

Hebrews 2:5-13 “But We See Jesus” **

Main Idea: Many look at Jesus and don't see the whole picture. Hebrews 2:5-13 helps us see Jesus as He really is. It's here we learn two vital truths about Jesus.

I. In the person of Jesus we see God's Son (5-9).**A. In the future, He will rule the world (5-8a).**

1. We see the Son's humility in His incarnation.
2. We see the Son's glory in His coronation.
3. We see that the Son will do what man failed to do.

B. In the past He didn't look like a ruler (8b-9).

1. He took a position lower than the angels.
2. He took the road of suffering.
3. He tasted death as a substitute.
 - a. Glory came by means of suffering.
 - b. Life came by means of death.

II. Through the person of Jesus we become God's sons (10-13).**A. Because God's Son became a man, we can belong to God's family.**

1. The Son brings God's sons to glory (10).
2. The Son calls God's sons His brothers (11-13).

B. Because God's Son became a man, we who know Him have a new identity.

Make It Personal: Ask yourself these important questions...

1. Do I really know God's Son?
2. Am I living like it?

Things aren't always as they appear. I mean, he sure didn't look like a college president. It was freshman move-in day at college, and we had just pulled our packed-to-the-brim vehicle into the Maddox dormitory parking lot at Cedarville University . As we began to unload the boxes and take them to our daughter, Julie's, new room, several friendly people, mostly current students, came to lend us a hand. One of the helpers was a gray-haired, fifty-something-year-old man wearing blue jeans and a tee-shirt. As he walked past me carrying a box to a room, I did a double-take. The man wasn't one of the other fathers, as first suspected. It was Dr. Brown. He may not have looked like it, but indeed, it was him, the *president* of the university, serving the student body he was called to leave.

I don't know about you, but I didn't expect to see a college president carrying the luggage of incoming freshman. He's supposed to be in his office making important decisions, sitting behind a big walnut desk, wearing a white shirt

and designer tie. *President* and *box-toting* didn't go together in my mind.

I'll say it again. Things aren't always *as they appear*.

He made His first appearance in a barn. That's where the earliest eye-witnesses saw Him, not in a palace but laying in a box where animals are fed, and not protected by a royal purple robe but wrapped in strips of cloth, a helpless peasant baby. He sure didn't look like a king, and what's more He absolutely and certainly didn't look like the Son of God. That, of course, is because things aren't always *as they appear*.

In two days millions of people will celebrate a birthday. They'll gather with family and friends and exchange gifts in a holiday intended to honor the birth of a person named Jesus. And they'll miss the point of it all for the simple reason that they don't really know who that baby is. Oh, they've got a nativity scene, and they've got all the characters there—the shepherds, the sheep, Joseph and Mary, the three kings (even though they weren't kings, and there probably weren't three of them, and they probably didn't arrive to see the baby until he was at least a year old—but that's another story)... And in the middle of the nativity display is the guest of honor, baby Jesus. He's there, alright, but who is He?

Who do people see when they see that baby? It's not an exaggeration to say that many who celebrate Christmas have a deficient, even distorted concept of who that Christ-child is. Oh, they *see* the nativity, but they come to the wrong conclusions about that baby for the simple reason that things aren't always *as they appear*.

Which is why we're in trouble if we're merely "red letter" Bible readers. That's the person who's familiar only with the "red letter" portion of the Bible—which would be the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—where we find recorded in red the words Jesus spoke. The four gospel accounts present the life and teaching of Jesus to us, and we need that, for sure. But sinful man is prone to distort the truth about Jesus, and that's one of the reasons God gave us the *epistles*, to correct false notions about Jesus and what it means to believe in Jesus.

Three weeks ago we began to investigate the epistle to the Hebrews for a very simple reason. Many look at Jesus and don't see the whole picture. And if you don't know the truth about Jesus, you'll be inclined to throw in the towel when life gets hard. That's what was happening around the year 65 A.D. Some folks (Jewish by birth) who had professed to believe in Jesus were being persecuted for their faith, and they were considering reneging on their promise and going back to their old ways.

To help them, Hebrews was written. Hebrews is a letter (anonymous to us) that highlights the supremacy of Jesus Christ to those who were pondering defection, thinking, "It's not worth it to follow Jesus." Yes, it is, says Hebrews, *yes, it is!*

The fact is, a person won't die for (and certainly won't live for) a deficient Jesus. A person who is wavering needs to know the truth about the person of Jesus.

In the first two chapters the writer shows that Jesus Christ is superior to angels. For that matter He is superior to all creatures for He, indeed, is the Son of God and Creator of all things (1:2). To see the Son of God is to see God Himself, says 1:3, for the Son is "the exact representation of His being."

