

Main Idea: Hebrews 1:5-14 exalts the supremacy of Christ and makes it clear that there is no Son like this Son. To accomplish this, the passage teaches us about two subjects.

- I. Here’s what is true about angels.
  - A. They are God’s creatures (7).
  - B. They are God’s servants (14).
    - 1. They serve Christ.
    - 2. They serve Christ’s people.
- II. Here’s what is true about the Son.
  - A. The Son possesses a special relationship with the Father (5).
  - B. The Son possesses inherent worth (6).
    - 1. He is God’s firstborn.
    - 2. He is the object of angels’ worship.
  - C. The Son possesses royalty (7-9).
    - 1. God says that angels serve (7).
    - 2. God says that His Son rules (8-9).
  - D. The Son possesses unchanging eternity (10-12).
    - 1. He made everything.
    - 2. He is forever the same.
  - E. The Son possesses unrivaled supremacy (13-14).
    - 1. He is equal with God.
    - 2. He will reign over His enemies.

Make It Personal: In light of the supremacy of Christ...

- 1. Make sure He is supreme in your life.
- 2. Make Him known to others.

*Scripture Memory Song (“Redeemed people sing the Word”):* Isaiah 33:2

Behold the Son! That’s the title and purpose of our current series. In these weeks leading up to Christmas, we’re inviting the author of Hebrews to help us *behold* the Son. “Behold” is a significant word in the Bible, appearing 1,111 times in the ESV, from Genesis to Revelation.

Genesis 1:29 “And God said, ‘**Behold**, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.’”

Genesis 9:9 (to Noah) “**Behold**, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you.”

Exodus 17:6 (to Moses) “**Behold**, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.”

Psalms 11:7 “For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall **behold** his face.”

Psalms 17:15 “As for me, I shall **behold** your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.”

Isaiah 62:11 “**Behold**, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘**Behold**, your salvation comes; **behold**, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.’”

Matthew 28:20 “And **behold**, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Revelation 3:20 “**Behold**, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

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\*\* 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.

<sup>1</sup> For a previous look at this passage, see the Hebrews series preached at WBC in 2007.

Revelation 21:5 “**Behold**, I am making all things new.”

Revelation 22:12 “**Behold**, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.”

Behold is what you did when you first held your child. You didn’t just look at that little bundle. There was no casual glance. You *gazed* at that little one intently. Do that with Me, says the Lord. And by God’s grace, let’s do just that as we come to our next passage in Hebrews.

Before we read today’s text, I want you to look at it. Scan verses 5-14. What do you see? Lots of quotation marks, right? In fact, the writer inserts seven citations from the Old Testament in verses 5-14. But here’s what you may not realize. When he quotes a verse, he assumes that we know the rest of the passage in which that quotation appears, and the meaning of that passage. He does this, not just in Hebrews 1, but throughout Hebrews.

We do something similar. I’m going to give you a list of words and see if you can tell me what message I’m communicating with this list? *The drive. The fumble. The cardiac kids. The move.* What’s the message? Those words represent much more than what they sound like at face value. There’s an entire story that’s unleashed when you hear them. That is, if you know the story. If not, they’re relatively meaningless. A few of you are following. I just told you *what’s it like being a Cleveland Browns fan.*

Let’s try another list. 3:23. 6:23. 5:8. 10:9-10. What’s the message behind that list of numbers? Many of you recognize that those are not haphazard numbers. Those are references in what’s called “the Romans Road”. I’ve just shared the gospel with you and told you how to be saved and become a child of God.

So as I read today’s passage, think about the message behind the message. Think about who the Son is according to the Old Testament. Behold the Son!

*Scripture Reading: Hebrews 1:5-14*

Satan is sly. He hates God and especially hates His Son, Jesus Christ. That’s why he works in the world to get the focus off of Christ. That’s his aim, to detract from Christ, to get people to stop thinking about Christ. He uses more than one strategy to accomplish that deadly agenda. His more obvious tactic is *outright assault*, as he’s doing in Nigeria right now with the senseless slaughter of Christians.

