in fact, God of all. In the middle of these seven, and maybe this is where it belongs, is number four, verse 3, "He is the exact representation of God's nature." Now we're going behind the shining of God to the essence of God. We're going behind the flames that come off the sun to the sun itself. He is the essential nature, this is talking about substance. The former was talking about the radiance of the sun, now we get the substance of the sun. He is not just the shining forth of God, He is the very person of God. He is the exact representation of God's essence. And what is God's essence? He is God. He is the eternal spirit and so is Jesus. And He is the precise copy, the *eikon*, the exact image, the exact reproduction. Language is basically pressed to its limits to try to express this. He is not just a sketch of God. He is not just a shadow like Old Testament pictures and images. He is the full revelation, the picture complete. So when you think about the One who came into the world, you're thinking of none other than God Himself, the personal nature of God manifest in human flesh. It becomes an absolutely mind-boggling stretching thing to think about God in the fullness of His nature inside a baby. But that's the reality of it.

The fifth thing that's said about Him is that He is ruler of all. Verse 3 says, "He upholds all things by the word of His power." The word upholds, supports, maintains, present tense, continuous action. People think that things are the way they are in the world because they are. They just are because they are. The sun rises and sets every day just because it does. The earth stays in its orbit just because it does. That's ridiculous. It's ridiculous, it's mindless, it's asinine, if you will, to think that everything came from nothing and it's equally ridiculous to think that everything hangs together without anyone holding it together. Not only did God create everything through the agency of Christ, not only did God create everything that exists, but everything that exists is held together by the very same power. Colossians 1:17, again that we read earlier, says it as clearly as it could be said, "In Him all things hold together." He is the principle of cohesion. Einstein died a broken man, died a dispirited man, died a disappointed man because he got down deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper into the fabric that makes up the atomic elements of life. And when he got down to the very

bottom, there was a force and a power that held it all together which he could not identify, which couldn't be seen, which couldn't be measured, and couldn't be quantified and couldn't be tested. Why? Cause it's the invisible power of the Son of God upholding everything. The reason things stay in orbit, the reason things are predictable, the reason things sustain a pattern that can be trusted is because He upholds everything by the word of His power. The whole universe hangs on the arm of Jesus Christ. His unsearchable wisdom, boundless power are manifested in sustaining and governing and directing all the complicated movements of everything that exists in the created realm. It's really just mind boggling to see the way people treated Him. Think about that song, "Sweet little Jesus boy, we treated You mean." They had no idea who they were dealing with. Everything is held together by the word of His power. It's held together because He speaks it. It's amazing.

If the earth's rotation slowed down, we would alternately freeze and burn. The sun has a surface temperature of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit, if it was any closer or further, we would burn and freeze. Our globe is tilted at an exact angle of 23 degrees which enables us to have four seasons. If it weren't tilted like that, we wouldn't have four seasons, vapors from the ocean would move north and south piling up continents of ice. If the moon didn't remain at its exact distance from the earth, the ocean tides would inundate the land completely twice a day. If the ocean slipped to a few feet deeper than it is, carbon dioxide and oxygen in the earth's atmosphere would be completely absorbed, no vegetable life could exist on the planet. And if our atmosphere didn't remain constant but thinned out at all, a lot of bad things would happen. You wouldn't be able to breathe and meteors which are burned up because of the density of the atmosphere would come flying through raining hell fire on us at all times.

Who holds all this delicate balance together? Who directs all these movements, actions and reactions? He does.

Number six, verse 3, "When He had made purification of sins," that introduces us to the fact that He's the Savior of all. He is the Savior of all. He is not only the ruler or Sustainer of all, He is the Savior of all. He alone made purification of sins, cleansing for sins. How did He do it? "Call His name Jesus for He'll save His people from their sins." How did He do that? By going to the cross and bearing the judgment of God, taking the place of sinners. He died under God's wrath for your sin. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He died the just for the unjust. The same wisdom and power that created the universe, the same wisdom and power that sustained the universe was applied in this gracious and merciful act of purification by which the Son came to be a substitute for sinners. He went to the cross to die your death and mine. To the Jews the cross may have been a stumbling block, to the Gentiles it may have been an offense. But to those of us who believe, it is the power of God to salvation. We rejoice in His blood. It's no stumbling block to me, it's no offense to me. As Paul said, "I glory in the cross, I glory in the cross for there at the cross by giving up His life and shedding His blood He bought our salvation."

He is the heir of all. He is the Creator of all. He is the light of all. He is the God of all. He is the ruler and Sustainer of all. He is the Savior of all and everything culminates in the last statement at the end of verse 3, "He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." He is Lord of all. He is Lord of all. Because of His submission to the Father's will to be the sin bearer God highly exalted Him, Philippians 2:9, bestowed on Him the name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and earth and under the earth and every tongue would confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

He sat down. Why did He sit down? Because His work was done. By one offering He perfected forever them that are sanctified. By one sacrifice He provided our salvation. He sat down to rest from His redemptive work. He sat down to be honored as Lord on the throne. He sat down to rule. And He also sat down to intercede. He's seated at the right hand of the throne of God and ever lives to make intercession for us. This is the Christ of Christmas. Be not mistaken about it. He is the preeminent One, God a very God no less.

So when we sing those profound words of Charles Wesley, "Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King, Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled," we're singing of these great realities. "Christ by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord, Late in time behold Him come, offspring of a virgin's womb, veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity. Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel. Hail the heaven born Prince of peace, hail the Sun of Righteousness, light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings. Mild He lays His glory by, born that we no more may die. Born to raise the sons of earth. Born to give us second birth. Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King."

Father, we are awed again by the glory of Christ. We thank You for the clarity with which this great reality was presented on the pages of Scripture. And may there be no soul here who does not bow to Christ now as Lord. We pray in His glorious name. Amen.

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