

“The Son, Our God”

Fixing Our Eyes On Jesus Our High Priest

Hebrews 1:5-9

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Jeff: Why don't we pray? Our heavenly Father, we thank You so much for this day and for the time that You've given to us. And Father, we thank You for every blessing that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we know, because we are assured of it in Your word, that we are indeed blessed with every blessing in Him. And Father, we come before You today knowing that we are not merely redeemed, but that we have been redeemed to be sons of the living God. And so we are.

And Father, as we come before You today, we come before You as children needing to express the things deep within our hearts, the things that lay heavy upon our minds. And so, Father, we lift up to You Bruce today. We continue to thank You for the progress that he is making. We thank You that there is no longer pneumonia in his lungs. And we look forward to the opportunity that he'll have to do physical therapy. And we pray that he would do well and that it would do him much good. And Father, we pray for his return. Father, we also think about Sarah Mangus. And Father, our hearts are heavy for her as she has had this setback. And yet we pray that it would do her well. We pray that it would do her well spiritually, as we know that adversity and setbacks are meant for our good, though they are a challenge. And so we pray, Lord, that she would grow in the midst of this. But also we pray that You'll use this opportunity for the doctors to fine-tune that pacemaker so that episodes like this won't happen again. And Father, we pray for her and her family.

Father, we pray for Joe Sweeney. We ask that you will keep him safe and protect him while he is apart from us. And Father, we pray for our brother Don. We're thankful for his life and his ministry among us and beyond us. And Father, we pray that You will bring him to health and strengthen his body. We ask that Your hand would be upon him for good.

And Father, we are thankful for one another, for the time You've given us to be together to do these Bible studies and to be together in doing them. We're thankful for Sig and for his work in organizing. And Father, we're thankful for these things, and we lift them up to you with joyful hearts in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Men: Amen.

Jeff: Okay. Well let's turn to the book of Hebrews. And this morning let's look at Hebrews chapter 1, verses 7-9. Let me read more than verses 7-9. Let me read starting in verse 5 and I'll read through 9. This is the word of God, and I want you brothers to know that this is God's word to us. He spoke it. He is an infallible God, which means that He's true. And Jesus said as much. He said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* And as He is true, so is the triune God, of which He is a part. And God, being true when He speaks, doesn't wander from the truth. And so this word is an inerrant word. And because it's an inerrant word, it's an authoritative word. And it is God's word to us. It's that word upon

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which we are to take our stand. And so listen to God’s word this morning. What a joy it is for me to read it to you and for us to hear it together. Listen to it.

*“For to which of the angels did God ever say,
‘You are My Son; Today I have begotten You?’*

*“Or again,
‘I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son?’*

And again, when He brings the Firstborn into the world, He says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship Him.’

“Of the angels He says, ‘He makes His angels winds, And His ministers a flame of fire.’ “But of the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness beyond Your companions.’”

Participant: Then what do you say, Jeff?

Jeff: I notice that that has fallen off.

Participant: No, no. You’re supposed to say it.

Jeff: I am supposed to say what?

Participant: The word of the Lord.

Jeff: The word of the Lord.

Men: Thanks be to God.

Jeff: I wondered why it wasn’t being said. It’s because it was my fault. *(Laughter)* I got it. I did; I wondered. All right.

Participant: Thanks be to God. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Let’s look today at just the introductory points—the outline, rather. Today we’re going to look at *some introductory points*. We’re going to look again at *the comparison between Jesus and the angels*. But it’s going to be different. We’re going to remind ourselves of what we looked at the last time, and we’re going to press further into these verses. And then we’re going to look at *the Deity of the Son* today, as it unfolds in verses 8 and 9. And so there’s a lot here in a little bit of text, and so let’s get started.

And the first thing I want you to know is that I went to the dentist. *(Laughter)*

Transcriber’s Note: He points to a dentist in the audience.

Jeff: That was not my dentist, but I wish it was. *(Laughter)* No. I went to the dentist and I said to this dentist that I’ve known for a number of years, “I’ve got a problem.”

He says, “So what’s changed?”

I said, “Well what’s changed is that in the last several months I’ve got a tooth on my right bottom side that’s giving me trouble.”

