

Seven Excellencies of Christ (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] A very special night tonight.

We actually come to Inspired Scripture.! I'm not going to do another introduction.! And a little bit of verse 2.

Long ago at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir, H-E-I-R, of all things. The Spirit of God opens the epistle to the Hebrews with what some of the old theologians described as almost a musical setting.

It just kind of resonates. However, we describe it in the words, the words are elegant in style, beautiful in individual word choice.

[1 : 25] In this opening, we hear from God the Father, through God the Holy Spirit, as He introduces us to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in so introducing us to the Son, just what is the Father trying to convey to us? He is showing us the superiority of His Son over all the created order in space and time.

The superiority of Christ in all things. How did the Father convey truth in the ages long past, before the incarnation that took place in a small town called Bethlehem?

He did so by speaking His revelation to men whom He designated as prophets.

He called them prophets. And it's important to remember that when a true prophet spoke, He was speaking a revelation given Him by God.

[2 : 57] In other words, God is the originator of the revelation. God is the source and the subject of the revelation.

And God then used prophets to make His Word known to people. We also learn from the opening words of the epistle to the Hebrews that long ago, God spoke at many times and in various ways. Many of our forefathers received revelation from God. Among them, and this is not an exclusive list, Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses to name some.

And the Scripture also tells us that God spoke to these prophets in various ways. God spoke to Adam in the cool of the day.

God spoke to Abraham in visions and visits. And Abraham was called God's friend. God spoke to Jacob in a dream and in a wrestling match which Jacob lost.

[4 : 27] God spoke to Moses face to face and the inspired Scripture tells us as a man speaks to his friend. God spoke through the prophets in the Old Testament.

He did so from Moses to Malachi. That's the Word of God in the Old Testament. God's revelation was recorded in written form as history, Psalms, Proverbs, and prophecy.

The revelation God gave us through the prophets of the Old Testament was progressive in nature. So what does that mean? God gave Noah more information than He gave Adam.

He gave Abraham more information than He gave to Noah. and so on. But what they taught was Christ.

Now they may not have fully understood that but He was always there. And in that regard I remember an interesting quote many years ago and not everybody in here will even be familiar with this name.

[5 : 48] Even Mike may be too young. Pastor Mike. Willard will I think recognize it and maybe some others but the late Dr. M.R. DeHaan radio Bible class and an M.D.

by the way the doctor there he was a medical doctor before he and he said this I always remembered it the entire Bible is the revelation of Jesus Christ.

He is in every verse of Scripture. He may be in the shadows of that verse or he may be out front and very obvious but he is there.

If you've not found him in a particular passage then you've not yet understood that passage. Amazing words by Dr. DeHaan. The Apostle Peter millennia later wrote this about the progressive nature of the revelation and the coming of Christ in 1 Peter chapter 1 starting in verse 10 concerning this salvation the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you searched intently and with the greatest care trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

[7 : 38] And then Peter adds this even angels long to look into these things. What we must bear in mind when we read the Old Testament prophets is that this was not their message formulated solely in their mind.

They were inspired by the Spirit of God to speak and write. The prophets spoke the Word of God which did not have its origin in the will of man.

His words came from God and yet God's able to do that without in any form or fashion violating the intelligence or the literary skill of the author.

He wove all that together. Not everything a prophet said was inspired by God. If Paul was walking to the next village with Barnabas and said I have to take a bathroom break that's not necessarily inspired even though it may be true and necessary.

A better example is that Paul wrote at least three and probably four letters to the Corinthian church and two made it into the Bible.

[8 : 58] But God for his purposes saw fit to have the others disappear. The archaeologist Spade hadn't recovered those. Why?

God didn't see fit to place them in the Kansas Scripture. They weren't in there. So we see from the opening words of the book of Hebrews that long ago and in many ways ago God spoke to the people.

people. But in these last days he has spoken to us by his son. God's full perfect revelation awaited the coming of his son and our savior.

God used to speak in many ways and through many people called prophets prophets but now God speaks to us through his son. But this begs a question there were many New Testament writers that is true but their work was centered on Christ.

God placed them in the womb of their mothers in order to bring about the revelation of Christ the son. And in fact Jesus never wrote a single verse of the New Testament.

[10 : 21] that was accomplished by men chosen by him filled with the Spirit. But Jesus does speak to us as the living word.

No one possesses equal authority to speak to us even if it is through men chosen for that purpose. No one possesses that authority because there is salvation in no one else.

For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Jesus is the preeminent one. Now there's something we need to add here.

If you have a red letter Bible I want to say to you that those words are not more important than the other words.

They're all inspired by the Holy Spirit. They're all inspired by the Spirit of God. But Jesus speaks to us through those New Testament writers in what is described as the last days.

[11 : 29] So I think we can deduce from that we're in the last days. And if you read John in one of his epistles he says we're in the last hours. In one of his epistles till the Lord comes.

