



"God's Final Word: *His Son*"

- Hebrews 1:1-3

by Pastor Tim Dodson
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1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last

days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

It seems that often as the months turn into years in our spiritual walk, our personal intimacy with Jesus can often be subtly but steadily replaced with a mere outward religious pretense. A "disguise," *if you will*. It happens because, over time, we tend to naturally stop listening, and thus cease to hear any longer from our pastors and leaders, not to mention from the Holy Spirit Himself. Soon we move away from that intense and intimate connection that we once had with Christ at the beginning of our faith, replacing it with a what we privately think is a "controlled degree" of sin. Such then ultimately settles into the quiet, closeted routine of our lives. With our sin "allowances" firmly entrenched in our private lives, we then seem strangely obligated to create a kind of religious motif, a façade for the public "religious side" of our lives. Because having arrived here, we have essentially now compartmentalized our lives: our faith life and then our "other" life, the one where our pursuit of the world and the flesh is sanctioned...self-anointed even. Our faith life merely becomes a churchy public persona, sort of a "This is what we say, this is what we do, this is how we act, this is what we watch, this is we think is funny, etc." We schedule the putting on of our religious coats and neglect or leave empty the inner realities of following Jesus. And the worst aspects of all of this is we incredulously seek to actually *defend* this life we are living, and bristle at any and every light that is shown upon our true selves by those around us!

Once this religious "straw man" is built in our lives, we no longer feel compelled to nurture and feed the spiritual life, at least to the degree that we once did. We can now neglect these inner realities in exchange for the false security and comfort of the religious stage props we have accumulated. Because when one ceases to hear the continual voice of God...moreover, once you cease to be firmly in communicate with that God, a vacuum is created which inevitably will be naturally filled with some kind of religious smoke and mirrors performance, with Wizard of Oz directions to "Ignore the man behind the curtain".

It was no different in the early days of the faith. In the book of Hebrews, we find these Jewish Christians who were failing any longer to really hear what God was saying. Over time...almost unwittingly, they too had gradually ceased to listen, and in so doing, along the way, they had built their own "straw man." And without the real Spirit life and the power that accompanies such, they began to revel in despair and anger...bitterness

and frustration and loneliness, and they missed out on the reality of God actively speaking to them and His desire to have a real relationship with them.

So many of us, in truth, live out our spiritual journey through a long “series of sprints.” We run fast and hard for a short run, and then we are down completely for a time, only to rise again soon after to run the next short sprint. But the book of Hebrews is calling us to focus our gaze upon our God and commit ourselves to the steady marathon.

The book of Hebrews seems to have been written specifically to a group of urban believers who were living in a religiously pluralistic society, very much like today. A society where a vast array of beliefs were present, wherein which a person could simply “snack.” Like a buffet line where you custom design your religious meal, taking extra helpings of issues and attributes that appeal to you and rejecting others that are distasteful to you, confront you, or those that are an affront to your senses. We reject not the whole meal, only the parts we don’t like, disagree with, or don’t believe in. It’s “designer” religion.

But Hebrews takes the extreme position that Jehovah God is the one and only God, speaking through His Son Jesus. Just one, just Him. Moreover, He is a “package deal.” And everything that He has said is sovereign, applicable, obligatory and compulsory. Each aspect...each part, critical to the whole. Each part mandatory to the operation of the final product.

This would not have been a popular position in the day that this letter was written any more than it is today in our society. But the bottom line is that true and empowered Christianity must be not only accepted in its biblical entirety, but moreover embraced as such. Hebrews essentially *forces* such a position. One that receives Christ as the one and only answer to the faith need innately found in each of us. But many ...if not most people... reject that principle saying, “Well, this or that issue I just can’t accept,” or, “I just don’t believe that point.” And thus the high view and the power found in a full connection to the scriptural Jehovah is never realized in these people, though they may sit in a pew every Sunday of their lives. Because they are unwilling to accept Christ as the sovereign singular voice for their lives, they are relegated to living them out in the vast shallow ground of religiosity.

From “Creature of the Word” pgs. 85 & 88 we read the following:

“One of the main reasons mankind is so restless these days, why we so easily and quickly downshift into boredom, is because instead of participating in this one great drama, we’re content just to watch and wish we were involved in something this significant. We keep going to movies, watching television shows, and buying video games that give hints of this grand romance and battle. Yet for some reason we fail to see that we are actually caught up in it.

“We are in the middle of the love story, the middle of the epic battle. Our real lives are a daring connection point between God and men for the healing of broken lives and a broken culture. By God’s grace, we must help the people in our churches see the “epic” in the ordinary details of life. We must challenge them to open their eyes to this grand event happening all around them, in the hearts of every individual they encounter, and then inspire them to play a fearless, tour-de-force role in this gripping drama of the ages. God used believers before us to pull us into the story. Every one of us in the faith was brought into the faith through the influence of others. God has chosen to expand the Creation through multiplication that is centered on Jesus.