And so he said, “Well, open your mouth and let’s take a look.”

So I opened my mouth and he took a look. He leaned back in his chair and he smiled at me and said, “All your bottom teeth are great.”

I said, “Even the bottom right?”

He said, “Even the bottom right.” He said, “But on the top left you have a problem.” And he waited for my reaction.

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And he said, “Sometimes pain radiates.” And then the next thing he said to me was, “Do you want to take care of that today?”

And you know what you’re thinking inside. You’re thinking, “He’s going to mess up my top left tooth.” (*Laughter*) When the problem is in the bottom right corner.

And what he said was, “Oh, no, no, no.” He said, “Sometimes it’s an odd thing. Pain radiates. So the problem may be in the top left, but you feel it in the bottom right. It’s an odd thing, but it’s true.”

And I thought to myself on the way home that day. I thought to myself, “That explains a number of spiritual problems that we have.” Sometimes the pain radiates. And we don’t really realize where the problem is.

And I thought about that with regard to the book of Hebrews. Now if you were to speak to the people in the Hebrew church, you would say, Look! You’ve got a problem.

And they would say to you, “You bet we have a problem! You know what our problem is? Our problem is in 10:32-34.”

Transcriber’s Note: Hebrews 10:32-34, NKJV. *“But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.”*

Jeff: Now you can look that up, but I summarize it here. “Our problem is that we’ve been made a public spectacle. We’ve been a reproach. We’ve been through tribulations. We’ve lost property. Some of us have been to prison. We have experienced a real trial—hardships, physical hardships. You bet we have a problem here!”

Now I think that the preacher to the Hebrews would say to these folks, “You have a problem. But your problem isn’t what you think your problem is. The pain is radiating; it’s migrating. What you think your problem is is not a problem at all.”

Can you imagine that? They’d sit back and they’d say, “Well what would you say our problem is?”

And he would say this. He’d say, “Well, listen. You’re tempted to go back to Judaism. That’s really what you’re tempted to do. Now you would say that you’re tempted to go back to Judaism because you’ve been made a public spectacle, you’ve lost property, you’ve experienced hardship. And I would say to you that that’s really not your problem. The reason why you’re tempted to go back to Judaism is because you don’t have a clear understanding of who Jesus is.”

Participant: Amen.

Jeff: And that’s what we looked at when we studied this whole problem. We started looking at this sermon from the vantage point of who Christ is. In other words, in the first four verses we learned who He is.

Now I want to tell you something. My wife has a number of physical problems. We were with the doctor one day. And the doctor said to her, “You are anemic.”

And we’re getting to the point now where we say, “All right. Well, what do we do about it?”

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And so he said, “What you need is that you need some vitamin B. And what we’re going to do is that we’re going to bolus you with vitamin B. We’ll give you a huge dose of vitamin B., and that way you’ll be ahead of the curve. And then you can start taking regular doses of it.”

If you’re a diabetic and you have an insulin pump, you know that when you bolus, you bolus yourself with a lot of insulin, cut the meals and things like that. Well I think about the letter to the Hebrews, at least in the initial part of it, as a bolus of Christology. There’s a sense in which the preacher is saying, “Look. Let me give you a bunch of theological truth that we will unpack along the way. But it will help you to understand what your problem actually is. The reason why you’re tempted to go back to Judaism is because of your faulty understanding of who Christ is.”

And so the Christology that comes in the beginning is for that purpose. It’s for that reason. And I think that it helps us to understand what it is that we’re getting ourselves involved in when we look at the next comparison and what goes beyond. So let’s take a look at that.

We’re going to look again at *Jesus and the angels* again, revived here. And what we’re going to do is that we’re going to begin by asking ourselves the question *why angels?* Now this is just background.

Why angels? Does anybody remember why angels? We did two weeks on it. *(Laughter)* Does anybody want to take a shot? Why angels?

Participant: Angels brought the Law. Was that it?

Jeff: Angels brought the Law. And if we look at this in its wider context,--in other words, think about how the preacher is weaving together his argument. We think about the angels giving the Law because what is he going to do next? He’s going to deal with Moses next. And what is he going to deal with after that? He’s going to deal with the priesthood next. And what is he going to deal with after that? He’s going to deal with sacrifices next, because he is trying to help them understand what?

