

BUMC Weekly Bible and Sermon Study

Sermon: “Christ Centered”

Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-14

Key take-aways from the Scripture

- In the beginning of the Book of Hebrews, we see the first chapter cover the glory and superiority of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of the of the Mosaic System and superior to all those whom the Law was originally given and administered by (Angels, Moses, and Levitical Priests). His divine status is incomparable.
- The first two verses highlight God’s approaches to speaking with our ancestors. This was done through dreams, visions or directly to them (think back to Abraham and Moses). Now, God is speaking to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. Verse 2 says, “God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe.”
- The NRSV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible explains, “Because Christ is greater than the angels who mediated the law (2:2), the punishment for neglecting his salvation is also greater than the punishment for rejecting the law (2:1-4). Some may have also been tempted to reduce Jesus’ divine status to the status of a mere angel to better accommodate their synagogue critics; some Diaspora Jews even allowed angels a role in creation. Jesus, however, is greater than angels (2:5-18).”
- Verse 3 explains how “the Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.” Verse 4 then explains that “this shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names.”
- Verses 5-14 are comprised of a series of scriptural verses (primarily from the Book of Psalms) to further illustrate Christ’s divine status. For example, verse 7 says, “Of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.’” This aligns with Psalm 104:4, “...you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers.” Here, the elements (wind and fire) serve as messengers similar to angels, which do not compare with the Son (see verse 8).

Key take-aways from the Sermon

- Today begins a new sermon series called “Anchored” based on the Book of Hebrews. The theme verse for this series comes from Heb 6:19, “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul. It is safe and sure, and goes through the curtain of the heavenly temple into the inner sanctuary. On our behalf Jesus has gone there before us and become our high priest forever.”
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ is our *anchor*. It holds us steady, connects us with each other and keeps us from drifting or being swept away by an adverse current.
- We often refer to the Book of Hebrews as a “letter” however, a closer examination of this book shows it is not like a letter. It is more of a *sermon* than a letter. The final part of Hebrews (see 13:22) shows the author defining his own material as an *exhortation* or encouragement. The primary purpose of preaching and sermons is to encourage in a discourages context, and uplift.
- This epistle is addressed to an ethnic group, the Hebrews, who were experiencing tension between their ancient customs and traditions and their new faith community. These particular people were facing tremendous pressure from both the synagogue as well as the state and were leaving the faith. They are worn out and worn down.
- The author of Hebrews evokes *Christology*, or the understanding of Christ, as the answer to their problems! The answer is to turn their eyes upon Jesus, their anchor!
- The origins of Jesus in Hebrews is tied to the dawn of all creation, and not just in a stable in Bethlehem. The focus is on the divine nature of Christ, and to know Jesus is to know God. The image of the invisible God!
- We are a “Christ-centered” people...when you are clear as to who Jesus is, we are clear as to who we are as the church.
- When we are faced with situations that cause us to feel “burned out” and fatigued, it is not just about us holding on to the rope and enduring...but also Who is holding on at the other end of that rope. When we get to the end of our rope, there is an *anchor* holding on to you.
- We also need “human anchors” (those who keep us grounded), notably our mothers, as we celebrate Mother’s Day. We also think about those who help us in our times of need.
- Even when you come to the end of your rope, God is there. The One who made you in His image, redeemed you by His blood, and sustains you by His Spirit will not forget His own. This is our anchor!

Questions for Personal Reflection or Group Discussion

- What were your key take-aways from the sermon? How can you apply this to your everyday life?
- What is the importance of highlighting the superiority of Christ in this first chapter of Hebrews?
- Why is it important for us to understand why and how God reveals Himself through the Son?
- Read verses 2-3. List all of the things that are used to describe the Son.
- Read verses 4-14. List all of the ways that Jesus is superior to the angels. Why is this important to know? In what ways do angels compare to human beings?
- What is *Christology*, and why is this concept important to our faith?
- What does it mean to be a Christ-centered church?
- Who is an *anchor* in your life? Who have you been an *anchor* for?

