

Title:                   **HEBREWS**  
                                  *Christ is Better!*

Text:            Hebrews 1:1-4

Introduction:

The Psalmist David, speaking prophetically of Christ's great accomplishments as our Savior, sang, — "*His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. For thou hast made him most blessed for ever*" (Ps. 21:5-6). In the book of Hebrews the Holy Spirit tells us something of the great glory of our God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Just listen to the opening words of this magnificent epistle...

(Hebrews 1:1-4) "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (3) Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (4) Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

---

<sup>1</sup> Date: Danville —Tuesday Evening—June 22, 2004  
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA – (Saturday PM – 07/03/04)  
Tape #     Y-28  
Readings: *Dave Burge & Bobbie Estes*

Truly his glory is great! May God the Holy Spirit show us something of it tonight and cause us to worship him.

We are not told who wrote this epistle, when it was written, or to whom it was written. It was obviously written to men and women of Jewish ancestry who were born of God; but we have no indication where they were located.<sup>2</sup>

These Jewish believers, being constantly pressured by family and friends to go back to their former religion, to go back to Judaism, needed encouragement to remain steadfast, to “*hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end*” (3:6). Like the saints at Galatia, Judaizers were trying to get them to go back to the Mosaic law, back to Jewish ritualism, back to empty, meaningless religious activity, to give up the way of life and faith in Christ. Everywhere, on every side, they were harassed, pressured, and persecuted for the gospel’s sake, because they had abandoned the religion of their father’s and trusted Christ alone for righteousness with God.

In a word, they faced the same pressures God’s saints face in all places and in all ages. This epistle was written by divine inspiration to God’s saints everywhere,

---

<sup>2</sup> The lack of information about these things is not accidental. God the Holy Spirit, whose Word this is, intended for every person who picks it up and reads it to read it as God’s Word specifically to him.

inspiring relentless devotion to Christ, by showing us his great glory in salvation.

## CHRIST'S WORK

As we read these 13 chapters, describing the greatness of our Savior's glory in the salvation he accomplished, we should not be at all surprised to see that the focus of the entire epistle is that salvation which the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God has accomplished. We are reminded of five great facts about Christ and his work as our Mediator throughout this epistle.

1. **Everything that the Lord Jesus Christ did for us, as our Substitute and Savior he did by himself, alone** (1:3; 2:14, 18; 7:27; 9:12-14, 25-26; 12:3). There was none to help him. He purged our sins by himself, offered himself, gave himself, and obtained eternal redemption for us by himself. His glory is great in salvation precisely because it is his work alone.
2. **Everything that the Lord Jesus Christ did for us, as our Substitute and Savior, he did just once** (7:27; 9:12, 26-28; 10:10). There was no need for anything he did to be done twice. Once was enough. He lived once. He obeyed once. He died once. He arose once. Once is enough.

(Hebrews 7:26-27) “For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,

and made higher than the heavens; (27) Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."

(Hebrews 9:11-12) "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us.*"

(Hebrews 9:26-28) "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (27) And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: (28) So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

(Hebrews 10:9-10) "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all.*"

3. Everything the Son of God did as the God-man our Savior, our Substitute, everything he did for

**the salvation of God's elect, he did for us all alike** (2:9; 6:20; 9:12; 10:10, 20; 11:40).

- He tasted death for us all (2:9). — The Son of God died to bring us all to Glory.
  - He entered into heaven for us, as a forerunner (6:20).
  - He sanctified every sinner for whom he died by his blood and perfected us all forever by his once for all sacrifice for us (10:10, 14).
  - The Lord Jesus has made a way for us all to approach and find acceptance with God (10:20).
  - And all God's elect, every sinner in the universe who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, shall obtain the same eternal inheritance in Christ (11:40). — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Peter, James and John, Paul and you and I shall all be made perfect together!
4. **Everything that our Savior did for our salvation, he did perfectly.** Nothing needs to be, and nothing can be added to it (10:10-14).

The Lord Jesus Christ is the perfect God, the perfect Man, the perfect Son, the perfect priest, the perfect Sacrifice, the perfect Altar, the perfect Tabernacle, the perfect Captain of our Salvation, and the perfect Surety. And he has "*perfected for ever them that are sanctified!*"

5. Because everything he did he did perfectly, and because he is the perfect God-man, because all that he did he did as our Representative, Substitute, and Surety, everything he did is of infinite value and efficacy. **That simply means that everything he did has everlasting consequence.** — **It is forever** (1:8; 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21; 10:12-14; 13:20).

- His throne is forever.
- His priesthood is forever.
- He has perfected and sanctified us forever.
- His covenant is an everlasting covenant.