Participant: That Christ is superior to all of that.

Jeff: Christ is superior to all of that, which is Judaism.

Participant: Yes.

Jeff: All right. So why angels? Clearly, very clearly, he is helping them to see that Jesus is superior to Judaism. The bolus of Christology is meant to help us to get that footing so that we can go into this whole thing understanding why Jesus is superior to the angels.

Now let’s look at a preliminary point. The word *angelos* is the word for angels. Somebody else said it. *Messengers*, sent ones, all of these things. When you think about the Greek language, it’s no different than any other language. Words have a sphere of meaning. It’s not just that this word translates into that word, and so forth.

I’ve got to tell you this. I don’t think I’ve ever told you this before. So I’m in Belarus. I’m in Belarus and I’m lecturing to pastors from Belarus, the Ukraine, Siberia, Russia, all these different places. I’m lecturing to them on the Trinity.

Now they have an influx over there of the cults, as you might imagine. So I am giving them the argument from John 1:1 as to why the Jehovah’s Witnesses are wrong in their

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exegesis of that text. And I’m lecturing and my translator is translating. And you know, the wheels aren’t falling off, but I can tell that the translator is really struggling. But I’m there with another guy. He was there from the U.K. and he was a principal at a theological college there. And I’m looking at him and I can tell that in his eyes the wheels are falling off.

And so I finally stopped and I said, “What’s going on?” And my translator looks at me. Now you have to understand that this whole argument is based upon what happens with the article, the *the* in the language. And my translator looks at me and says, “There are no definite articles in the Russian language.” (*Laughter*) None of this is working. (*Laughter*)

So angels, the word *angelos*, sphere of meaning. It means angels, it means messengers, sent ones. It has a variety of meanings. That’s an important preliminary point. Let’s just keep it in mind.

Now I want you to look for a minute at the quote. The quote comes in verse 7 of our text, so I’m going to put it up here. It is compared with Psalm 104:4. I want you to see it. It says this. Psalm 104:4 says,

*“He makes His messengers winds,
His ministers a flaming fire.”*

And then you look at Hebrews 1:7.

*“He makes His angels winds,
And His ministers a flame of fire.”*

Now I want you to think about this for just a minute. I want you to remember that *angels* can be translated *messengers*. *Angelos* can be messengers, and *messengers* angels.

I know what you’re thinking. You’re saying to yourself, Pastor Jeff, here’s the problem. The problem is that you have forgotten that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and you’re telling us what a Greek word *angelos* means. So you are comparing apples to oranges.

And I say to you that you would be right were it not for the fact that Paul is quoting—I said Paul! It’s not Paul! I don’t know who it is!

Participant: It’s somebody.

Jeff: Somebody! If I say Paul, just think sermon. Preacher guy. The guy who is preaching this sermon was not quoting from the Hebrew Bible. He was quoting from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

Participant: Right.

Jeff: And when you look at that text that’s called the Septuagint, he lifts that verse, Psalm 104:4, right out of the Septuagint and puts it right here and quotes it word for word. So what I say to you is that *angelos*—Greek—can mean *messenger* or *angel*. What I’m saying to you is right out of the Old Testament translation into the Greek. This is what our preacher is using.

So *“He makes His messengers”*—His *angelos*—*“winds, His ministers a flaming fire.”* He makes His angels or His *angelos* winds, and His ministers fire. So remember, angels and messengers are the same thing, the same word.

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Now think about this. What’s this Psalm about? What is Psalm 104 about? Well when you look at Psalm 104, it’s about creation. You look at it. You read it. You read about winds and you read about clouds and you read about fire, and you read about the deep and you read about thunder, and you read about springs and grass and animals and all of those kinds of things. It’s about creation.

Now think about this. When you look at these things and you read these words, the words of Psalm 104 in context, and Psalm 104:4 in context, one of the things that you realize is that it’s the wind that’s the minister of God. It’s the fire that’s the minister of God, the *angelos* of God. All right?

