



An ANCHOR for the soul

STUDIES FROM THE BOOK OF **HEBREWS**

STUDY 1

HEBREWS 1:1-4

Aim of Study: Marvel in wonder in the light of God's goodness in speaking to us in the Son. Demonstrate our appreciation of this enormous privilege by trusting in Jesus.

Main Teaching Point:

God's clear word to us today is the word about his Son - his person and his work

Introduction

In his book, *If I were God, I'd make myself clearer*, John Dickson writes about the day when he found himself listening in to a conversation between a group of young yuppies. He overhears them speaking disparagingly about organised religion and forms of worship. At one point however, one of them pipes up, "Yes, but there's something in it, don't you think? I like the idea of being grateful to Someone for the things in my life."

1. To what degree do you think that this statement accurately reflects the attitudes of your non-christian friends, family members or work colleagues?
2. What does the statement reveal about the speaker's views about whether God can be known?
3. In general where do you think Australians fit on the following spectrum about whether God can be known?

Knowledge of God

No knowledge possible



True knowledge

The Speaking, Revealing God

Read Hebrews 1:1-4

Compare and contrast the ideas of verses 1 and 2a:

4. Where do you see continuity between the two?
5. Where do you see discontinuity?
6. What incredible comfort do you find from the fact that God speaks and has spoken?

Let's think about God speaking to "us" in verse 2:

7. To whom does the "us" refer? Is it "us" today or does it refer to "them" in their time, ie. those of the time of the apostles? In what sense can we say that the word to them in their day is also the word to us in ours?

In thinking about the the discontinuity between two speakings, (through the prophets and by the son) we might be tempted to think that somehow the former revelation from God is flawed. Read and discuss the following helpful quote:

These two stages of divine revelation correspond to the Old and New Testaments respectively. Divine revelation is thus seem to be progressive - but the progression is not from the less true to the more true, from the less worthy to them more worthy, or from the less mature to the more mature. How could it be so, when it is one and the same God who is revealed throughout?... The progression is one from promise to fulfilment... (The Epistle to the Hebrews, Eerdmans 1964, p. 2.) F.F. Bruce

The Person and Work of Christ

The writer then goes on to explore, not just the fact of God speaking but the content of that speech. In doing so, he closely associates who Jesus is (his person) with what he has done (his work). These two aspects seem to blend seamlessly together.

Have a go at trying to unravel them :

Jesus'	
Person	Work

In verses 2-3 the writer states 7 facts about the Son. List them out below:

- i. v.
- ii. vi.
- iii. vii.
- iv.

- 8. Are there any which particularly grab your attention? If so why?
- 9. In verse 4, the writer draws a conclusion which we in our age would not normally come to. What do you think is going on in his readers' minds?

The superiority of Jesus is a theme that the writer will return to again and again throughout the letter. The content of God's speaking God's word to us in this last days is about His Son, but what specifically about the Son? God reveals himself to us in the Son but the Son's saving activity is an essential part of that revelation.

Application

10. What are some of the ways that both Christians and non-Christians expect God to speak to them today in a way that differs from what the writer to the Hebrews is saying here? Can you think of any examples?

11. How in the examples you shared do you see the person and work of Christ being separated?

Pray together asking God to help you to fix your eyes on Jesus, knowing that he is greater than anything else upon which might be tempted to fix our gaze.

Reflect together on the words of the song we've often sung at church which picks up a number of important themes from the letter to the Hebrews.

Glorious Christ

The radiance of the Father
Before the dawn of time
You spoke and all creation came to be
The molecules and planets
Reveal Your great design
And every one was made so we could see
So we could see

You are the glorious Christ
The greatest of all delights
Your power is unequalled
Your love beyond all heights
No greater sacrifice
Than when You laid down Your life
We join the song of angels
Who praise You day and night
Glorious Christ

You left the air of heaven
To breathe the dust of earth
And dwell among the outcast and the poor
You came to be forsaken
And died to take our curse
So You could be our joy forevermore
Forevermore

You're seated now in heaven
Enthroned at God's right hand
You've shattered death and freed us
From our fears
And though we cannot see You
You're coming back again
And all will be made right when You appear
And all will be made right when You appear

Bob Kaufflin

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