“This takes us back to the ...assertion for why we’re so restless and prone to boredom. We sit here in our modern-day world, demanding that the activities of the moment satisfy us and give us meaning. We order them to meet the yawning lack of significance and purpose that aches in our hearts whenever we turn off our public faces and realize we’re getting older without necessarily getting richer, fuller, deeper, better. Whatever we hope to accomplish, achieve, and be known for, is bound by the constraints of what remains of our human lifetime. And as the time slips steadily and quickly by, the pulse to find more in each experience intensifies.

“But what if our people realized—more each Sunday, more each month, more each year—that their lives are as connected with God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 as they are to the business of the day? That God’s plan of redeeming and reconciling people from all nations and people groups is as alive and electric today as it was at the dawn of civilization and, indeed, in eternity past? That the work of the apostles and leaders of the early church is as attached to our own work in God’s kingdom as their work was attached to God’s promises to His people Israel? Today is an opportunity to engage in a centuries-old epic, to splash into an ocean of God’s sovereignty, and send out ripples that will continually mount in reach and intensity, stretching eternally in all directions. This is huge.”

Just what is Jesus to you today? What place does he hold? Is He allowed to correct you? To push you contrary to your plans? To tell you no? To actually be your *Lord* as well as your *Savior*? Or is he a utensil, a product to make your life easier, a tool to utilize in your life plans, dreams and pursuits? If the distance from the earth to the sun, 92 million miles, was the thickness of a piece of paper, then the distance from the earth to the nearest star would be a stack of paper 70 feet high, and the distance across our galaxy from one side to other would be a stack of paper 310 miles high. And our galaxy is merely a speck in the universe. So let me ask you this: if there is a person who holds all of that together with merely a word of His power, is that the kind of person you invite into your life to merely be your personal assistant?

We often can, in our religious seeking, become entranced with some new and modern revelation. Vast segments of the church today has become obsessed with the study of angels, or end times prophetic issues, or King James only, or the manifestation of the titillating spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecies, dedicating entire conferences to such, all the while missing the bigger picture. We are essentially just filling up on the sugary desserts while rejecting the meal. God sent His Son to save us from the power and the guilt of sin and moreover...ultimately, to have a relationship with Him. One that would “conform us into His image” and one day crescendo to our bodily redemption and eternal presence with Him and being like Him. God loves you. This is the revelation of God. This is the God of Hebrews.

Are you hearing Him today? Because indeed so many of you have stopped hearing and you’ve been filled with both distractions, as well as anger and doubt and despair and loneliness, and have lost sight of what you have been called to and what the missional call of Christ was and who you were called to be, and you have replaced all of it with this religious façade. And in doing so, you are today missing out on all the inner realities and life with Jesus.

The fact is so many of you are completely exhausted trying to fix yourselves up because you have bought into the idea that He’ll finally love you when you master this and stop that. But you keep failing at it. And so now you’re convinced He doesn’t really love you at all. And because you’re convinced that He doesn’t love you yet, you kind of run *from* Him rather than *to* Him and it becomes this horrific cycle of New Year’s resolutions that never get done. A series of sprints. A circular lifestyle of ups and downs, highs and lows. Mountain-top experiences and deep valleys of despair alternating every few weeks or months.

Some of you today are stuck in some darkness. I'm here this morning to tell you that you have no reason to be quiet and secretive about that. I'm no different than you because I am standing up here. I have not arrived at some high spiritual plateau where I can sit back now and coast to the finish line. Maybe you need to grab a guy that you know who loves Jesus and say, "Help me. I am messed up." Listen, anything's better than the religious façade! This is why we are here today. If you don't know Jesus or you're kind of on the fringes and you're just kind of looking in at us, this is why we're here, because God spoke and what He said is that He loves us and there's this hope that we don't have to be the darkness that is inside of us. And that the plague of the human creature... sin, can be healed. And we're loved by God right now. I know some of you feel really far from God today and you're going, "Oh, if He'd just speak to me. If He'd speak to me." He has, guys. It's not *will* He speak, it's *will you listen?*

1:1

"God, ...*spoke*..." Immediately we are faced with one of the great elements of this letter, the great truth that God is not some abstract idea or a philosophical ascent. He is a person. A Creator that longs to communicate and relate with His creation. God is speaking: are we listening? Are we even interested?

Throughout scripture we see both specific and broad elements of His communication. His direction, His counsel, and His care manifested through His speaking: "*Go this way. Stay away from there. Watch out for that. Practice this. Shun that.*"

The passage says that God spoke at many times and through many different ways "to the fathers by the prophets." You see, God is not only talking today, but He has been talking for a very long time!

We often want to get all "hip and groovy" and even super-spiritual in an artsy kind of way, believing that God is "whispering in my ear", giving me an individual and personal communiqué that is catered to my unique persona. Because hey, you know, "It's all about me."

But the truth is that God has already been talking for a very long time...long before you arrived here. And he has said a lot already which is equally valid in your life as in mine, as in the Jews of Abraham's day and the Jews of the New Testament. Whatever He might be saying to you today will not negate what He has already said, nor is it somehow validated because you are hearing something personally.