He described it as being in the last hours. The phrase in these last days would have been very familiar to the Jews in that day because they had messianic implications.

When a Jew heard the statement in the last days he would have had messianic thoughts and to the Jew in that day the last days conjured up the truth that the Messiah would come sometime in the last days overthrow whoever was oppressing Israel at the time and establish his kingdom.

It's one of the reasons the followers of Christ were so confused. Well, if he's the Messiah, why didn't he kick the Romans out of here and establish the kingdom? This truth is captured very well in a very familiar portion of scripture dealing with the woman at the well.

Now remember she was a Samaritan woman which means that she was ancestrally in her DNA she was half Jewish and half Gentile therefore considered an outcast by any respected Jew.

[13:01] That's what amazed the disciples when they came back and saw Jesus talking to this woman. Just the fact that a rabbi would talk to a woman but a Samaritan woman. Listen to this portion of her conversation with the Lord.

John 4 starting in verse 16. He's talking to this woman in the village of Sychar just on the outskirts at the well. Jesus said to her go call your husband and tell him to come here.

The one answered him I have no husband. Jesus said to her you are right and saying I have no husband for you've had five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband.

She's living with some guy unwed. Jesus said what you have said is true. The woman said to him sir I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain but you say that in Jerusalem is a place to worship where people ought to worship.

Jesus said to her woman believe me the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the father. You worship what you do not know we that's the Jews worship what we do know for salvation is from the Jews.

[14:22] But the hour is coming and now is here when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth for the father is seeking such people to worship him God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

And then the woman gave the Lord this block burst of revelation just unbelievable. Simple almost a peasant woman.

She said I know that Messiah is coming who is called Christ. When he comes he will tell us all things.

Amazing revelation coming from this Samaritan woman. And I love this. Jesus said to her I who speak to you am he.

I'm always amazed even today modern writers say you know Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah. How do you read that brothers? Messiah is coming I who speak to you am he.

[15:36] I think that's pretty definitive. The woman at the well was not a prophet or prophetess but the Holy Spirit used her to reveal to all generations a great truth.

She both knew and stated that when the Messiah came he would unfold the full and final revelation of God and that's precisely what he did.

Unfortunately the people of Messiah the Jews rejected him and his revelation the fulfillment of this prophecy has yet to be achieved even in our own time.

Well who was Jesus? If you ask that question around the world you're going to get many and varied answers. Jesus has been described as one of the great teachers in history.

Others are not that kind. They describe him as a religious fake, a fanatic, a charlatan, things even worse. Some people refer to him as a man of love from which we can learn how to love other people.

[16:47] Some people claim Jesus was the highest form of humankind that ever walked the earth. Then go on to say that Jesus while only a man was able to fan a spark into a flame that changed the world.

But then they like to cover all their bases so they go on and say and every human has that spark he just needs to flame it. Well if I've got that I flamed out years ago trust me.

We have a tremendous opportunity here in our study of the book of Hebrews even in these opening verses of scripture inspired by the spirit of God we get to examine in detail how God the father describes his son and the holy spirit is going to speak to us really in an economy of words of the seven excellencies of Christ and the spirit of God is going to do that in two verses of scripture and actually he's going to do it in a verse and a half the seven excellencies!

of Christ and I wish I had thought that up but I had to depend on John MacArthur to think that up and if anyone thinks we're going to get through all seven tonight you don't know me very well do you that's not going to happen and the spirit of God added these inspired words whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom he created the world he is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature and he upholds the universe by the word of his power after making purification for sins he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs now it seems kind of silly for me to read this but this next paragraph

I am presently writing these words on Tuesday September 27th at 11 a.m. I'm fairly confident that we're not going to be able to get through all seven of the excellencies of Christ tonight this day will carry over into next week and maybe the following week this is a testimony though of how much truth the Holy Spirit can utter really in an economy of words there's not that many words there but they are excellent words and these two verses or verse and a half we see the following concerning Christ Jesus under the banner of the seven excellencies of Christ the superior one or the preeminent one in the universe we see his heirship his creator ship we see his radiance we see his being we see his administration we see his sacrifice we see his exaltation rich rich section of scripture as to heirship and I said that's h-e-i-r it says whom he appointed the heir of all things fabulous passage that's the first excellency of

[21 : 00] Christ we have in this great epistle to the Hebrews it is the heirship of Christ Jesus as the unique and eternal son of the living God Jesus is heir of all that God the father possesses think about that what does God possess everything everything there is nothing that the Lord does not inherit down to individual atoms and I love what Dr.

