

# JESUS, UNLIKE ANY OTHER

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June 10, 2018

I've got a book here entitled *Angels* by Billy Graham. Archangel Gabriel to entertaining angels unaware, we're curious about angels.<sup>1</sup> I've got here a book entitled, *Who's Jesus?* by Michael Green. We've just read a passage that tells us that Jesus is superior to the angels. So skip the first book and read the second one. That's the point the Bible is making.

The author of Hebrews' answer to *who's Jesus?* is loaded. I worked one summer for Allied Van Lines. We packed people's houses into moving trucks. Go into the house and get a box and put it in the truck. Go back into the house and get a box and put it in the truck. Again and again. Once I went for a rather small box about 16x12 inches. I about popped a gasket it was so heavy. I looked in. Bricks. It was loaded with bricks.

The first four verses of our passage is 16x12 loaded with bricks, gold bricks, telling us about Jesus. We know him as a folk rabbi and miracle worker. But here's what the author of Hebrews says about him and why we should concentrate on the book about him.

Different gold bricks is a good image to have about the first verses of Hebrews 1. But it can be a static image. The author really brings them out in a boom, boom, boom

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<sup>1</sup> Hollywood has given us *Touched by an Angel*, *Michael*, and *City of Angels* to name a few.

fashion. So we're going to take them in this sermon in that boom, boom, boom way.

One, he is the heir of all things. We just had a marriage in Britain and there was much talk of who is heir to the throne. In other words, the throne and all that it represents will belong to the heir. That's Jesus times a million, THE HEIR of not just the British empire but of all things – the seven continents, the in-between oceans, all that is on them and in them, the starry host, and all that flies between the globe's surface and that starry host. Heir of all things, earthly, cosmic.

So when the estate lawyer reads the will, if you could put it this way, he says, "Jesus inherits everything. Meeting's over." There's no "The cat goes to Uncle Harry." There's no "The butterfly collection goes to the town museum." Everything to Jesus. If you're sitting there for the reading and you didn't know the roster of names related to the will, you would think, "Wow, this Jesus must be something *because* he's getting everything." And you'd think this Jesus will be something *since* he will have everything!<sup>2</sup>

Two, he is creator of all things.<sup>3</sup> He is a maker. He is an author. He is the idea man and the manufacturing man.

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<sup>2</sup> Many of the uber-rich today are deciding not to leave their vast wealth or businesses to their children based on the idea that it might be detrimental to them or that they couldn't handle it. No such notion regarding Jesus. He can handle it. He "earned" it. One may wonder why he doesn't already have everything and has to inherit it. He did have it but for our sakes became poor. He did have it but in giving this world free will, he shared and it went awry, and now in his redemptive plan it will come back to him.

Look around and everything you see, the eyeball with which you see, and the you which houses the eyeball, it's all made by him. Creator of all things.

I have met people who have built their own houses with their own hands. I walk through the house and say, *"You built all this?"* They answer yes and I'm impressed. That's a lot of know-how. What if for every brick at that site, I picked it up and they said that they had made that too? Every shingle? Every plank? Every pipe? We can't even conceive of that but that is the zone we are in with Jesus. Everything. He made everything.

Late night comedian David Letterman once entered a NYC shop whose sign read *"Nothing But Lamps."* It was on the spot and live and the filming was of him asking the owner *"Do you have any pencils?"* The owner would say *"No, just lamps."* Then David would ask, *"Do you have any canned peas?"* The owner would say *"No, just lamps."* And on and on until the owner was exasperated. The special with Jesus would be David Letterman entering his shop whose sign reads *"Maker of Everything."* Then David would ask, *"Did you make asparagus?"* Yes. *"Did you make Antarctica?"* Yes. And on. He made...makes everything. (All things were made through him, and without him there was not any thing made that was made. John 1:4)

Three, he sustains all things. In business there are those who start businesses up but they are not very good at keeping them going. Not Jesus. Jesus isn't a "start them and leave them" guy. He isn't a one trick pony. He starts and keeps.

There's a story in the Bible where Elijah is absolutely worn out. He wants to give up. Then God gives him a kind

of cake saying that this will refresh and sustain him for the days ahead. That's Jesus, not just organizationally keeping the ball rolling, the plates spinning, the molecules cohering but inside nourishing, inside encouraging, inside guiding.

Four, he is the exact representation of God. Imagine the Invisible Man.<sup>4</sup> If you have an invisible man and you sprayed him with spray paint so as to see him, what you'd see, is him made visible. That spray adhering and making visible, that's Jesus. Take a stamp and put into clay, there's an image in the stamp and what shows up in the clay fits that image. That's Jesus.

We laugh at the little girl who, when asked by the teacher what she was drawing answered, "God." The teacher went on, "But no one knows what God looks like." The girl replied, "They will when I'm done." That's Jesus line. (If you have seen me, you have seen the father. John 14:9 The Son is the image of the invisible God. Col. 1:17)

Five, if I take a picture of you, the photograph is an exact representation of you. But it doesn't effervesce. It's flat.<sup>5</sup> As if the author of Hebrews sensed that he lets us know that Jesus is not the flat representation of God. He is the radiance of God's glory. What a ray is to the light, Jesus is to God.