## **GOD-MAN**

Nowhere is Scripture is our Savior's eternal deity and glorious humanity more clearly set forth than it is in the first two chapters of Hebrews. Remember, the purpose of this epistle is to show forth the greatness of Christ's glory in the accomplishment of our salvation and to encourage us to remain steadfast in the confidence of our faith in him. What better way could this goal be accomplished than by reminding us at the outset that he who is our Savior is both God and man in one glorious person? Because he is a man like us in all things, sin alone excepted, he is able to understand all our needs. Because he is God over all, he is able to meet all our needs.

## **CENTRAL DOCTRINE**

The central doctrine of this epistle is Christ's eternal Priesthood and his finished, efficacious sacrifice for the redemption and salvation of his people. The book of Hebrews stresses the infinite importance and efficacious power of Christ's sin-atonement blood in obtaining eternal redemption for us, in purging the conscience, in opening to us the heavenly sanctuary.

### BETTER

The key word in the book of Hebrews is "*better*" (1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24). One purpose of this book is to show us that Christ is "*better*" than all who came before him. He is better than the prophets, better than the angels, better than Moses, better than Joshua, and better than Aaron. He is Surety of a better covenant, established upon better promises, giving a better hope. Christ our Savior is better than the tabernacle, the altar, and the mercy-seat. He is a better Sacrifice, offering better blood, giving us a better access to and better standing before the holy Lord God. In all things Christ is better than all others. He is infinitely better. He is the best!

**Christ is better than the prophets** (1:1-4). — Each of the prophets gave us a partial revelation of God and his purpose. Reading the prophets and studying their messages, we leave each one thinking (as they intended), "This is not the final word. There is more to be

revealed.” Christ is the perfect, complete, full, and final revelation of God.

- The prophets were mere messengers. Christ is the Message.
- The prophets were mere men. Christ is the Creator, Ruler, Redeemer, and Savior of men.
- The prophets were sinners in need of atonement. Christ is atonement. By his one sacrifice, “*he purged our sins*” and “*sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,*” because his work was finished and accepted.

**Christ is better than the angels** (1:4-2:18). — The angels are creatures of God. He is the Son of God (v. 5). The angels were commanded of God to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, his incarnate Son, as God in his humiliation as he came into the world (v. 6). God never commanded an angel to sit with him on his throne, but he said to his Son, when he had finished his work of redemption as our Substitute, “*Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” (vv. 7-13). Christ is one with the Father, in every way his equal. But the angels are “*all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*” (v. 14).

**They minister for those who shall be the heirs of salvation; but Christ is our Savior** (2:6-18). He visited the earth in human flesh, made a little lower than the angels that he might taste death for all his elect (referred to by the words “*every man*” in verse 9).



- His elect are every man numbered among the many sons he shall bring to glory (v. 10).
- His elect are those who are sanctified by him, whom he calls brethren (v. 11).
- His elect are the children the Father gave him to redeem and save (v. 13).
- His elect, every man for whom he tasted death, are the seed of Abraham on whom he took hold to redeem and save (v. 16).

**Christ is better than Moses** (3:1-19). — Moses, of course, represents the law of God. He was a servant in the house. Christ is Builder and the Master of the house. God's elect, his church and kingdom are his house. In this house Moses was a servant for a season. But Moses could not bring the children of Israel into the land of promise because he represented the law, and the law cannot save. It cannot give rest. Moses had to die in the wilderness. Joshua was raised up to take his place and to lead Israel into Canaan, into the land of rest. But Joshua, too, was but a man typical of Christ.

**Christ is better than Joshua** (4:1-16). — As Joshua brought Israel into the typical land of promise, the land of blessedness, bounty, and rest, so the Lord Jesus Christ brings God's elect into rest by his omnipotent grace. As Israel's enemies were conquered by the hand of God in Joshua's day, so our enemies were conquered by God our Savior, our Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 2:13-15).

**Christ is better than the sabbath** (4:9-11). — The Old Testament sabbath was typical of Christ, too, who is our true Sabbath. The sabbath rest of faith in Christ was typified by God ceasing from his works of creation and resting on the seventh day and in Israel resting in Canaan. As the Lord God ceased from his works, sinners enter into rest when they cease from their works and trust Christ alone for acceptance with God. Just as surely as Christ our Substitute has entered into his rest in Glory, there is a vast multitude of sinners in this world who must also enter into his rest. They must enter in because God ordained, and because Christ has obtained it for us.

**Christ is better than Aaron** (4:14-7:28). — Beginning at the end of chapter 4 and going through chapter 7, the Holy Spirit tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ is our great High Priest, and that he is a Priest better than Aaron with a better priesthood than Aaron's typical priesthood in Israel.

(Hebrews 4:14-16) “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. (15) For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. (16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a Priest who is God, but also man, a Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but a Priest who can do something about our infirmities. He is a Priest upon a throne, the throne of the universe, God over all and blessed forever, but his throne is a throne of grace. And he bids sinners come boldly to his throne in every time of need, assuring us that we shall obtain grace to help in our time of need. He is our everlasting Priest, a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, whose Priesthood is unchangeable. Because Christ is our Priest, accepted of God forever, the God of Glory has confirmed the everlasting acceptance of his elect in him by his own oath and decree, giving us a “*good hope through grace*” (6:17-20).