Sproul always said there are no maverick molecules Jesus owns them all if you find a maverick molecule over which God is not sovereign over that molecule he's not sovereign over anything there's no maverick molecules the writers of the various Psalms understood this because it flowed to them from the same Holy Spirit in Psalm 2 as for me I have set my king on Zion my holy hill I will tell of the decree the Lord said to me you are my son today I have begotten you in Psalm 2 a few verses later ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession you will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel in Psalm 89 verse 27 and I will make him the firstborn the highest of the kings of the earth and you can't count how many people have sought to discredit the concept that the Lord Jesus is really eternal they try to discredit that they try to discredit the fact that Christ existed eternally before his human birth in Bethlehem he will exist eternally after his birth many of the cults one and one of many the Jehovah witness they point to this verse to lodge a claim well Jesus is a created being because he's the firstborn he should not be referred to or thought of as divine and eternal but the word firstborn in this verse is not dealing with chronology it is dealing with legal rights as the premier one or the preeminent one the

Lord himself Jesus himself has the exclusive rights of inheritance from the father God has already determined that his kingdom will in the last days be presented fully completely and eternally to Christ Jesus that's already been determined we have a very instructive verse from Paul's epistle to the Colossian church chapter 2 verse 16 for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible and invisible were the thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him we learn from this inspired verse that all things were created through him and that all things were created for him this is very instructive this leads me to quote what I believe to be the single most important verse in all the bible that's pretty bold

Romans 11 36 for from him that's Christ the subject from him and through him and to him are all things to him be glory forever amen from him and through him and to him I don't believe you can get more inclusive than that now remember we're talking about Jesus Christ inheriting all things although we've journeyed into his creatorship we'll do more on that in a moment but speaking of airship the book of revelation is quite instructive!

[25 : 38] in this it speaks about! scroll remember that? chapter 5 it speaks about a scroll that's the title deed to the earth and John says in chapter 5 verse 1 and following then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back sealed with seven seals and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals and no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it and this is John speaking and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it and one of the elders said to me weep no more behold the lion of the tribe of

Judah the root of David has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals and the Lord Jesus steps forward and he takes the scroll out of God's right hand the father's right hand how can he do that he can do that because he and he alone is the rightful heir of all things Christ is the heir of the earth when the Lord first came to earth as a man he became poor for our sakes he had nothing for himself dr.

luke one of the greatest historians that ever lived describes it this way and Jesus said to him foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head when he was born his parents could not secure a room in Bethlehem for the delivery when he died even his clothes were taken away his grave belonged to someone else but when the Lord returns he will inherit everything pertaining!

to the earth there is nothing that will not be his and now let us read a staggering verse of scripture we find it in Romans chapter 8 verse 16 and 17 the spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God he's talking about us now okay guys we are children of God and if children then heirs H-E-I-R-S heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him wait a minute what's this suffering business all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution we who trust oh if you're not being persecuted be more faithful it'll come trust me when we who trust in

Christ enter into his kingdom we will jointly possess all that he possesses that's staggering we will become joint heirs with him we'll never be equal to Jesus we'll never be joint lords we're not going to be joint Christ obviously but we are joint heirs his tremendous inheritance will be ours as well the Lord Christ offers to share his abundance with all who trust his finished work on the cross and believe in him and how sad that most people reject that offer and one day enter into a Christless eternity this was illustrated by a very instructive parable given by our Lord in Matthew chapter 21 real interesting here another parable there was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a wine press in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants and went into another country when the season for fruit drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit and the tenants took his servants and beat one killed another and stoned another again he sent other servants more than the first they did the same thing to them finally he sent his son to them saying they will respect my son start to get the impression that the father's speaking here they will respect my son but when the tenants saw the son they said to themselves this is the heir they knew who he was this is the heir come let us kill him and we will have his inheritance and they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him when therefore the owner of the vineyard comes what will he do to those tenants they said to him he will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits of their season amazing passage of scripture

[32 : 23] Jesus said to them have you never read in the scriptures the stone that the builders rejected has become the corner stone in the Greek language that is the head of the corner he's the corner this was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes therefore I tell you speaking to the Jews the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruit and the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces and when it falls on anyone it will crush them now he's talking about the church coming and that kingdom will be taken away and given to the church until the days of the church are over and

God will again turn his attention to the Jews well I'm going to end it there with that parable and that parable doesn't need any more explaining it speaks for itself but we will get into creatorship next time and it's amazing lesson for us that Jesus was the very agent whom God the Father appointed to bring in existence everything there is and it's an amazing study let's close with a word of prayer and Father we thank you for your love your grace and your mercy and the very peace that we can have peace with Christ and in Christ a gift from Christ and Lord we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous one the atoning sacrifice the propitiation the appeasement the satisfaction who satisfies the wrath of

God toward anyone who is in Christ and sins that's why we must be men of confession all the time and so Lord ask that you would be with us protect us and our families protect this church and may the Lord Jesus when he returns find us occupying with his work for there is much to be done in these closing days and we ask all this in the blessed name of Jesus amen to him him to him to him to him