But he uses another strategy and we often miss it. It’s the strategy of *distraction*. Satan can’t eliminate Christ, so he does all he can to divert attention from Him, not necessarily by bad things either. What’s Christmas all about for many today? Family, office parties, gift giving, light displays, sending cards, cantatas, new clothes, and more. Again, nothing wrong with those things, yet the combined effect of them is that Christ is lost in the clutter.

Thankfully, God has given us a special resource to help us in this battle. It’s a book that demonstrates the supremacy of Christ and calls for absolute allegiance to Him.

As we saw last week, Hebrews was written about thirty-some years after Messiah Jesus conquered the grave and returned to heaven. We don’t know who wrote the book, nor are the recipients identified. Based on the content of Hebrews, the first readers were from a Jewish background and were experiencing intense persecution such that they were wavering and considering defection and a return to Judaism. But like a good coach, the author of Hebrews seeks to motivate his dear readers to stay in the game.

He begins the letter by highlighting eight breathtaking features of God’s Son, Jesus the Christ. Who is He? Verse 2 says He’s the heir of all things and the creator of all things; verse 3 states that He is the perfect expression of glory, the exact representation of

God, the sustainer of all things, the one who took care of our sin problem, and who took a seat in heaven; and verse 4 indicates He is superior to the angels.

Having mentioned angels, the writer knows he needs to slow down the pace. He knows the Jews have a high regard for angels, so a comparison is needed. How do the angels compare to the Son?

What happened in the Old Testament when a person met an angel? It happened a lot. An angel appeared to Hagar in Genesis 16, to Lot in Genesis 19, and to Abraham in Genesis 22. Jacob saw a vision of angels ascending and descending a ladder in Genesis 28. Balaam met an angel that stopped his donkey in Numbers 22. Elijah was strengthened by an angel after his flight from Queen Jezebel in 1 Kings 19.

How did people respond to these angels? Often they were petrified by these powerful creatures. So it was a natural question. How does the Son rank in comparison with these frightful beings known as angels? The author devotes the rest of chapter one to show that no one (including the angels) compares to the Son, and thus no one deserves our undivided loyalty as does the Son. Indeed, there is no Son like this Son.

#### I. Here's what is true about angels.

The truth is, we learn more about angels from Hebrews 1 than perhaps any other biblical text. And the reason? Apparently, these first century readers were fascinated by angels. Paul ran into this as his warning in Colossians 2:18 indicates, "Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and *the worship of angels* disqualify you for the prize."

When that happens, it suits the evil one just fine. Remember his agenda? He wants to turn people's attention *away from Christ*. He knows that if we develop a preoccupation with something—even something good like angels—then he's won a victory for he's distracted us from the best of subjects, namely Christ Himself.

In order to exalt Christ, the writer of Hebrews puts angels in their proper place by emphasizing two important facts regarding angels.<sup>2</sup> In an expository message, we typically walk verse by verse through a passage, but I want to change that today. I want us to see the bookends of this passage together and what they communicate to us about angels.

**A. They are God's creatures (7).** Notice verse 6, "And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all *God's* angels worship him.'" And verse 7, "In speaking of the angels he says, 'He makes *his* angels winds, *his* servants flames of fire.'" The author stresses that angels belong to God. That's because they are *His creatures*. He made them. Indeed, to be precise *the Son* made the angels as He did everything else that exists, as we saw last time in verse 2, and as we'll see again momentarily in verse 10.

Sometimes we forget this. Angels are creatures. Yes, they're different from us in intriguing ways, but they are nonetheless creatures. They did not always exist, but came into being, just like we did, because the Sovereign God chose to create them.

**B. They are God's servants (14).** We see this in verse 14, which, you'll note is a question, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" In asking this rhetorical question, the writer is stating what he assumes his readers should already know about angels, namely that they are *servants*.

Notice the words carefully. They are *ministering* spirits (from the Greek term *leiturgika*, from which we get the word 'liturgy'). Angels exist to fulfill the desire of their Maker. They are not rivals to God, but ministers of God.

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<sup>2</sup> There are 108 references to angels in the OT and 165 references in the NT.

They are ministering *spirits*. That indicates that unlike human beings, angels are not restricted by space. They are *spirit* beings. They do not have bodies although they can appear in bodily form as they fulfill their ministry (see Heb. 13:2).