The truth IS the truth already whether you believe it and accept it or reject it and ignore it! It is what it is, and needs nothing added by us to make it a fact. We must know that over and over, that truth key has proven to unlock the door. So no argument needs to be made that it is THE key.

1:2

Hebrews goes on to say that now "in these last days" that God has spoken to us. Again, please note that! He speaks to us and therefore apparently expects us to actually listen and hear Him.

He speaks "in these last days" through His Son, Jesus Christ. Please note this also. It does not say that this unique communiqué would come through me or you or some other perhaps self-proclaimed prophet or self-anointed Messiah. It doesn't say "sons" in the aspect that we are all His adopted "sons," but rather His SON, singular and specific. It also does not say through Mohammed, or Buddha, or Confucius, or Ellen White of the Seventh Day Adventists, or Mother Mary or Father Bob down at the local Catholic church, or Joseph Smith or Brigham Young, or whoever is the current president/prophet of the Mormon church, or the Watchtower group of the Jehovah Witnesses, etc. It says God has spoken through His SON, period.

Thus it is mine only to communicate and reiterate what Christ has already said on behalf of the Father. Anything else I believe He is saying can never negate or minimize what He has already said because Titus 1:2 says God cannot lie, and Numbers 23:19 says, “God is not a man, so he does not lie. He is not human, so he does not change his mind.”

You may feel that these are some long “last days”, but the fact herein is that they *are* the “last days.” There will not be a third set, no “Age of Aquarius” where we all speak as little gods and join arms and sing “We are the World.” This is it, all we get.

Verse 2 says that God has spoken to us by His Son. But the actual old world text reads rather “spoken unto us by Son”. The word “his” was added by the translators because they believed it would add clarity. But the fact is it can actually take away from what is actually being said here, for Jesus did not come to just deliver God’s directives, but He bodily IS God’s directives: The actual “Word.” He indeed spoke the Word, but further, He was and is the Word!

Jesus not only *carries* God’s message, but *is* God’s message! To receive Him is more than sitting in church learning of His words and directives. To receive Him is to literally take Him into one’s self. He becomes the very essence of our being. His “word” is then manifest from inside out: in action, practice, and exercise of faith.

1:3

To the Jewish mind, *and that is to whom it was specifically aimed at when it was written*, this would have some very clear and powerful understanding as to what was being said. After “He had purged our sins,” He sat down. To a Jew, God’s Son sitting down would clearly mean that He was done. It would say that the payment for and the purification of sin was completed. He was done. He was going to sit down now.

Two things to consider here: one uniquely for us and one for the Jewish nation. First, the payment has been made and He is done and He has sat down. But what about my sins since the cross? What about my sins today? Paid for. Past tense. It’s a radical truth and has profound ramifications! In chapter 10, verse 14, we read, “For by one offering He has perfected forever...” One offering. The cross, perfected forever, not “until the next sin.”

It’s radical because for some, this truth is the unlocking of Pandora’s Box and they have essentially been given the license to kill without accountability. Notice the word “purged”. That word speaks of an extreme purification. It carries in it the truth of Christ’s complete removal of the guilt in us and the power of sin. Note the past tense nature of this word!

Yet on the other hand, there will be those who knee-jerk and say, “Oh, we can’t give that kind of carte blanche. That’s dangerous. We need to control people; we need moral corrals around them to protect them.” These folks want to minister through fear, through intimidation. And they become the Holy Spirit for others, not in the letter of rule but as the enforcer. You know, because God needs us to be the spiritual police and round up the bad guys. One thing is for sure and there is no debate...it absolutely is dangerous!

It is also so dangerous on the other side that Paul needed to throw down in the book of Romans, saying, “Should we sin all the more so that grace may abound?” because apparently even then this had already been a historical problem. The people were saying, “Oh, I’m forgiven, so I can just do whatever I want.” For the record, Romans 6:1 says, “Shall we sin all the more so that grace may abound? May it never be.” The language in the Greek is actually a lot stronger than that and it’s going to go on to say that if you can believe that and behave that way, you’re not saved. So if you are out there saying in word or deed, “I’ll do whatever I want because I can be forgiven,” the Holy Spirit of Christ does not dwell in you according to scripture.

The second issue is this: the Jewish nation is today still waiting for the Son of God to come and redeem them as a people and a nation. But we are told here that the Son of God already came, already purged our sins, and already sat down. Whoa. That would mean that at some point they missed the coming of their Messiah! Thus, at this point they are forced to take up and reconsider that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is perhaps indeed the Messiah that they long have waited for. And further, if He is not, then their Messiah came and left without their knowing him and embracing him. And either way, he is not still yet coming to redeem them in the way of the sacrificial unspotted lamb! It's done: He sat down! Game over.

Finally, we must, at some point in our life, come to embrace the fact that God isn't the enemy of all that we seek, but in fact He is the author of it. Can you define love better than this? To come so far to do this?

Phil. 2:6-8 "...although He [Jesus] existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.