We need to *pay careful attention to what we've heard about the Son*, says the writer in 2:1. There's no escape for the person who ignores the salvation the Son provided, he emphasizes in 2:3. And then, for the first time in the letter, the writer identifies just who the Son is. He gives His name in 2:9, "But we see *Jesus*."

But that's the problem, remember? Many don't see the real Jesus, the Jesus that's worth living and dying for. We're going to see Jesus this morning from the perspective of Hebrews 2:5-13 and we're going to learn two amazing truths about Him.

I. In the person of Jesus we see God's Son (5-9).

Our text begins in verse 5, “It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking.” Remember, the writer is showing that the Son is superior to angels, apparently because his readers had an inflated view of angels. That’s not unlike today. Angels are “in” again. I googled the word “angels” and found 141 million hits. Back in the 70’s and 80’s, the supernatural world was scoffed, but since we were “touched by an angel” back in the 90’s there’s been great fascination with the supernatural.

For sure, angels are real. Hebrews 1:14 makes it clear that angels are ministering spirits who do God’s bidding. They’re servants. As such, verse 5 tells us something that’s *not* true of angels. The world to come will *not* be “subjected” to angels. That right belongs to someone else, namely to the Son.

A. In the future, He will rule the world (5-8a). “It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified: ‘What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet.’ In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.”

Angels won’t rule the world to come. That’s a task God has given to someone else, a point the writer underscores by a quotation from Psalm 8.

Once again the writer of Hebrews quotes from the Old Testament (he did so seven times in chapter one). The writer seldom mentions the Old Testament writers’ names when he quotes them. Here he simply says, “But there is a place where someone has testified.” It’s not because he doesn’t know that the “someone” who wrote Psalm 8 is David. Throughout Hebrews when the writer cites the Old Testament, he stresses its divine authorship (e.g. 3:7 “So, as the Holy Spirit says,” and then quotes from Psalm 95; and in 4:3, “Just as God has said,” and quotes again from Psalm 95).

Something else stands out about the writer’s use of the Old Testament. He continually takes a Christological view of Old Testament passages. In other words, he sees *Christ* in the Old Testament.

Take a look at Psalm 8. The heading states that David wrote this psalm. Psalm 8 speaks of the majesty of the Lord God, and begins and ends with the same statement, “O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” In the middle of the psalm David contrasts the greatness of God with the smallness of man, stating in verse 3-4, “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?”

In the scheme of the universe, man is pretty tiny, isn’t he? Which makes David’s next words so amazing, verses 5-8, “You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.”

Who is David talking about here? The “him” for David (“you made *him* lower than the angels”) refers to *man*, specifically to the first man, Adam. David has Genesis 1-2 in mind, where God created man and gave mankind the responsibility to exercise dominion and rule over all creation as God’s caretaker. God created mankind to rule the world, but of course, Adam failed his assignment. He broke God’s command, and cut the human race off from his Maker.

Look again at Hebrews 2. Who does the writer of Hebrews have in mind when he cites Psalm 8? Who is the “him” in “You made *him* a little lower than the angels...”? The writer of Hebrews says Psalm 8 points, not to the first Adam, but to the last Adam, to the perfect man who came to undo the first man’s blunder and to restore man’s dominion over God’s creation.

By the way, Paul does the same thing with Psalm 8 in 1 Corinthians 15:27 and in Ephesians 1:22, showing that Christ, the Son of God, is the fulfillment of Psalm 8. In other words, what God intended the first man to do yet failed to do, God sent His Son to do as the perfect man and He succeeded. So we can look at Psalm 8 now, says the writer,

and see God's Son who is the fulfillment of Psalm 8 as He is of the entire Old Testament (see Matt. 5:17).

So look again, says Hebrews 2. Look at Psalm 8 and see the Son, namely three things about Him.

1. *We see the Son's humility in His incarnation.* Verse 7—"You made him a little lower than the angels." That's what happened. Two thousand years ago, God's Son left heaven where angels served Him, lowered His standard of living more than we can fathom, and entered the human race. Angels are heavenly creatures, but when God's Son left heaven and came to earth, He made Himself lower than the angels.

2. *We see the Son's glory in His coronation.* Verse 7 continues, "You crowned him with glory and honor," and verse 8 begins, "And put everything under his feet." And in the next part of verse 8, the writer stops quoting Psalm 8 and makes this staggering announcement, "In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him."

To put it simply, Jesus Christ the Son of God is the ruler of the universe. There is nothing that God has not made subject to Him.