They are *sent*, says verse 14. The passive verb indicates that angels were not created to “do their own thing,” but to do the bidding of their Maker. God *sends* them.

He sends them to *serve*. This Greek term is the familiar *diakonian*. Angels are spiritual ‘deacons,’ if you will, *servants*.

And who do they serve? The text states they serve *those who will inherit salvation*. Angels, then, serve two subjects.

1. *They serve Christ*. Think back to Christ’s earthly ministry. Who do we see at His birth? Angels (Luke 2:13). And after His forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness, who do we see attending to His needs. Again, angels (Matt. 4:11). We see an angel ministering to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, too (Luke 22:43). And it’s not surprising that we see angels at His tomb (Matt. 28:2).

And it’s not just that angels served Christ in the past either. The book of Revelation makes it clear that right now angelic beings are serving Him in heaven (Rev. 5:11), as they will in the future when He sends them to gather His elect (Matt. 24:31), when He returns to earth in glory (Matt. 25:31), and when He judges mankind (Rev. 16:1; 17:1).

But Hebrews 1 reveals something quite staggering. Angels serve a second subject.

2. *They serve Christ’s people*. They are “sent to serve those who will inherit salvation.” What salvation is he talking about? He seems to be talking about the salvation that the Son came to earth to accomplish, the “purification for sins” mentioned in verse 3. The Son came to save sinners. That’s why He died on the cross, to pay sin’s penalty and thereby provide salvation for those who would repent and believe on Him. But the Son doesn’t just offer *future* salvation. He also offers a *present* guarantee. He will lose none that He saves. He sends His angels to serve His people, to make sure they will inherit the salvation He merited in their behalf.

I’d like to restate an implication I mentioned last week. We will not receive wings when we die and go to heaven. We are both creatures, but different kind of creatures. We are human beings, not angels.

There’s much more we could say about angels and their ministry, but to do so would be unwise at this point for two reasons. One, our time doesn’t allow. And two, our text doesn’t allow. The purpose of this text isn’t to arouse our interest in angels. There’s a loftier subject at hand, and to that subject we now turn.

## II. Here’s what is true about the Son.

At times in the Old Testament angels are referred to as “sons of God” (e.g. Job 1:6; 2:1), but no angel nor any other creature holds the status of *The Son*. To prove the point, the writer of Hebrews cites a series of Old Testament texts (again, his readers are Jewish) to demonstrate the superiority of the Son. He uses these Old Testament texts to show that the Son possesses five attributes that make Him superior to angels.

**A. The Son possesses a special relationship with the Father (5).** Listen to verse 5, “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’? [a quotation from Psalm 2:7] Or again, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son’ [a quotation from 2 Samuel 7:14]?”

The first quotation comes from Psalm 2, a psalm frequently cited in the New Testament. According to the first part of Psalm 2:7 (which isn’t included in Hebrews 1:5), what follows is “the decree of the LORD.” It’s a decree about the Person referred to

as “the Anointed One” in Psalm 2:2, “my King” in 2:6, and the One who will “rule” the nations “with an iron scepter” in 2:9, and whose “wrath can flare up” according to 2:12. It’s to that person that the LORD proclaims this decree: “*You are my Son; today I have become your Father.*”

The second quotation comes from 2 Samuel 7:14. In 2 Samuel 7, God gave King David a promise. Keep in mind this is one thousand years BC. The LORD declared that He would establish David’s kingdom forever (verse 12) and that He would give David an offspring, a son to build a house for God’s honor (verse 13). Verse 14 states, “I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men.” In the context, that “son” is Solomon. God is telling David that He will work through Solomon to build the Davidic dynasty.

But the writer to the Hebrews, as he does with many Old Testament passages in this book, says that this points beyond David’s son, Solomon. This promise point to and is fulfilled by the ultimate Son, *God’s Son*. *I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.*

In His sermon on the mount, Jesus Christ claimed to be the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17). He later said that all the Hebrews Scriptures pointed to Him (John 5:39, 46). And the New Testament record over and over shows that Jesus is indeed *The Son*.

