Greatness Of Christ

Intro: In this lesson let’s consider Hebrews 1:1-3 “1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:” This is a beautiful passage which tells us that God has spoken. It tells of three ways God has spoken: (1) unto the fathers, (2) by the prophets, and (3) by His Son. The writer then states seven facts concerning the Son showing His superiority over any other way God has spoken. Let us consider these seven facts.

I. God Has Appointed Him Heir Of All Things.
   A. “Hath appointed.”
      1. This is in the aorist tense (completed action).
      2. At some point, He was appointed heir of all things.
      3. It would have been at Christ’s resurrection and ascension to heaven.
   B. “Heir”
      1. This take us back to the idea of Sonship.
      2. Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
      3. Phil. 2:6-11 “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
   C. God has given Him “all things.”
      1. John 3:35-36 “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”
      2. John 13:3 “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;”
      3. Mat. 28:18 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
      4. Psa. 2:6-8 “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. 7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”
      5. Contrast the temptation of Christ:
         a. Mat. 4:8-9 “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”
         b. What Satan is really asking is: “Do you trust God.”
D. The significance of this is to say, “Christ is competent.”
   1. He is an adequate prophet, priest, and king.
   2. He does not share His heirship with any other;
      a. Mat. 3:16-17 “16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
      b. Mat. 17:5 “5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”
   3. He is competent as the author and finisher (perfecter) of the faith; Heb. 12:2 “2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
   4. He will not abdicate His throne until He gives it back to the Father; 1 Cor. 15:24-25 “24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”

E. This inheritance is not limited to the earth.
   1. Mat. 28:18 “18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
   2. Heb. 2:5-8 “5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. 6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.”

II. THROUGH WHOM HE CREATED THE WORLD.
A. “By” in the KJV is the Greek διά and means through (as all other reliable translations have).
B. “Worlds” is from the Greek αἰών (aion).
C. It can have reference to the physical world.
   1. John 1:1-4, 10 “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.”
   2. Col. 1:15-18 “15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”
D. It can have reference to the ages.
   1. Eph. 1:10 “10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:”
   2. He is the one who brought in all the ages or dispensations of time.
E. The writer is pointing out: How can you forsake Christ.
   1. He is the source of life and times.
2. John 1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”
3. John 10:10 “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

III. REFLECTS THE GLORY OF GOD
   A. Brightness and glory:
      1. The original word for brightness (ἀπαύγασμα; apaugasma) means “radiance, effulgence, the reflective splendor.”
      2. Glory is “honor, praise, dignity.”
      3. He was truly the faithful witness; Rev. 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”
      4. John 14:9 “Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip: he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?”
   B. He was shining forth of God’s glory.
      1. John 1:14 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
      2. Col. 1:15 “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:”
      3. Col. 2:9 “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”
      4. 2 Cor. 4:4, 6 “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
   C. John 17:4-5 “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”
      1. “I have glorified Thee” is the same as saying “I have reflected Your glory.”
      2. “I have finished the work”
         a. Heb. 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”
         b. John 19:30 “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”
      3. “Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was”; Phi. 2:6, 9-11 “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

IV. BEARS THE VERY IMAGE OF HIS NATURE.
   A. Image, Person
      1. Image is from the Greek word χαρακτήρ (charakter) and is an exact representation of something.
      2. Person is from the Greek word ὑπόστασις (hupostasis):
         a. Made up of two parts:
            (1) ὑπὸ (hypo) means “under.”
(2) ἵστεμι (histemi) meaning “to stand.”
(3) Thus it is that which stands under.

b. It is the substance, nature, or essence.

3. Thus Christ is the exact representation of the nature or essence of God.

B. How we come to know God:
1. Nature; Psa. 19:1 “1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”
2. Christ;
   a. John 1:18 “18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”
   b. Mat. 11:27 “27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”
   c. He reflects God’s glory so He is the perfect revelation.

3. Through His Word; 1 Cor. 2:7-13 “7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

V. Upholds the Universe by the Word of His Power

A. Christ is the Creator of all things.
1. John 1:1-3 “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
2. Col. 1:16 “16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:”

B. All things need sustaining power which is what Christ supplies.
1. Upholds is from φέρω (phero):
   a. It means “maintaining.”
   b. It also includes the idea of movement and not simply a static sustaining.
   c. It expresses “not only with sustaining the weight of the universe, but also with maintaining its coherence and carrying on its development” (Wuest).
2. Col. 1:17 “17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist [hold together—NASV, ESV].”
3. It is not like Atlas supporting dead weight on his shoulders, but as One who carries all things forward on their appointed course.

C. He accomplishes this “by the word of his power.”
1. Gen. 1
2. Heb. 11:3 “3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”
3. Psa. 33:6, 9 “6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.”
4. He spoke it into existence and sustains it the same way.

VI. WHEN HE HAD MADE PURIFICATION FOR SINS

A. He made purification by Himself.
   1. It was not by the blood of bulls and goats.
   2. Yet, blood was necessary to remove sin.
   3. Heb. 9:22 “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”
   4. Heb. 9:26 “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

B. He purged our sins.
   1. 1 Cor. 15:1-4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”
   2. Mat. 26:28 “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
   3. 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
   4. Rev. 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”
   5. Purged is aorist tense which is completed action, here indicating a single definitive act—a once for all act.

C. When did He purge our sins?
   1. Christ shed His blood in His death.
      a. We contact that blood in baptism.
         (1) Christ purchased the church with His blood.
         (2) Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
         (3) We get into the church by baptism.
            (a) Acts 2:41, 47 “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls…. 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
            (b) 1 Cor. 12:13 “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”
            (4) Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
            (5) Rom. 6:3-6 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be
also in the likeness of his resurrection: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

(6) Notice the comparison:
(a) Mat. 26:28 "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
(b) Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

2. He took that blood into heaven.
   a. He purged our sins when He sat down on the right hand of God.
   b. Even as the high priest had to go into the Holy of Holies with the sacrificial blood.
      (1) So Christ went into heaven itself to offer His blood.
      (2) Heb. 9:23-26 "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

VII. SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH.
   A. Sat Down indicates He had finished His work.
      1. John 19:30 "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."
      2. The Levitical priest remained standing:
         a. It was because their service never came to an end.
         b. The blood of bulls and goats they offered could never take away sin.
   B. Sat Down also indicates Christ’s exaltation.
      1. Psa. 110:1 "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."
      2. Zec. 6:12-13 "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
      3. Phi. 2:9-11 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
      4. Acts 2:32-36 "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Conclusion: The writer has given us seven (the perfect number in Hebrew numerology) reasons of the greatness of Jesus proving that He is the Christ, the Son of God. As such, we should listen to Him;
Heb. 2:1-3 “1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;”