

The Heart of the Issue: “Who Is Christ?”

Hebrews 1:3

Some Hebrews (Jews) came to faith in Jesus of Nazareth as “The Anointed One” (Messiah). The Jewish leaders began to persecute these early followers of Christ; and Hebrews is written to help those who may have doubts. The heart of the issue for them (and us) is: Who is Jesus Christ?

I. Jesus is the ray of God’s glory – *“He is the radiance of (God’s) glory”* (v.3).

The KJV puts it *“Jesus is the brightness of his glory,”* but many render brightness as “ray.” The allusion is to the sun and just as a ray expresses the nature and character of the sun, so Jesus is the extension of God. *“In Him all the fullness of Deity bodily dwelt”* (Col. 2:9).

II. Jesus is the image of God’s person – *“He is the expressed image of God’s person”* (v.3).

Obviously there was not photography in the days of the writing of Hebrews (AD 69), but any person would be familiar with the concept of “expressed image.” Whether it be the reflection of a person in polished metal or the stone image of an emperor, the image reflected a *person*. *“If you see me you have seen the Father”* (Jn. 14:9). Christ is the image of the *invisible* God. The Father’s voice has never been heard nor has the Father’s shape ever been seen by man. When God speaks or when God appears it is always through the second Person of the Trinity.

III. Jesus is the sustainer of all things – *“he sustains all things by the power of his word”* (v.3).

There are some implications to this phrase that need to be considered by you as a Christian.

A. All things means all things.

Jesus said, *“All power is given me”* (Matt. 28:18) which includes power over people.

Jesus is the sustainer of your faith, being called *“The author and finisher of our faith.”*

Jesus’ power is over heaven and earth: He has power over nature and the supernatural.

B. “Sustains” means to govern.

Jesus governs all things. He is King of Kings. His power is inherent to His position.

He is the Creator Himself. When convinced of His love, you can rest in His care.

C. “Power of His word” means He speaks and it is done.

Everything in His world, from electrons to the largest galaxies, responds to His voice.

When He speaks, the universe obeys. Know Him. Love Him. Ask Him. Trust Him.

IV. Jesus is the purger of our sins – *“when He had by Himself purged our sins”* (v. 3).

The word “purged” is the Greek word *karthosis* from which we get the English *catheter*.

It refers to “cleaning up, cleansing, purifying” or “removing unwanted objects” (i.e. “sin”).

Those of us who have messed up our lives through selfishness, ambition, jealousy, greed, hate, and all manner of evil – listen to the words *“who by Himself purged.”*

To whatever extent you see yourself in “purgatory” you have lost site of Christ Himself.

V. Jesus is the victor over all things – *“He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty”* (v. 3).

Being seated is a sign of kingly coronation. After He accomplished what He did on earth,

He rose from the grave and now reigns on His throne in the heavens. What is there to fear?

Before history, throughout history, to the end of history, Jesus the Anointed One loves me.