Here’s an example. Do you remember what the angel told the virgin Mary? Luke 1:31-32 records, “You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and *will be called the Son of the Most High.*”

And what do we hear at Jesus’ baptism? We hear the Father announce in Matthew 3:17, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” We hear a similar announcement on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17:5. “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

Take a closer look at Hebrews 1:5 and we’ll see something quite revealing. The NIV says, “Today I have become your Father,” but it literally reads, “Today I have *begotten* you” (as in the ESV; from the Greek *gegennaka* which means “to give birth, become father of, procreate, or cause to happen). That raises some questions. In what sense did the Father *beget* the Son? And what does He mean by the word *today* when He says, ‘Today I have begotten you’? What day is *today*?

We can be sure it does *not* mean that there was a time when the Son did not exist. As we’ll see later in Hebrews 1, the second person of the Trinity has *always* existed (verses 10-12). He is eternal (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17).

The Nicene Creed, written in AD 325, helps us. It states that Christ is “the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made.” Robert Gromacki explains, “In that choice of words, the early church fathers wanted to point out the unique eternal relationship between the Father and the Son without implying that the Son had a beginning in time. There could be no Father without the Son and there could be no Son without the Father. The decree, therefore, is as eternal as the relationship.”<sup>3</sup>

The *begetting* of the Son seems to be referring to His incarnation, in other words, to the point in time (the ‘*today*’) when the eternal Son took on flesh and become a man. Philip Hughes comments, “The ‘begetting,’ then, is the begetting of the *incarnate* Son—

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Gromacki, p. 32.

not the eternal begetting of the divine Son ‘before all worlds’—and it marks the completion and the acceptance of his redeeming mission to our world.<sup>4</sup>

Some, like Warren Wiersbe, believe the *begetting* pertains specifically to Christ’s resurrection, based on Paul’s statement in Acts 13:33, “He has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.’”

Of this we can be sure. God the Son possesses a unique, one of a kind relationship with the Father, which the angels do not possess. And this unique identity is under constant attack and is that which we must diligently defend.

I mentioned the Nicene Creed. Let me take you back to the setting of the creed. Al Mohler explains what happened:

“In the early fourth century there arose a presbyter in the church of Alexandria by the name of Arius, who began to teach that Jesus Christ was not the pre-existent Son of God, but that there once was a time when the Son was not. On the other side of the controversy was a bishop named Athanasius. Here was a man who understood the truth, and who also understood that his responsibility as a shepherd of the sheep to warn his people about this false teaching. At one point, one of Athanasius’s advisers said to him, “Athanasius, the entire world is against you.” In reply, Athanasius said, “Well, if the entire world is against Athanasius, then Athanasius will be against the entire world.” In Latin, Athanasius’ phrase has been summarized as “*contra mundum*,” “against the world.” Surely that is one of the greatest statements in the history of Christianity, and Christians should feel invigorated by the courage of Athanasius. If necessary, *contra mundum*, against the world! If the world is against the Gospel, then the world will have to understand that we must be against the world.”<sup>5</sup>

Hebrews points out a second way in which the Son is superior to angels.

**B. The Son possesses inherent worth (6).** Here’s verse 6 in the NIV, “And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him.’”

The writer of Hebrews quotes here from Deuteronomy 32:43, but if you looked at it in your Bible, you’d conclude that’s the wrong reference. That’s because the writer isn’t quoting from the Hebrew Bible (from which we get our English Old Testament), but apparently from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible which was made two centuries BC).<sup>6</sup> The LXX adds this phrase, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Deuteronomy 32 is a song of Moses in which he praises God for bringing Israel into the Promised Land. The “him” refers to God. Here Hebrews 1 says it points to the Son, thus stressing the deity of Christ. We’re told two things regarding the Son here.

1. *He is God’s firstborn.* In verse 6, just before the quote, the writer refers to the Son as God’s “firstborn” whom God brought into the world. The Greek term translated “firstborn” is *prototokos* from *proto* (which means “first, chief, first in rank”) combined with *tikto* (which means “to bring forth”). The Son is referred to in several other texts as “firstborn” (such as Colossians 1:15, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation”; also Rom. 8:29).