So these things are being called *God’s messengers*. Why? Because what the writer is doing is that he’s using the elasticity of the language, he’s using the elasticity of the word *angelos* in order to talk about wind being God’s messenger, or angels to be God’s messenger. Why is he doing that? Why would he be doing that? Do you have any ideas? Why do you think that the author would use Psalm 104 which is about creation, to use the elasticity of the language—*angelos*—in order to not only talk about wind as God’s messenger, but angels as His messenger, in his argument here where he is talking about angels? Why would he do that?

Participant: It fits better with his preconceived notions.

Jeff: Okay. It fits better with his preconceived notions. (*Laughter*) I’ll tell you what I think. I think that what he is doing is that he’s helping us to see that he’s using the elasticity of the language to help us to see that angels are created beings. They are just like the wind. Angels are like the wind in the sense that they belong to the created order and they do God’s bidding. They do His will.

Now when you think about that, that fits very nicely with what he’s been talking to us about with regard to Jesus being superior to the angels. Now all of a sudden, Bill, the context is enlarged. And it’s not just Jesus and the angels with the idea in mind that Jesus is better than Judaism. Now what he’s doing is that he’s pulling from Old Testament texts that talk about angels as created beings, and he’s saying that Jesus is far superior to them. Why? Not just because of the overall argument that they’re part of the Judaism that Jesus is better than, but they’re part of the created order.

And what did he tell us? Think about this. What did he tell us in the first four verses? He told us that Jesus is the Alpha Creator and the Omega Inheritor. And so when you think about context, how it is that he’s weaving these things together, one of the things that you realize is that this idea of Jesus being superior to these created beings who are God’s messengers fits into this idea that he already builds on in the first four verses. In other words, Jesus is the One through whom the angels were created! And so they are subject to the Son!

And so one of the things that we realize is that the author of the Hebrews is weaving together a tight argument, a tight theological argument that has not only the main point that Jesus is better than Judaism. But he even weaves together the sub-points—that Jesus is the Alpha Creator. And by the way Psalm 104 talks about the angels as being winds that are created to do God’s bidding. And they too are created through the Son. So it’s just an amazing thing, and actually very wonderful.

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Now there are some possible objections that are coming up here that will lead us into the second point. But before we go to those possible objections, do you have any questions? Do you have any thoughts, anything that’s striking you? Go ahead.

Participant: I was just going to say quickly that Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jesus is indeed a created being. He is the archangel Michael.

Jeff: Yes, absolutely.

Participant: Actually, the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jesus is an angel.

Jeff: That’s right.

Participant: How would the Jews embrace angels? Would that be part of their culture, part of their frame of mind, that the author would make sure that he distinguishes Christ from the angels?

Jeff: Well you know, it’s interesting. Go ahead, Bishop.

Bishop Rodgers: Well let me just start off by saying that the Sadducees didn’t, but the Pharisees did.

Jeff: Yeah, right. Yes. One of the things that’s really interesting is that when you look at the book of Colossians,--and I can’t remember the details at the moment,--but there is talk about angels and principalities, and there is a Judaism connected there. This is escaping me. But let me give you the conclusion that one author that I read pointed to with regard to some monastics that you ought to be studying here pretty soon in the early church.

The monastics, like guys like Simon Stilates who stood at the top of the pillar and just stood there. You know, a lot of these guys would just stand motionless, believing that they were mimicking the angels who were standing around the throne of God, gazing upon His glory. Now this isn’t the whole reason. But a lot of the monastic fervor for just a motionless gaze was angel impetus, if you will. So there is that. That doesn’t directly come back to the Judaism. But it certainly goes further, a couple hundred years later into the monastics. Anybody else?

Participant: Jeff, just to follow up on that. Wasn’t the presence of angels a terrifying sight in Jewish thinking? I just keep thinking of the announcement of Christ’s birth to Mary. They always say, “Don’t be afraid.” So is there some presence of angels in the Jewish mind? We look at them in 21st-century America. Oh, my angel is watching over me!

Jeff: Right.

Participant: Is that accurate, that the Jews would say that this is a terrifying messenger of God?