(Hebrews 6:17-20) “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: (18) That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (19) Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; (20) Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

**All Aaron could do was offer typical sacrifices and make ceremonial cleansings. Christ is a better Priest.** His work is neither typical nor ceremonial, but real and

sure. He is a Priest who is able to save and save unto the uttermost all who come to God by him. He who is our Priest is the omnipotent Lion of the tribe of Judah (7:11-27). If our Lord, who came not from the tribe of Levi but from the tribe of Judah, was to be our High Priest, “*there is made of necessity a change also of the law*” (7:12). The law regarding these things was disannulled because of its weakness and unprofitableness (7:18; Rom. 8:4).

The Lord Jesus Christ could not be our great High Priest before God, except the Levitical law which required the priests to be of the tribe of Levi be set aside and be made of no effect. That legal system under which the Jews lived and worshipped God in the Old Testament was only temporary and typical. Once Christ came and fulfilled it in its entirety, he put an end to the typical, Levitical system altogether (Rom. 10:4).

“*It is yet far more evident*” that our Lord Jesus Christ is a great High Priest infinitely superior to Aaron because those priests were temporary, made priests “*after the law of a carnal commandment,*” without an oath, for a limited time. Christ was made a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek and the oath of God in his eternal decree, by the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:11-27).

(Heb 7:11-27) “If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? (12) For the priesthood

being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. (13) For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. (14) For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. (15) And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, (16) Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. (17) For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (18) For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. (19) For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. (20) And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest*: (21) (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) (22) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. (23) And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: (24) But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. (25) Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (26) For such a high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; (27) Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up

sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."

**Christ is the Surety and Mediator of a better covenant, with better promises.** — The old covenant was a conditional covenant of law and works. In that covenant the whole weight of responsibility was upon the shoulders of men. The new covenant of which Christ is the Surety is an unconditional covenant of pure, free grace. In this covenant nothing depends upon men. In this covenant the whole weight of responsibility was laid upon the shoulders of One who is mighty, our great Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ (8:6-12).

(Hebrews 8:6-12) "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (7) For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (8) For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (10) For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (11) And they shall not teach

every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (12) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

**Christ is a better Tabernacle** (9:1-28). — Everything in the Old Testament tabernacle, and later the temple, was typical of Christ. They were but “*a figure for the time then present...until the time of reformation.*” Christ is the true Tabernacle. He is the true place of worship and blessing.

(Hebrews 9:11-16) “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us.* (13) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: (14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (15) And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (16) For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.”

**Christ is a better Sacrifice** (10:1-39). — All the laws, sacrifices, holy days, and religious observances of the Old Testament were only typical rituals. They could never take away sin and give sinners acceptance with God. Christ did and does!

“Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away:  
A Sacrifice of nobler name  
And richer blood than they.

Believing, we rejoice  
To see the curse remove:  
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,  
And sing redeeming love!”

**Christ and his sacrifice, his finished work as our Substitute and Savior is the whole of our acceptance with God, the whole of our peace from God, and the whole of our assurance before God.**

(Hebrews 10:4-22) “For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. (5) Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast



thou prepared me: (6) In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. (7) Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. (8) Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; (9) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (15) *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, (16) This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (17) And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (18) Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. (19) Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And *having* an high priest over the house of God; (22) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts

sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

**Christ is the better Object of faith** (11:1-40). — In chapter 11 the Apostle shows us that Christ is the better Object of faith, better than any that any man may choose, for he is the only Object of faith among God’s saints throughout the ages. He alone is the One by whom Abel worshipped God and Enoch walked with God and pleased him. Christ is the Ark of Salvation in whom Noah trusted. He is the One with whom Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob walked. Joseph, Moses, and Joshua, Rahab, Samson, and David, all God’s saints of old believed him, lived by him, died in him, and reign with him in heaven today.

Let us, like those countless multitudes of old, trust Christ alone as our Savior. It is only by believing him that we can know our election by him (11:1-3). It is only by faith in him that we can understand the things of God. (11:3). And it is only by believing him that we can please God (11:6).

(Hebrews 11:1-3) “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (2) For by it the elders obtained a good report. (3) Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

(Hebrews 11:6) “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

**Christ is the better motive** (12:1-29). — The book of Hebrews is calling for perseverance in faith, urging us to continue in the grace of God. We have many examples to follow. But our best and only real inspiration and motive is Christ himself.

(Hebrews 12:1-3) “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

In a word **Christ is a better Savior** than any to whom we might look, for he is the only Savior there is (13:1-25).

(Hebrews 13:8-10) “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (9) Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats,

which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (10) We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.”

(Hebrews 13:12-15) “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. (13) Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. (14) For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. (15) By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.”

(Hebrews 13:20-21) “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (21) Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.”