

September 16, 2018 - Hebrews 1:1-3 / John 1:1-10 - "God's Final Word is Jesus"

Introduction

Many years ago Dr. Josh Mc'Dowell accepted a challenge of some Christian friend's ... mostly out of spite to prove them wrong. He was convinced the Christian story would not stand up to evidence. Josh Mc'Dowell spent months in research to disprove the claims of Christianity. Josh said, "I was a prelaw student, and I knew something about evidence. I decided to start with the Bible. I knew that if I could uncover indisputable evidence that the Bible is an unreliable record, the whole of Christianity would crumble. I even dropped out of school for a time to study in the historically rich libraries of Europe. And I found evidence in abundance. Evidence I would not have believed with my own eyes. Finally, I could come to only one conclusion: If I were to remain intellectually honest, I had to admit that the Old and New Testament documents were some of the most reliable writings in all of antiquity. He later wrote the book "Evidence that Demands a Verdict." It is an intellectual and authoritative defense of Christianity containing arguments from the best apologetics of the ages. The Bible is God's Word to man and Jesus is the final word to all of humanity. The Canon of scripture is closed and ever since evil men have tried to destroy this living truth and guide for our lives. How futile when Jesus Christ is the Word...

The Bible clashes today with the morality of our culture and is not "politically correct. Therefore much of the world believes the bible to be obsolete and even a book of hate. Two hundred years ago, Voltaire said, "Fifty years from now, the world will hear no more of the Bible." 50 years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society used his house and his printing press to print Bibles. In the same year the British Museum paid the Russian government a half a million dollars for one copy of a Greek manuscript. And in that very year, the first edition of Voltaire's book sold on a Paris bookstore counter for less than eight cents. They were foolish because you will never terminate the Word of God. That is a crazy endeavor and we have God's word on this subject that it will never happen.

The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published *it*. Psalms 68:11

Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. Psalms 119: 89

Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. PS. 119: 168

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. Luke 22:33 / Luke 4:4

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

I. He is the Giver of the Word.

1. Jesus is the Word and Jesus is God; to rid the world of the Bible is to rid the world of God. Hebrews is part of the word of God and although there is some mystery in connection to this epistle we have confirmation by God Holy Spirit that it is given by God...We can state with reasonable confidence that Hebrews was written no earlier than the mid-first century since its first readers were second generation believers (Hebrews 2:3-4; Hebrews 13:7). It was certainly written before A.D. 96, when Clement of Rome quoted from it in his letter to the church at Corinth. Many ascribe 60 AD as the time of it writing. When the author discusses Jewish

priests, sanctuary and sacrifices, he clearly is speaking about people, places and things described in the Old Testament, not the politicized priesthood and Temple of the first century after Christ. We cannot say for sure whether Hebrews originated before or after the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in A.D. 70. Advocates for both views claim internal support from the book of Hebrews itself.

2. Through the centuries, most Christians have assumed that Hebrews was written for Jewish believers who were tempted to abandon Jesus for the religion in which they were raised. There are two main reasons for this assumption. First is the name "Hebrews" itself. Again, there is the constant emphasis throughout the book on all the ways Jesus and his priesthood and sacrifice are better and stronger and more enduring than their Old Testament counterparts. Isn't that adequate evidence for the long held and widespread conclusion that Hebrews was written to Jews who were in danger of forsaking Jesus for Moses? I think so but not all agree.

3. Some scholars think that it is not. In fact, the name "Hebrews" is undocumented before about 200 A.D. As a descriptive term, "Hebrews" appears almost exclusively in the Old Testament, where it regularly identifies the people we know as Jews.

It should not surprise us that the Book of Hebrews frequently quotes, regularly refers to, and always assumes the presence of what we call the Old Testament. After all, those earlier Scriptures were the early church's Bible. (For the most part, the early church read the Septuagint, a common Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures made between 275-200 B.C.

4. Nearly all the Old Testament quotations in Hebrews match the Septuagint. Whether the first readers were messianic Jews, Gentile Christians or house churches containing both Jews and Gentiles they were in need of teachings and encouragement. The writer was concerned that his readers would drift away from Christ and return to Judaism. Becoming a Christian was not easy then just as it is not in our day. This is one purpose behind the study of this book. Jesus is God's final Word to us because...

II. He is the Recipient of all things (1:2b-c).

1. God appointed Jesus heir of all things (1:2b). The reason He is heir of all things is found in **Colossians 1:16**; let's look at this important passage. In John 1:18 we note the result of God speaking to us through His Son. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

2. It was through Jesus that God made the worlds (1:2c). The word translated worlds is not KOSMOS, which is the common Greek word for "world." The word translated worlds here (AIONAS, i-ohn'-as) is a Greek word from which we get our word "eon" An eon is an extremely long, indefinite period of time that can refer to billions of years and the universe.

This means Jesus not only created material things but also time, so His creation continues indefinitely. Things are still happening in God's time and in His order. That's why we are not here by accident. God told Jeremiah He knew him before He formed him in his mother's womb (Jer. 1:5a). What does God also tell him in Jeremiah 1:5b, which is also true of you and me?

You and I are not "cosmic accidents." The miracle of birth and the organization of cells and organs have grown by His design. Some people want us to believe we are "cosmic accidents." I don't have that much faith. Do you? It takes a lot less faith to believe in God than to believe we are "cosmic accidents."

III. He is the Radiance of God (1:3).

1. Jesus is the brightness of God's glory (1:3a). He is not just a reflection of God. Is the light of the moon the same as the light of the sun? No! The moon reflects the light of the sun, whereas the sun radiates light because it is the source. Jesus doesn't reflect God; He is the **radiance** of God's glory because He is God in flesh and blood. Jesus make this clear in John 14:9...

2. Jesus is also the express image of God (1:3b). The word translated image (car-ak-tare') is the word from which we get our English word "character." Jesus is the exact representation of the holiness, love, grace, and mercy of God. Jesus doesn't reveal God's physical appearance; He reveals God's character. Someone said, Jesus is the signature of God in human flesh.

3. Jesus is upholding all things by the word of his power (1:3c). The word upholding is in the present tense, denoting continuous action. Our universe is not in chaos because Jesus' sustaining power keeps everything on course and in order. Why doesn't our Planet ever get too close to the sun? Why don't the planets collide? **Colossians 1:17** answer these questions.

Jesus Christ is not only the Creator of the universe; He also sustains and maintains what He has created. Jesus is the Recipient of all things, the Radiance of God, and ...

Conclusion:

He is the Redeemer of all people (1:3d).

Jesus is God's final Word to us because He is the Recipient of all things, the Radiance of God, and the Redeemer of all people. God speaks to us in many ways, but God's final Word is Jesus. Do you know Him as your redeemer your savior?