Jeff: Yes. Well when I look at the Scriptures, you oftentimes see that the Angel of the Lord is the One in the Old Testament. Now every occurrence of the angel of the Lord is not the Lord. But sometimes you get the idea that it is, and there’s terror, right? Remember when Samson’s parents saw the Angel of the Lord and they thought they were going to die, you know? So there is that.

But you get the angel of the Lord with Abraham, and he’s excited to welcome them in and have them sit around the table. So it varies, I think.

Participant: And when Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the Lord, he wasn’t especially terrified. He was ready to take God on.

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Jeff: Yes. He needed to have his hip socket touched so he'd calm down a little bit.
(*Laughter*) Anybody else?

So basically, what we need to understand again is that this could really be categorized as a sub-argument that connects with those first four verses. But it filters into the idea that Jesus is superior to the angels.

Now the possible objection is this. Well, isn't the Son made a little lower than the angels? And something else. In 10:5, one of the things that you find is—and this is again a quotation from the Septuagint, the Greek text of the Old Testament—“*Consequently, when Christ came into the world, He said, ‘Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, but a body You have prepared for Me.’*”

Now people will say, Now wait a minute. His body was prepared for Him. He was made a little lower than the angels. Isn't Jesus then a created being?

Now let's deal with that. Let's talk about the Deity of the Son because that is, if you will, the objection that one might say the preacher is anticipating in the quotation that comes next. So let's look at it.

It is true that He assumed flesh. It is true that He became the incarnate Son of God. That's true. But when you look at verses 8 and 9, there's something different there. Look at verses 8 and 9 again. “*But of the Son He says,*” (that is, the Father says), “*Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,*” and so on.

Now I want you to think about this just for a minute. But before I think about the text, I want to just say something about the Trinity. One of the things that you're getting the idea of is that there was an eternal communion prior to the creation of the world. And that is true. And when you find the authors of Scripture opening up Jesus for us as God, one of the things you don't find is that you don't find them panicking. You just find them embracing the idea.

And it's really interesting how they then write the Scriptures. One of the things that we need to get our minds around though is that *God is the triune God prior to creation*. And here's what I really want to say. And I'm only going to say this briefly now because I think it ties in later with what I'm going to say now. When you think about the eternal communion between Father and Son, one of the things that I want you to grab is that God is an immutable God. That's one of the things that you learn when you learn the attributes of God. What does it mean to be immutable? We're not going to pull the bishop into this one. (*Laughter*) What does it mean to be immutable?

Participant: He doesn't change.

Jeff: He does not change. He is unchangeable. And yet He is not an Aristotelian static God who contemplates Himself. God wasn't pre-existent to creation going,--

Jeff: He wasn't sitting in the Buddha position. there is in the Trinity, between the Persons, a dynamic relationship, which is why you see love. The father, the Son and the Holy Spirit love one another. And that's why the Unitarian, the person who believes in one God only, one Person, has to believe that God creates in order to express love, because there's nobody else to express it toward. But the Trinitarian understands that God is triune, and that the Father expresses love to the Son and the Son to the Father,. And the Father to the Holy spirit and the Holy Spirit to the Father, and so on. And so there's this

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beautiful immutable dynamic relationship that takes place within the communion of the Trinity. And I think that’s so very important.

And here’s where it begins to come out. The Son enjoys an eternally dynamic and immutable relationship with the Father. And so the Father says, *“But of the Son He says,”*—that is, God says, *“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.”*

Now immediately, don’t you want to say to yourself, Wait a minute! Okay, didn’t we just overreach here? I mean we went from saying that the Son was not created to now going all the way over here and saying that He’s God. Doesn’t that provide for us a contradiction? If God is God, then how can Jesus be God? And all of a sudden we realize—oh! That strong bolus of Christology has helped us! It has helped us to understand what it is that we’re experiencing now.

What do I mean? Weren’t we told that Jesus is the effulgence of His glory and the exact representation of His nature back in the first four verses? Yes, we were. And didn’t we explain that to mean that the effulgence of His glory was not a derived glory but an original glory. But the exact representation of His glory indicates that this original glory is possessed by another Person, the Son.

