



Jesus Christ

Hebrews 1:1 – 2:18

By Thomas L. Trevethan

We believe in Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, who lived as a perfect example, who assumed the judgment due sinners by dying in our place, and who was bodily raised from the dead and ascended as Savior and Lord.

To describe Jesus as “fully human” and “fully divine” is both an idea and something to be embraced. Expand your understanding of Jesus Christ with these remarkable descriptions from the book of Hebrews. See why Jesus is an example to follow in the midst of our own suffering, failures and spiritual drifting.

1. Read [Hebrews 1:1-4](#). The author of Hebrews refers to God speaking through the prophets, but does not feel the need to explain either the prophets or the various ways they speak. What does this tell you about the author of Hebrews and his audience? Take a moment to recall and look up some of the Old Testament prophets. What are some of the various ways in which God spoke? What does this tell you about God’s commitment to speaking to us?
 - The word “but” in Hebrews 1:2 indicates contrast. How is the word spoken through the Son different from the word spoken through the prophets?
 - What do vv. 1:1-3 tell us about who Jesus is (in relationship to God, in relationship to the created order, his accomplishments)?
 - Focus on the phrase “the radiance of God’s glory” as a description for Jesus, the Son. What does this metaphor claim about his identity in relationship to God, the Father? What does it claim about Jesus as the one who reveals God?
 - We have noted that Jesus is superior to the prophets as the supreme revelation of God. In [vv. 5-14](#), the writer quotes several Old Testament passages to also make the case that Jesus is superior to angels. Summarize his argument in these verses.
 - What would be a fitting response on our part to this description of the Son? Read Hebrews 2:1 and notice how it answers this question. What does “careful attention” mean? How have you paid “careful attention” to the Son?

2. Read [Hebrews 2:1-18](#). The author interprets [Psalm 8](#) as speaking about the Messiah (Christologically), not about humankind in general (anthropologically). As the author of Hebrews understands it here, Psalm 8 is about Jesus, not us.
 - Hebrews 1 deals directly with the divine nature and authority of the Son of God. Hebrews 2 is more about the Incarnation and his human nature. In what ways does this passage describe Jesus as “fully human”?
 - Again, to call Jesus “fully human” is both an idea and something to be personally embraced. What characteristics of humanity clearly and easily apply to Jesus? What

characteristics of humanity do not? What parts of this attribution (“fully human”) might need further inquiry, repentance, or reflective prayer on your part?

- There is a tension in 2:8 between “. . . *God left nothing that is not subject to them*” and “*Yet, at present we do not see everything subject to them.*” Describe the tension between these phrases. In what sense do we see all things “subject to them?” In what sense is this not a reality? Why is this not realized? In what ways do you sense this tension in your own life?
- What specific things do we see about Jesus in verse 9? How do these things address our life in the tension of v. 8? How does the coming of Jesus resolve the tension?

MAKING IT PERSONAL

- If Christ identifies with us in suffering (Hebrews 2:9, 14, 17, 18) and has power over those who make us (the Church) suffer (Hebrews 2:8), why do we still suffer? How does the author of Hebrews respond to this? (See Hebrews 2:9, 3:1, and 12:1-2.)
- In the midst of our own suffering, persecution or drifting, how is Jesus an example for us to follow? What practical difference does it make to know that Jesus shared in our sufferings and our humanity, and that he has conquered death and the fear of death (vv. 14-18)?

GOING DEEPER

- Read [Luke 24](#) and [1 Corinthians 15:3-15](#). Besides dying for our sins, Jesus also rose from the dead. These are rich passages for learning, reflection, and worship. For today, though, simply reflect on the kindness that Jesus offers to his followers in insisting that we recognize the resurrection of his body.
- Why is Jesus’ resurrection the foundation of our hope?
- What do Hebrews 2:17-18 tell us about the role of Jesus as our High Priest? This is the main and distinctive theme of Hebrews. You can explore it more fully by reading Hebrews 7:23 – 10:39, a rich and challenging passage.
- Take some time to re-read these passages. Pray that familiarity with these verses will open to you more of the depth of God’s love for you. Pray that these parts of Scripture might help you to love the Lord your God more fully and faithfully, and to love your neighbor more directly. It may be helpful to keep your Bible open to these passages, but close with a time of thanksgiving for the verses you studied today.

TOOLS FOR FURTHER GROWTH

Norm Geisler, [“The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ.”](#) This article summarizes Christianity’s unique claim that Jesus Christ was both God and man. Find more excellent resources at [Theology Network](#).

George Guthrie, [*The NIV Application Commentary: Hebrews*](#) (Zondervan, 2002). This is a great resource for beginning readers to understand Hebrews. [\[Kindle Edition\]](#)

David Wells, [*Above All Earthly Powers*](#), (Eerdmans, 2004). Examine and apply the meaning of Jesus' identity for life in the early 21st century with this profound analysis of theology and culture.

Michael Horton, [*Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology*](#) (Westminster John Knox). Discover and understand the person and work of Jesus within the developing story of God's covenant grace.