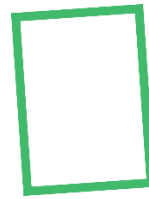


Hebrews: introduction and 1:1–4

Term 3, session 1



**BIBLE
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Welcome

Introduction

Why might this be a bad idea?

- Anonymous
- We don't know where it was written or to whom [despite 13:24]
- We don't know what it is [despite 13:22]
- Dense / difficult
- Repetitive
- Foreign / unfamiliar
- Discouraging / disconcerting in parts?

The warnings...



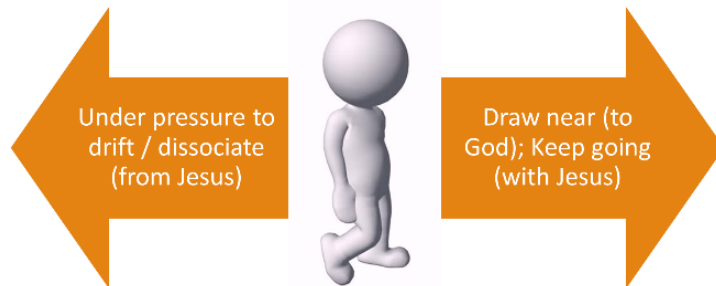
(from Thomas Schreiner and Ardel Caneday, *The Race Set Before Us: A Biblical Theology of Perseverance and Assurance* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001]: 194.)

Why might it be a good idea? ...

For people under pressure to rediscover and appreciate JESUS, who has completed what God has said he would do

Who is at the heart of Hebrews?
 Jesus *seated* at the right hand of the Majesty on high, the sacrificial
 element of his priestly work *completed* or '*perfected*'.

The pastoral purpose
 A sample of exhortations...



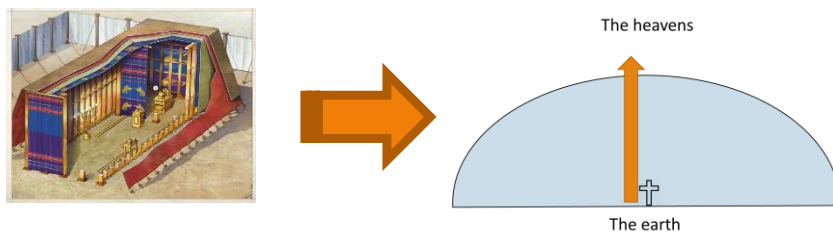
The theological rationale:

Jesus is the one who, as Son, **completes** God's saving activity



Completion language: Heb. 2:10; 3:14; 5:9, 14; 6:1, 8, 11; 7:3, 11, 19;
 9:9, 11; 10:1; 11:40; 12:2. 'Better': Heb. 1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23;
 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24

The 'main point' – 8:1–2



Across the structure of Hebrews – sermon / letter / word of
 exhortation...

Discussion question

- Given all this, even if we don't know who wrote it and precisely who it is for, why should we take Hebrews seriously?

Hebrews in three sentences...

1:1-4	You who are drifting, LISTEN! – God has spoken through one who is <i>Son</i> ...
1:5-2:18	...whose greatness should attract our attention and thoughts
3:1-4:13	...so let's respond to Jesus' voice TODAY.
4:14-8:2	And therefore let's HOLD FAST to our confession, for we have a great High Priest... ['main point']
5:11-6:20	...(if we are mature enough to see it),
8:3-13	...within a greater covenant,
9:1-10:18	...offering the greatest sacrifice.
10:19-25	So let's DRAW NEAR to God in full confidence of faith,
10:26-39	...not throwing away what we have,
11:1-40	...but persevering with faith
12:1-29	...and keeping going with endurance,
13:1-25	...stirring one another to love and good works

12:1–2 is a good summary:

COMPLEX	12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses • , let us also
CIRCUMSTANCE	lay aside every weight , and sin which clings so closely, and
PRINCIPLE	let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
ELABORATION	² looking to <👤 Jesus, 👤> the founder and perfecter of our faith,
SENTENCE	who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,
SENTENCE	despising the shame , and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

A careful mix of *exposition* and *exhortation*...

Discussion question

- If Hebrews speaks powerfully to the Christian in a crisis situation, what does it have to say to the person not (yet) in a crisis situation?

Hebrews: the first four verses...

SENTENCE	1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,
SENTENCE	whom he appointed the heir of all things,
SENTENCE	through whom also he created the world.
COMPLEX	3 He
CIRCUMSTANCE	is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,
CIRCUMSTANCE	and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.
CIRCUMSTANCE	After making purification for sins ,
SENTENCE	he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
ELABORATION	4 having become as much superior to angels
ELABORATION	as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Purpose (look ahead to 2:1): To those in danger of drifting... PAY ATTENTION to what God has said through one who is Son

Listen! God has spoken to us through one who is Son! (Not just in the words' of Jesus, but in who Jesus is and what he has done...)

Seeing this in four steps:

1. As Son, greater than the prophets – *the last word of God*
2. As Son, given (inheriting) all things
3. As Son, creator of all things
4. As Son (effectively and *actually* representing God, sustaining all things, and *now* having made purification for sins), in the honoured place as Son – as the greatest 'messenger' of God (far greater than the angels)

How would *you* structure/build a talk on this?

Please keep reading / listening to Hebrews. Joel Shorey, Covenant Fellowship Church... <http://vimeo.com/30397355>.

Homework

How would you summarise the purpose of Heb 1:1–3:1?