In Philippians 2 Paul expressed these same two truths about Christ—His humility as seen in His incarnation and His glory as seen in His coronation:

Speaking of Christ's humility, verses 6-8: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Speaking of Christ's glory, verses 9-11: "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

So Hebrews 2 makes something very clear about God's Son, namely...

3. *We see that the Son will do what man failed to do.* Think about it. What did Christ do on earth? He exercised the dominion that Adam forfeited. Just think what Jesus did while on earth. He exercised authority over the fish (Matt. 17:24-27), over the birds (Luke 22:34, 60), over the wild animals (Mark 1:12-13), and over domesticated animals (Mark 11:1-7). As Wiersbe explains, "Man was 'crowned...with glory and honor,' but he lost his crown and became the slave of sin. Jesus Christ has regained that 'glory and honor', and believers today share His kingly dominion (Rev. 1:5-6)." [\[1\]](#)

Let that sink in. The New Testament says that Jesus Christ, as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), regained man's lost dominion, so that today everything is under His feet (Eph. 1:20-23).

You say, "Hold on! It sure doesn't look like it. Jesus may have performed a few miracles over fish and animals, but He didn't look like a Ruler when He was on the earth. How can we say He is a Ruler?" Just remember, *things aren't always as they appear.* That's the point the author makes next. In the future, the Son will rule the world, but...

B. In the past He didn't look like a ruler (8b-9). Verse 8—"In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him." Notice that. At present we don't see the whole picture. At present we don't see the Son ruling. What do we see?

Verse 9—"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." We learn three things about Jesus here.

1. *He took a position lower than the angels.* He who created the angels was made lower than the angels. Again, the writer's talking about the incarnation. Christmas. You say, "What's Christmas all about?" At Christmas

God the Son took a position lower than the angels by becoming a man.

Why did He do that? Know this. You'll never appreciate Christmas fully until you can answer that question. We'll come back to it momentarily, but for now let's notice the second insight about Jesus verse 9 gives us. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death..." Why does verse 9 say Jesus is now crowned with glory and honor? Notice the word *because*. It's because...

2. He took the road of suffering. He is now crowned "*because* He suffered death."

Why did God's Son become a man? Some say it was to show us how to live, and for sure He did that, perfectly. But that's not the primary answer, for many reasons, chiefly because sinners need more than an example, even a perfect one. To answer why God's Son came to Bethlehem, you must go forward thirty-three years to another location, to a hillside outside of the city of Jerusalem where Jesus breathed His final breath following His crucifixion. There He announced, "It is finished" (John 19:30). That's why He came to earth, to do a work His Father had given Him to do, and He didn't stop until that work was finished. Philip Hughes explains, "Calvary...is both the explanation and the fulfillment of Bethlehem."^[2]

What specifically did Jesus accomplish at Calvary? Notice the rest of verse 9, "...He suffered death, so that [here's the purpose] by the grace of God [that is, by the unmerited, undeserved favor of God] he might taste death for everyone." There's what happened at Calvary ...

3. He tasted death as a substitute. The verb "tasted" doesn't mean He merely put the cup of death to his lips, but rather that He drank it all. It means "to partake of" and even "to enjoy." That's why Jesus came to earth. He came to die. He came to taste death "for everyone." That is, He did what He did for the benefit of others.

In what sense did Jesus taste death for *everyone*? Does that mean He died as a substitute for every human being, that He took away every sinner's sin? If you answer that question *yes*, you'll have a hard time explaining why the Bible says there will be people in hell. I think Jesus Himself explained what this means when He said in John 12:32, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." Was Jesus saying that His cross-work was going to result in everyone coming to Him? No, that can't be, for it didn't happen. Actually Jesus said those words just after some Greeks approached Philip in the temple, saying they would like to see Jesus. Jesus responded by saying the hour had come for Him to die, and that by His death He would draw *all kinds of men*—Jew, Greek, and every other type of person—to Himself.

Think of it this way. The first man served as the representative of the entire human race. And serving as mankind's representative, the first Adam failed. But the last Adam, also serving the entire human race, didn't fail. Anyone can now come to God through Him because He tasted death *for everyone* as a substitute.

Remember the Titans is one of my favorite movies. There's a great scene where one of the Titan football players approaches the coach with a plea. It's the State Championship game, and it's not going well. This particular player is a defensive back and he's getting beat badly by the faster offensive ends on the opponents team. So he goes to Coach Boone and says, "I can't do it, coach. I can't guard those guys." And then he points to a teammate who's on the bench and says, "Put Pete in. He can do it." And Coach Boone did, and the substitute did what the starter failed to do, and the team won the game.