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<sup>4</sup> Philip Hughes, p. 55.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.albertmohler.com/commentary\\_read.php?cdate=2006-05-19](http://www.albertmohler.com/commentary_read.php?cdate=2006-05-19)

<sup>6</sup> This also follows the variant Hebrew manuscript discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Again, please realize the term does *not* mean the Son had a beginning, for the second person of the Triune Godhead has always existed. But God has not always existed *as a man*. That took place some two thousand years ago when God brought His *firstborn* into the world in the person of Jesus Christ. Concerning Christ, Colossians 1:19 declares, “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.”

2. *He is the object of angels’ worship.* Notice the instruction given, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” Since it’s wrong for any creature to worship another creature, the fact that God commanded angels to worship His Son is another clear indicator of His Son’s deity and inherent worth.

And think about it. This is precisely what the angels did at the first Christmas. They worshipped the firstborn (Luke 2:13-14), just like God commanded them to do. Their worship was a clear acknowledgement that the Son is greater than they are.

Friends, many today (especially at Christmas time) are enamored by angels. And so they decorate the tree with angels. They wear angel pins. They put angel figurines around the house. And there’s nothing wrong with any of this *necessarily*. As long as what? As long as they do what the angels did and *worship the Son alone!*

**C. The Son possesses royalty (7-9).** Notice verses 7-9, “Of the angels he says [in a quotation of Psalm 104:4], ‘He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.’<sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says [a quotation of Psalm 45:6-7], ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.’<sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

Notice the contrast.

1. *God says that angels serve (7).* If we took time to examine Psalm 104, we’d see it speaks of Yahweh’s majesty over His creation. It shows that the LORD is over the heavens (2), the clouds (3), the earth (5), the birds, donkeys, and cattle (10-14), over trees, mountains, and birds (16-18), and makes this declaration in Psalm 104:24, “How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.” One of these creatures (which the psalmist mentions in verse 4) are angels.

And that’s the point of the Hebrews’ quotation. Angels are creatures, God’s creatures. God created them to serve and likens them to wind and fire, “He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.”<sup>7</sup> What’s true of wind and fire? They’re powerful, yes, but they’re also temporary and not eternal. They come and go, a vivid illustration of the work of angels.

But the person and work of the Son isn’t temporary. It’s permanent. And unlike angels that God created to serve, God’s Son rules.

2. *God says that His Son rules (8-9).* Psalm 45 that’s quoted here was written by the sons of Korah. It was a wedding song used to praise Israel’s king on his wedding day. In verses 6-7 of the psalm the sons of Korah break into praise and acknowledge that God sent this king in place, and that this king will rule eternally and justly.

Please note in Hebrews 1:8 that the Father addresses the Son as “O God.” The Son of God is the ultimate king spoken of in Psalm 45.

**D. The Son possesses unchanging eternity (10-12).** In the ESV, “And, ‘You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gromacki comments, “In such service they may use the winds (another translation of *pneumata*) and fire as the channels for their manifestation.” p. 33.

like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

Here Hebrews quotes Psalm 102:25-27. The heading over Psalm 102 says it is a prayer of an afflicted man who poured out his lament to God. “Hear my prayer!” he begins the psalm in verse 1. “My enemies taunt me,” He tells the Lord in verse 8. “You, O LORD, sit enthroned forever,” he acknowledges in verse 12. The psalm ends by contrasting God’s greatness with His enemies, and it’s that section that Hebrews 1 quotes, and from that quotation we learn the following about the Son.

1. *He made everything.* Verse 10 says, “In the beginning, O LORD, you laid the foundations of the earth.” The world exists because the Lord made it. The *Son* made it (as we saw in verse 2).

So answer this. What should be our attitude towards what the Lord made? Should Christians be concerned about the environment? Yes indeed, and it’s tragic when greedy individuals abuse and misuse God’s earth. But please realize that man will not ultimately terminate this universe. Who will? This text says the Son of God Himself will do that. The One who made the universe will one day “roll up” the earth like a useless garment. At that time He will burn up the heavens and the earth by fire in order to create a new heaven and new earth (Matt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 21:1).

So the present universe will change? What about the Son? Will He change? No.

2. *He is forever the same.* Verse 12 teaches the *sameness* of the Son of God, stating, “But you remain the same, and your years will never end.” The Son possesses *unchanging eternity*.

**E. The Son possesses unrivaled supremacy (13-14).** In the NIV, “To which of the angels did God ever say, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’? Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?”