So right in the first three verses what do we have? We have been set up for the fact that there is another Person who shares the *ousia* of God. We’ve already been prepared for it. We already have the foundation laid for that. Isn’t that great? (*Laughter*) I just love that! (*Laughter*) Yes, Ted?

Ted: It just strikes me that there are so many practical applications to this.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: The Unitarian says that God must create to be loved. And if God is to love, He’s got to create. But we’re saying no. That’s not true. God would not have to create anything and He would be totally satisfied in His love with all the members of the Trinity.

Jeff: That’s right.

Ted: Hence, that gives the lie to those churches that say that God needs us to do this. God in a sense is not fulfilled unless we do this. God is not fulfilled unless we act, or unless we do something.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: And you hear this. I once heard a preacher say that God is meaning to bless you. But His hands are shackled unless you act.

Jeff: Right.

Ted: And I’m sitting there; I’m stunned. I’m listening to this and I’m just stunned that the pastor would say that.

Jeff: My wife and I had lunch with a person from my congregation who listened to a sermon and then asked me a question. And here was the question. And she was asking it facetiously because she knew the answer. She said, “Does God have control over tornadoes and hurricanes, and things like that?”

And she looked at me and smiled, and I said, “Of course He does. You know He does.”

And she said, “I just listened to a sermon where the pastor said that He doesn’t.”

And I said, “Did he explain what he meant?”

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And she said, “Yes he did. He explained that since God is love, He doesn’t do anything bad. And therefore those things can’t be under His control because they’re bad.”

And I thought to myself, “You know, there is a stripping away of an attribute of God, and it’s just what you’re saying.” In order to accommodate our understanding of what God ought to be, we strip Him of what He really is. And we can’t do that. I mean that’s why going through a book sort of patiently like we are—I mean, we’re not going through it patiently; we’re hurrying along a little bit. (*Laughter*) We’re hurrying along; you know what I mean. I knew you were going to laugh. (*Laughter*)

But when you think about what is in a book, like the one we’re looking at, and you just sort of patiently unpack what’s here, then you begin to allow God to be who He is right before us, because this is His word and He’s the One unpacking it. So it’s great. Yes?

Participant: When you were talking about God in His substance sharing love together, it made me think that Islam has a view of God that is not Trinitarian. Their god is not a loving god.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right. In fact, it’s even worse than that. This is just an extra. I’m not going to charge you for this. (*Laughter*) But actually, Islam believes, to put it technically, that God’s existence is separate from God’s attributes. In other words, His existence is separate from who He is. And therefore God can choose in the freedom of His existence to be different than He is. So God chose to be this way, the way He is. So Allah chose to be that way. And it’s a frightful thing.

Actually, I realize that I’m treading on some thin ground here. And the bishop can correct me if I’m wrong, because I know you’ve studied this in more detail. But Barth’s actualism has the same kind of ring to it. Karl Barth is a theologian who talks about the freedom of God, and it’s called *Barth’s actualism*, that He could have been a different God than He is, because to say that He is the God who He is, as if that were static, would be to rob God of His freedom. Would that be right? Would that be a right understanding?

Bishop Rodgers: I think it’s correct, but I don’t think it’s right. (*Laughter*)

Participant: All right. Good point.

Jeff: I like that answer. (*Laughter*) I just love having him, you know? (*Laughter*) All right. Anything else?

Participant: Hey, Jeff. The whole presence of this audience that this man is speaking to is what troubles me, because when I read it, obviously I’m reading it in my culture and in my context. But the Jews would have trouble with God becoming man, right? Or no?

Jeff: Well, only if they were not regenerate. (*Laughter*)

Participant: Right. So he’s talking to Christians who are Jewish.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: Okay.

Jeff: And I actually think that he’s not just talking to Jews. But he’s talking to a Jewish/Gentile conglomerate. And I think that within that context you have Jews who have likely come back from the Claudian exile.

Participant: And they’re living within the context of a synagogue. That’s their place of worship, the temple or the synagogue.

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Jeff: No. These guys would be living in the context of the house church, right?

Participant: Oh, okay.

Jeff: As Christians. Yes?