That's what we must do. We need to admit that the starting team is in trouble. We need a substitute, and because of the grace of God, a substitute is available! The substitute, Jesus, came to earth as a baby, lived a perfect life, and then tasted death in the place of everyone that would ever believe on Him. Three days later He conquered death, and He lives today. The substitute will enter the game in your place if you will ask Him to do so.

Things aren't always as they appear. For Jesus...

a. Glory came by means of suffering. He sure didn't look like a Ruler when He was hanging on the cross. But He was and is. What's more...

b. Life came by means of death. Jesus died, but on the third day the Son of God raised from the dead, and forty days later He returned to heaven took His rightful seat on His throne, as King of kings.

That's what happened to Jesus. But there's more. In the verses that follow we learn a second amazing truth, one we'll touch on briefly today and develop more fully next time. Truth #1—In the person of Jesus we see God's Son. Truth #2...

II. Through the person of Jesus we become God's sons (10-13).

Notice the first words of verse 10, "In bringing many sons to glory..." Don't miss the word "sons." It's plural. That's why Jesus came. The Son came from glory in order to bring many sons to glory. Or, to make it personal...

A. Because God's Son became a man, we can belong to God's family. Allow me to read the following verses, make a couple of initial observations, and then we'll probe more carefully next time.

Verses 10-13 "In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. He says, 'I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And again he says, 'Here am I, and the children God has given me.'"

Truth #1—those who know Jesus know God's Son—leads to truth #2—those who know Jesus become God's sons. Here we're told that *the Son* does two things in behalf of God's *sons*.

1. *The Son brings God's sons to glory (10).* Verse 10 refers to the Son as the "author" of our salvation. The term means "pioneer—one who opens the way for others to follow."^[3] The Son went first, and the sons follow in the path He blazed. Indeed, He's the only way to experience the glory of heaven. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me (John 14:6)."

Do you ever get the sense that there's got to more to life than what you're experiencing? That's because there is. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. That's what Romans 3:23 says. But Hebrews 2:10 says that the Son brings many sons to glory. In Adam we've fallen short of glory. In Christ we're taken to glory.

What path leads to glory? Verse 10 says that God made the author of our salvation perfect *through suffering*. The road to glory for the Son involved suffering. Should *the sons* expect it to be any different for them?

The church father Chrysostom offered this food for thought, "If Jesus calls what he suffered for your sake 'glory,' much more ought you to call 'glory' what you suffer for your Lord."^[4] Is that how we typically view suffering? Verse 10 says that the Son was made perfect, again, *through suffering*. We often miss the connection between suffering and glory. It was true for God's Son, and it will be true for God's sons and daughters.

And here's a great truth that keeps us going as we walk the path of suffering...

2. *The Son calls God's sons His brothers (11-13).* Verse 11—"So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers." How staggering! We who were once cut off from God, and we who were the reason that the Son suffered and died, are here called 'brothers' by the Son. The Son calls those who put their trust in Him *brothers*, indicating that if we know Him then we're in the family, God's family.

The world is full of lonely people. Perhaps you are one of them. If so, take another look at the Christmas scene. But don't just see a baby lying there. See the rest of the story, and know this. Through that child, you may become a child of God's forever family.

Again, make it personal...

B. Because God's Son became a man, we who know Him have a new identity. When I was in high school I remember a preacher asking us to take a piece of paper and write down these words: "I am _____." Then he told us to fill in the blank with ten words. What words would you use? I am... *Tall?* *Short?* *Funny?* *Athletic?* *Musical?* *A Brown's fan?* The preacher then asked a very important question which I'll ask you. How many of you filled in the blank with these words...? *I am a Christian.*

I looked at my list and was convicted. "*Christian*" wasn't one of my words. Oh, I claimed to be a Christian, but I had failed to see that being in Christ isn't just a ticket to heaven. It's a new identity.

Beloved, if we're in Christ today, then this is our identity. We are part of God's forever family. We are His children. Jesus calls us His brothers.

Make It Personal: Ask yourself these important questions...two questions, to be precise.

1. *Do I really know God's Son?* If you want to know for sure that you will experience glory when you leave this world, then make sure you know the Son (see 1 John 5:11-13). And for those who do know God's Son, a follow-up question...

2. *Am I living like it?* Am I deriving my identity and purpose for living from my connection with Christ? Am I making choices that reflect well on the family name? Does my life make others want to become part of God's family?

****Note:** This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church . It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

[1] Warren Wiersbe, p. 283.

[2] Philip Hughes, p. 88.

[3] Observation by Wiersbe, p. 283.

[4] Taken from Hughes, p. 88. And Philip Hughes adds, "The Christian glories in the first place in the cross of Jesus, the source of his redemption (Gal. 6:14), and then also in the sufferings which he is permitted to endure for Jesus' sake."