

Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2016 8:56 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Hebrews 2

The author of Hebrews (possibly the Apostle Paul) leads off chapter 2 with the first in a series of "admonitions" which we'll find interspersed in his writing of this great epistle! His readers, he says, need to "pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it!" He's obviously referring to the things written about in chapter 1! Things spoken by God "long ago to their fathers through the prophets, in many portions and in many ways..." And things spoken by God, "in these last days...in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world" (included almost as an after-thought!) He's speaking of Jesus whom He clearly identifies as God "Incarnate"--being the "radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature"! The One who "upholds all things by the word of His power"--and the One who "made purification of sins, and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high!" And by the way, the author notes, He's "much better than the angels"!

In last nite's lesson, we learned that He (Jesus) was and is not only fully God but also, "for a little while," was fully man--made "lower than the angels"!

Hagner notes that we need to "face (pay much closer attention to?) the full reality of the miracle of the incarnation, which affirms both the deity and the humanity of Christ"! This "mystery," he says, is at the heart of the Christian faith"!

So, accepting the reality of the "deity" of Christ, why is it so important as well that we recognize and understand that Jesus Christ also was, at one point, "fully man"? That was one of the key questions we discussed at last nite's session, which the Bible answers!

Hebrews 2:9, our memory verse for Lesson #3, says: "But we see Him who was made, for a little while, lower than the angels, namely Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone!" The #1 reason God sent His Son into the world and made Him as a man, and thus lower than the angels, was "so that by the grace of God, He might taste death of everyone!" And he goes on to write that "it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect (meaning "complete," or "bring to fulfillment!) the author of their salvation through suffering." Fitting? It was the fulfillment of God's will--and, according to Hagner, it was perfectly consistent with His righteousness and holiness! Ephesians 6:21 says: "He (God the Father) made Him (Jesus, the Son) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him!" The humanity of the Son of God was indispensable to the fulfillment of God's saving purpose for the world!

The author also writes (in 2:14) that by His death He was able to "render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives!" In I Corinthians 15, he adds: "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? Thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

But there's more! He writes (in 2:17) that He "had to be made like His brethren in all things! So that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people"!

And because He was "made like His brethren," He Himself was "tempted"--and thus able to understand and "come to the aid of those who are tempted (or tested)"!

MacArthur sums it up this way: "By His redemptive work, Christ has fulfilled all that is required as the supreme, representative of mankind. By His incarnation, substitutionary sacrifice, and victory over sin and death, He has fulfilled man's original purpose. As the second Adam, He was for a short time lower than the angels. Now He has glory and honor, and all things are subject to Him!"

And so, based on what we learned through last nite's study, do you understand, and appreciate, more (much more?) about who Jesus is, why He came into our world--and what He has done for you? Have you ever felt, as a believer, like you were "drifting away" from what you have heard and learned from the teachings of Jesus and of God's inspired Word, the Bible? Sometimes even becoming indifferent to them? Maybe tempted to "neglect so great a salvation"? The author would encourage you (all of us!) to "pay much closer attention to what we have heard"!

Have a great week, men! See you next week when we take on Lesson #4 and Hebrews 3--and learn more about Jesus, as portrayed in Hebrews!

Lowell