

The Son of God

Hebrews 1:1-6

Introduction

Merry Christmas! Here we are at the manger. After a month of waiting and preparation, we finally made it. Now, it's time to celebrate His birth! Our celebration, which actually began last night, will continue for the next twelve days until Friday, January 6th, Epiphany. I want to let you in on a little secret. The reason this birth is such a big deal and worthy of all our celebration is ... are you ready for it? This Baby in the manger is the Son of God!

Communication

The writer of *Hebrews* begins by telling us that it's all about communication. Before the fall, God could communicate with His people directly. But after sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's actions in the Garden, He had to find other ways. To some, He came disguised as a human, hidden in a burning bush, a pillar of cloud, or a pillar of fire. Mostly, He spoke through the Law and the prophets. But now, through His Son, He has communicated to us more fully. What has He communicated? *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16)*. God communicated salvation through His Son.

The Son

Here, in *Hebrews 1*, we are given a clear description of the Son of God, the Baby who lay in the manger.

Dual Nature

Martin Luther says that the writer *describes the same Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God. For the words "He was appointed heir of all things" are properly applied to Him because of His humanity, but the words "the worlds were made through Him" apply to Him because of His divinity (LW 29:110)*. This tells us right up front that Mary's Baby lying in the manger is God's Son as well. Throughout the centuries, people have tried to poke holes in the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. The recipients of *Hebrews* were in danger of losing their faith because they were under social and political pressure to buy into that kind of teaching. That's why this book is so clear on the divinity of Christ. For us today, the idea that Christ was just a man is one of the main tenets of secularism, which plagues the church.

Second Person of the Trinity

In *verse 3*, we read, *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature*. Both phrases point to Him being the Second Person of the Trinity. To say, "He is the radiance of God's glory" is to say that He shines with the substance of the Father. He is of the same substance (glory). The word "radiance" could mean "shines" or "reflects." He is a distinct Person from the Father. To say that He is the "exact imprint of His nature" is to say that He is the same in nature. Yet, as the "imprint", He is distinct from the Father. It is like when Paul calls Christ *the image of the invisible God* in *Colossians 1:15*.

What He Does

Our author also describes the Son of God by what He does.

Upholds the Universe

By saying that *He upholds the universe by the power of His Word (v. 3)*, he's saying that the Son of God is not only the Creator, He is also the Sustainer. He also shows how powerful the Son is. Creating and sustaining are both done by the power of His word. Who else could say that?

Made Purification for Sins

He *made purification for sins (v. 3)* by sacrificing His body on the cross. He died to pay the price for our sins. He is our Redeemer, our Sacrifice.

Sat at the Right Hand of the Father

Not only is He our Sacrifice. He is also our Priest, who offered the sacrifice. By *sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high (v. 3)*, He showed how superior His sacrifice was to that of the Israelite priests. They never sat down because they were always serving. Their sacrifice was never complete. His sacrifice was once for all. When He said, *"It is finished" (John 19:30)*, He meant that the price was paid in full, no more needs to be or can be done for our sins. He has paid the last penny of the debt we owe. We are totally forgiven in His death.

His Continuing Gift

As we said earlier, the Son is a Gift given to us by the Father. But the Son has also given us a gift that keeps on giving. While the sacrifice never needs to be made again, He has given us the Sacrament of the Altar to continually receive forgiveness of sins and to have our faith strengthened. He gives us His body and blood to eat and drink along with the bread and wine. That makes the birth of the **SON OF GOD** worth celebrating. And that's what I mean when I say, "Merry Christmas!"

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