Participant: The question is, can you have a faulty understanding of Christ and still be regenerate? One time I asked a gal if she was confident that she was going to heaven. She was a strong Christian.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: She said, “Oh, that would be presumptuous.”

And I said, “No. It’s not about you; it’s about God.”

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: She was a believer. She was regenerate. But she did not understand that this was about God, and so she was uncertain of it and thought it was presumptuous to even ask that question.

Jeff: Yes. I think you’re absolutely right. In fact, you know, I think that you can have that because God regenerates you. And it’s not dependent upon your theology. Your theology will get worked out as you grow in the Christian life.

Participant: Right.

Jeff: Yes, that’s 100% right. I agree.

Participant: Well that’s part of what he’s addressing, right?

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: They are born again but they’re tempted, because they have a very weak Christology.

Jeff: That’s right. That’s very true.

Participant: Going back to the Trinity and the love expressed in the Godhead, we’re a gift. The redeemed are a gift that God the Father is giving the Son. And isn’t it true that the Son in the end will lay it all back down before the Father?

Jeff: Mm-hmm.

Participant: But we’re caught up in something tremendous.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: Unbelievable!

Jeff: Yes. And we’ll get there in just a second. Let me just round this out. There are several things that I want you to notice. I want you to notice that *the obedience of the Son* is here in verses 8 and 9.

And what I want you to notice is—and I’m just going to kind of quickly hasten over this—but *God alone saves*. One of the interesting things, if you go back to Isaiah 59:16 and look at the whole chapter, one of the things that you discover is that God’s people are in a bad way.

Transcriber’s Note: Isaiah 59:16, NKJV.

“He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.”

Jeff: They’ve been disobedient. Sin is manifest in their lives. They need saving. And God looks and He says, “I looked and there was no one to save. There was no one to intercede on their behalf.” So God dons His own righteousness in order to save those who

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are unrighteous. That is an absolutely beautiful picture of part of what we talk about when we talk about the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. We are imputed with Christ’s righteousness because He who is righteousness came to save by His own righteousness. And so in Him His righteousness is imputed to us. It’s an absolutely beautiful picture.

But you see that emerge in Psalm 45, which is what he quotes. It’s a righteous scepter. He loves righteousness, and so on.

And the Son loves the Father. And so in His mediatorial state He obeys the Father, fulfills all that is required in order that He might be seen as righteous and communicate, or impute that righteousness to us.

In fact, one of the great blessings that we have when we think about Jesus is His sinless nature. Now it is true that He was imputed with sin that He might be punished on the cross. But it was on the cross that He atoned for sins. Then He dies. Remember, He gives up His spirit, then He dies.

Think about the beauty of this. *“He was raised for our justification”* because it would have been unrighteous for God to leave a sinless man in the grave, right? And so His resurrection is a testimony of His own righteousness, a righteousness that we receive in Him by imputation. It’s just a beautiful, beautiful picture.

And then there’s *the anointing of the Son*, such that the Father is pleased with the Son’s display of righteousness.

And then this. This is what I want to get to here. *Who are the companions?* This is what you were talking about. Who are the companions? Well, look ahead to 3:1 for just a minute. *“Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus.”*

But it’s not just there. One of the things that we’re being told is in chapter 2. Look at verse 11. But I’m going to start in the middle of 11. *“That is why He”—Jesus—“is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, ‘I will tell of Your name to My brothers; In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praises.’”*

I mean, we’re going to get to this. But one of the things that we’re latching onto is that we are already in view as redeemed in this text. And that’s going to get unpacked as we go further.

But think about it. I mean this is rich, you know? When we’re singing in worship to God, our Brother Jesus Christ is in our midst! That’s a wonderful thing, giving praise and glory through what we sing! Anyway, it’s a beautiful thing! It reaches into what you were saying. We’ve got a minute left. Any final thoughts or comments before we close out today?

All right. Well let’s pray and we’ll close out. Father, thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ and thank You for the richness of Your text. And thank You for the Lord Jesus coming through that text, that He might reach into our hearts and that He might invigorate us, and that we might see Him more clearly and so follow Him as we love Him more dearly. And so we pray these things in His name. Amen.

Men: Amen. (*Applause*)