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<sup>4</sup> The Invisible Man met the Invisible Woman. They fell in love, got married, and had kids. I've gotta tell you though, those kids weren't much to look at.

<sup>5</sup> Computer and cell phone technology focuses quite a bit on screen brightness and definition. Images can have a brightness and dimensions that a paper photograph cannot. However, Jesus' liveliness supersedes the photograph be it on paper or screen.

Sometimes when people are in love, others will see this in them physically and say, *"You're absolutely glowing."* Jesus is the glow to the God of love.

Six, he is the one who makes purification for sins. This presupposes an understanding that human life is marred and the problems cannot be ignored. The guilt of sin, the bruise of sin, is there, adversely, fatally there. However, there is a sin-remover. Jesus.

I've noticed that when I have a problem with something or someone and I share that with a friend, if I asked at the end, *"Do you think I am guilty for this?"* Here's the reply I am hoping for, *"No, you're not guilty."* This, however, is not the gospel. The gospel is not necessarily that you personally are 100% guilty but it is that you are at least a lot guilty AND there is a guilt remover.

My mother has a table cloth her mother crocheted. I witnessed someone spilling something on it. I could feel the worry from that person and the whole table. But then she said, *"I have something that will take that right out. No worries."* We all were grateful and could inwardly sit down and relax.

This guilt remover, Jesus, sat down. The high priest in Israel's temple didn't sit down. There was always more sin and another sacrifice that was needed.

I need to have an AC unit replaced. They have warranties, some five years, some ten. But that warranty means that somewhere after that it's going to break and I'm going to need to buy another one! No sitting down on AC purchasing. I want a lifetime warranty and then I could sit down. Jesus did the purification where, as a priest, he sat down. Forever warranty.

Being the exact representation of all things, being the radiance of God's glory, and being the one who makes purification for sin, he sat down. Don't go sitting down on the job. Sit down when the job is done. Jesus is the one who got it done.

Our storm shutters have been installed but the tracking around a few of the doors needs to be retooled. It's largely done but it is not done. The company doesn't get to sit down on this job. But Jesus' work is complete and completed. He has no loose ends still to come back and finish up. What he's done he has done and he has done completely and completely well.

You may or may not have noticed that we leaped right over something else about Jesus. God speaks through him. You may think of Winston Churchill's *"we will never give up"* speech in WWII. Or John F. Kennedy's *"ask not what your country can do for you"* speech. Or Martin Luther King's *"I have a dream speech."* These are all great speeches. God's best-effort orator is Jesus. He speaks superlatively, conclusively, beautifully, powerfully, insightfully, caringly ... by and through Jesus.

You say, *"I wish God would speak to me."* He has. In today's world your teenage grandson might say, *"I wish God would message me."* He has. Jesus is the word of God, the message of God. He is God's superlative and conclusive word or message.

Conclusive, definitive. Every year young men and women across the United States take SAT tests. And there will be some who do the amazing and get a perfect score. When that happens, no one says, *"Better come back and see*

*if you can do better next time.” No, that’s it. Jesus is conclusive in that way.*

Two plus two equals four. That’s it. Not anything more to be said. I wouldn’t wait around for new light on that subject. God has spoken well and fully in Jesus Christ.

Who Jesus is, what he did, is God’s message. The preacher felt so much for the spiritually hungry parishioner in the front row. He tried this word and that word. He was communicating. Then he ... he ... he stepped out of the pulpit and came down to that front row and wrapped his arms around the parishioner. No words... but he was his message. Jesus is God’s message for you and me. Personal, a son.

Will you listen to him? Will you really listen to him?

*If you would like to talk with someone about this message or your spiritual life, or have someone pray with you, the pastor and elders would welcome your call.*

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*Also see [welovefirst.org](http://welovefirst.org)*

*Or*

*[facebook.com/welovefirstsebastian](https://www.facebook.com/welovefirstsebastian)*

Lord Jesus, I don't know that I would have picked up on it apart from the guidance of the author of Hebrews. I would have done what so many have done and do and what I am still inclined to do – I would have said you are right up there with the best. You're the best of the best – Abraham, Moses, Mohammed, Buddha, ... you're better than them. But you're actually not just better than, you are categorically different than – not one of them would claim or be comfortable with being called heir of all things, maker of all things, sustainer of all things, the one God himself made visible, audible, felt. And yet you, without arrogance, say that about yourself and accept those statements about you.

Forgive us for our inattentive, underestimating ways. Keep us from thinking that these things we've heard today about Jesus are nice thoughts and then there is our reality and where he is and where we are aren't exactly the same thing. Speak to us that the maker and sustainer of all things is here, now, with us. Consequently, we can live differently.

The angels were made by you and serve you and we join them in serving you and praising you.