That’s a quotation of Psalm 110:1, a psalm that the Jews viewed as messianic even before Messiah Jesus came. It’s not surprising that Psalm 110 is cited or echoed a dozen times in Hebrews (1:3; 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:3, 11, 17, 21; 8:1; 10:12, 13; 12:2).<sup>8</sup>

Here the writer cites Psalm 110 to point out something angels have *never* heard. No angel has ever heard God say to him, “Sit at my right hand.” But God did say that to one person, His matchless Son.

Where is the Son of God right now? The last book of the Bible tells us. In His letter to the church at Laodicea, Jesus Christ comments about His current position in Revelation 3:21, “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.” Where is Christ right now? He’s sitting with His Father on His throne. What does that tell us? The same two realities emphasized in Psalm 110:1 and in Hebrews 1:13...

1. *He is equal with God.* And...

2. *He will reign over His enemies.*

And that takes us back to where we began. Earlier in this this message I commented about the tactics of the enemy. The evil one hates Christ and does whatever he can to take the focus off of Christ. He uses outright assault as well as distraction. The result is the same. Christ fails to receive what He deserves.

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<sup>8</sup> Observation by Hughes, p. 69.



Beloved, this is the truth about God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone possesses a special relationship with the Father. He alone possesses inherent worth. He alone possesses royalty, unchanging eternity, and unrivaled supremacy.

You say, "Pastor Brad, this message was a little heady. Do I really need to know all this? I mean, as long as a person loves Jesus, that's what matters, isn't it?"

But of course, the question is, "What Jesus?" The real Jesus can save a sinner from his sins, yes. But only the real Jesus. If we want real salvation, we need to know the real Jesus.

Is theological precision necessary? When it comes to the identity of Christ, yes! Al Mohler uses an illustration from the fourth century to show just how vital it is that we know the Bible well:

"At crucial points in the history of Christian theology, the difference between orthodoxy and heresy has often hung on a single word, or even a syllable. When Arius argued that the Son was to be understood as being of a *similar* substance as the Father, Athanasius correctly understood that the entirety of the Gospel was at risk. As Athanasius faithfully led the church to understand, the New Testament clearly teaches that the Son is of the *same* substance as the Father. In the Greek language, the distinction between the word offered by Arius and the correction offered by Athanasius was a single syllable. Looking back, we can now see that when the Council of Nicaea met in A.D. 325, the Gospel was defended and defined at this very point. Without the role of Athanasius as both pastor and theologian, the heresy of Arius might have spread unchecked, leading to disaster for the young church."<sup>9</sup>

#### Make It Personal: In light of the supremacy of Christ...

Two responses are in order.

1. *Make sure He is supreme in your life.* The Son came to earth, died for sinners, conquered the grave, returned to heaven, and is exalted on His throne right now. The question is, *is He exalted on the throne of your life?* Put your trust in Him and you will be saved. But don't just trust Him. Live, by His grace, for the supremacy of His name!

2. *Make Him known to others.* Many don't know about the Son. Let's tell them!

**Closing Song:** #88 "*Fairest Lord Jesus*" (all four verses)

**This afternoon:** *Community groups*

#### Community Group Discussion:

1. In today's message from Hebrews 1:5-14, "*Behold! There Is No Son Like This Son,*" we examined the contrast the author of Hebrews makes between angels and Jesus. There was a great fascination with angels in the first century, as there is today. What is the common view of angels in our day?

2. What does the Bible teach about angels in Hebrews 1:5-14 (and in other passages)? How should we view angels as Christians?

3. What do we learn about Jesus in verse 5? In verse 6? In verses 7-9? In verses 10-12? In verses 13-14?

4. The author of Hebrews quotes several Old Testament passages in Hebrews 1. What texts does he quote? What do we learn from his use of the Old Testament? How should Christians today approach the Old Testament?

5. What's the proper response to Jesus according to today's passage? What is something you plan to do this week in light of what you learned today? After sharing, spend time as a group praying for grace to apply these commitments.

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.albertmohler.com/commentary\\_read.php?cdate=2006-04-19](http://www.albertmohler.com/commentary_read.php?cdate=2006-04-19)