



## Look to Jesus for Significance - April 5, 2020

### OPEN

On Wednesday, I was walking back from checking our mail. I had just opened the garage door when I thought I would check on the plants on the front porch. As I rounded the corner and looked up, there was a bear staring wide eyed at me from the other end of the porch! Needless to say, I high-tailed it into the house. Sometimes, all looks well...and then you look up and...

As many of you watching this are aware, our church family was planning to celebrate this Palm Sunday in a new meeting space – Webster's Corners Elementary School. Little did we realize that moving our church this weekend would be pre-empted by a pandemic!

Just like my bear encounter, we may be startled, even a little shaken...but we are safe in the purposes that God has for our lives. How can we say this? One word: Hebrews. This book of the Bible was written to people who were seeking to live for God in tumultuous times. They were experiencing unprecedented change. The book of Hebrews is a book of *certainty for Christians*, because it declares the *superiority of Christ*.

Once, when Albert Einstein was asked about his working process he replied: "I grope." Even the most eminent minds eventually admit that they are inadequate to fully grasp the mysteries of this world. Currently, COVID-19 has our planet in a state of anxiety, fear, and grief. And the solution – just as it was in the first Century – is to heed the advice of Hebrews 12:3: "**consider Jesus**" which means "to count up, reckon, consider" or "to take stock" if you will.

Why look to Jesus? Maybe the phrase "consider Jesus" sounds passive...at best, being curious about Christ. Or perhaps it sounds like historical or literary investigation. But consider this – long before we were face-to-face with a global pandemic, Jesus successfully navigated ultimate suffering – betrayal, abandonment, beating, mocking, and crucifixion!

Now we are invited to seriously take stock of who He is and what He has accomplished for us – which is no less than eternal redemption! So, for a few weeks we are going to examine some portions of Hebrews in a sermon series called "Look to Jesus". Yes, Easter celebrations this year will be quite different. But the invitation remains exactly the same: look to Jesus!

### DIG

Today we are **looking to Jesus for our significance**. You could look for your significance in many places. Some search for it in the world of wealth. Some believe they are significant because of their beauty, or ability. While others see their knowledge and understanding as giving them significance.

In this sermon we are going to search out the way in which significance can only come from being linked with the life of Jesus Christ.

Michael Card has written a gripping song, "The Final Word" which states, "*When the Father's wisdom wanted to communicate His love, He spoke it in one final perfect Word....His final word was Jesus He need no other one.*" It is this miracle of the **incarnation** that allows Jesus to bring such meaning and purpose to our lives - we will see these in Hebrews 1:1-4.



*How does the fact that Jesus took on flesh and blood bring significance to my life?*

### Our expectation is realized in the Living Word - v. 1

Hebrews begins abruptly – like Genesis it assumes the existence of God. And it begins with a focus upon the way in which God spoke in the past. Verses 1-4 form just one sentence. The subject is "God" (v.1). The verb is "spoke" (v.2). First, we learn about God actively stirring up expectation in the past.

What comes to mind when you think about the Old Testament "fathers" hearing from God? We might think of **Moses** hearing God at the burning bush. We may recollect **Elijah's** encounter with God's "still small voice". Or picture **Isaiah** seeing a vision of God's holiness. But what about the ordinary Joe!?

This passage emphasizes that God spoke **by the prophets** to all the fathers in the past. Read **Isaiah 62:10-12** and **Zechariah 9:9**. Such expectations were realized in Jesus when He entered Jerusalem to the shouts of "Hosannah" and "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord". God planted a keen sense of expectation in His people. When God's promises were taken seriously by God's people, God produced incredible results.

We too can take hold of God's promises. We can also live in expectation. How? We live our lives counting upon the fact that our salvation was accomplished in Jesus Christ. This means redemption from sin and brokenness today. And it means our final redemption to an eternity with Christ one day.



*In what ways are you living with expectation of God right now?*

### **Our hope is found in the Living Word - vv. 2-4**

Whereas God communicated in the past by prophets, “in these last days” He spoke (verb in v.2) to us in Jesus. There are many examples of creative communication these days – for example, making noise at 7 pm communicates appreciation to front-line health care workers. I have been using lots of email. But I also talk to people on my mobile. And now I also use Zoom. Notice the progression: info → info+audio → info+audio+video. What could be better? **In person!**

“In these last days” is a Rabbinical phrase referring to the time of the Messiah’s coming...in person! There was no confusion that the object of God’s speaking is Jesus. As we understand who Jesus is, and what He has done, we understand God’s message to mankind. Consider two facts in this text.

#### **1. The authority of Jesus - v. 2**

Jesus is appointed “heir” which speaks to His superiority over the universe (Philippians 2:6-11). Also, He is the agent through whom God brought our world into being (Colossians 1:16).

#### **2. The nature of Jesus - vv. 3-4**

Here are five facts about what it means for Jesus to take on flesh and blood.

- **“Radiance of His glory”** - Jesus is the outshining of the brightness of God’s glory and majesty
- **“Exact representation (carakthr) of His nature”** - this term, used to refer to the impress of a die, is only used here in the NT. We get our word “character” from this term.
- **“Upholding all things by the word of His power”** - Jesus carries all things along by His power (Colossians 1:16-17).
- **“Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”** - Jesus enjoys a place of honor and rest (completion) following His sacrifice for sins. His human experience reflected His moral perfection.
- **“Excellent name”** (v.4) - His better name is a key thought in Hebrews.

As we look to Jesus, by God’s grace we will understand Him more. And as we understand Him more, our hope will grow.



*What part of Jesus’ nature gives you the most hope?*

### **REFLECT**

Corrie Ten Boom said, “If you look at the world, you’ll be distressed. If you look within, you’ll be depressed. If you look at God you’ll be at rest.”

One of the great gifts I received as a child was the constant reminder that my life had purpose...and that purpose was tied to the life of Jesus in mine!

When we truly engage with Jesus Christ, we come to realize that all our expectations and hopes are realized in Him. And when this is true, what happens? We discover that our lives have great significance and purpose. And it is all tied to the Living Word, Jesus.

We can express this significance by learning to give the Gospel message of Jesus to our world. Consider the following two invitations:

- ***What does Peter tell us about the way the Gospel is “light giving”? See II Peter 1:16-19***
- ***What does Paul tell us about the Gospel being “life giving”? See Colossians 1:6***

Take some time to “consider Jesus” by listening to the following songs:

[Fairest Lord Jesus](#)

[Jesus, Son of God](#)