

30: May - June 25, 72 A.M.

GOD'S LAST WORD TO MAN

Hebrews 1:1-2

Coach Tom Nugent, former coach at the University of Maryland, in describing his victory over Clemson said the ball game in Clemson had been planned this way. He planned to bring a microphone into the pre-game huddle so that the boys' remarks and the team's prayer could be transmitted back to the Maryland fieldhouse at College Park, where the boy's mother's were watching the game on closed circuit T. V. The presence of the microphone was supposed to have a psychological impact on the players. It was to remind them that their mothers were listening as they prayed before the game. This in turn, was to fire the players up so that they could beat Clemson - which by the way, they did.

But something went wrong with the connection on the microphone and instead of the prayer being transmitted, all the way back to Maryland's fieldhouse, it got trapped by a dead connection. And the coach added, the only guy who heard the prayer was the Maryland scout who was in the press box fiddling with the connection.

In our text today, we find it is a matter of communication. Now a man may speak before a microphone and unaware that his voice is not reaching the people. It is not getting out.

You, perhaps, remember some experience when there was someone speaking. And you did not understand a word the person was saying. Or perhaps, you have heard someone singing a solo, and you could not understand a single word being sung. It gives you an uneasy feeling. In other words, there is a failure to communicate. The message does not get across.

The whole book here of Hebrews is that of getting the message across. Now Webster says that to communicate is to make another or others partake of it. Now

this is the business of the church. To proclaim a message.

Our problem is to speak so as not only to be heard but also to be understood.  
The listeners partake of what we have to say.

This was one of the problems that God had way back in the beginning. God wanted  
to say something to men and women. He had to find a way to communicate this truth  
and I believe that this is what our text is dealing with.

He is telling us how God worked this problem out.

Now there are two or three things that you see immediately about this text.

First of all, that there is a God. That is plainly stated in this text.

Second, that God has spoken and there is no question about that.

Third, that what they knew as Scriptures were divinely inspired. They knew  
that God had spoken.

The book was addressed to Hebrew Christians and there was no necessity to  
prove the existence of Almighty God to them. They recognized that God is and that  
he always was -- they worshipped him as the God of their Fathers, Abraham, Isaac,  
and Jacob. Their Scriptures were filled with records of his dealing with mankind  
in general.

That God had spoken, they knew well also about this. God had addressed Moses  
out of the burning bush that was not consumed. The voice of God had talked to him  
on the back side of the dessert.

God had spoken to Joshua, and had given him the guidance for the conquest of Canaan. They could see his hand at work.

They knew that God had spoken in the firey furnace. And that he had been there. And been with Israel in that time.

They had heard Isaiah preach - hear, oh Heaven, and give ear of earth, for the Lord has spoken. Isa. 1:2. For as the rain cometh down and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Isa. 55:10-11.

In the Old Testament we have many words of the Lord - they were inspired words and God had spoken and this was God's voice. And this is recorded in the Old Testament as an evidence that God had spoken, What God had spoken, we are told in the Scriptures, is not the thing in tradition handed down from men of one generation to another.

Are you one of those people who still ask the question or still say, (I haven't heard God say anything.) I haven't seen God do anything. Now there may be a reason why the Bible is all Greek to you. Because you do not think in the way that the Hebrew thought about this. And how he looked upon these facts in that day. For example when rain begins to fall, the Hebrew would say, God is sending us rain. You and I would never think of saying anything like that. We would simply say, look, it is raining.

Our failure here is communication - and that is in evidence everywhere. About

the subject of the stewardship of our money - now anybody that knows anything about the Bible knows that the first principle of stewardship is that God is in ownership of all of our possessions. And yet when a preacher stands up in the pulpit and says that God owns all these things and that you are simply a trustee of it, you never hear it. You don't take it as God speaking to you.

There are people who say I try to read the Bible but I can't understand it. When you come to understand that God is speaking in the Bible, it becomes alive to you. It really has a message for you - even today. You may not understand it like other people understand it, but you have to have a certain amount of knowledge in order to understand something even about the future. There is a story of a tale of a little boy who drew a picture in Sunday School. At Christmas time and the picture showed an airplane with three people in it. The teacher wanted to know who they were, and she was told the man and the woman was Joseph and Mary. But who is this sitting up front, she asked. Oh, said the little fellow, that's Pontius - the pilot.

Mrs. Billy Graham was telling about her visit with Queen Elizabeth in London and after the Queen had served tea. She had the nurse bring in the children and the conversation got around to the new English New Testament. Where upon the little princess said this, but it doesn't sound like Jesus talking. Her comment was that the child knew what Jesus sounded like in the King James version because she was being taught to read the Bible. But in the new translation, Jesus did not sound like himself. And so she didn't really like that voice.

How God has spoken. At this point we turn to think about this text and what the writer has said.

First, at sundry times - that is in the Old Testament times, God did not speak all at once - but in several (portions), many portions, God spoke. In (many separate)

various times- over a period of many hundreds of years - God spoke.

Now God could have made everything known concerning himself and man, and man's history. About his fall, his redemption, and his eternal destiny. He could have told Adam and Eve all of this in the Garden of Eden.

He might have revealed all of this to Abraham. Or given the revelation to Moses. Or to Daniel. If he had so willed, he could have revealed himself from the earliest days of creation - but that was not his prayer.

At one time he declared to Abraham and God gave the promise of the seed.

To Moses, he declared the law.

To David he announced the Kingdom.

And to Daniel he made known the abomination of desolation. Now it was the same God speaking in love and wisdom, in revelation, at these several points.

Second, diverse manners.

That is in (different) ways (unlike.)

At Sinai, God spoke to Moses out of a thunderings and lightnings and with the voice of a trumpet. At Horeb he addressed Elijah with a still small voice.

To Ezekiel he revealed himself through visions.

To Daniel, he spoke through dreams.

To Abraham he appeared in human form.

To Jacob he spoke through an angelic visitor.

So God spoke by warning, by exhortation, and in type and in parable. Now it was the same word - the word of Jehovah but it came in ~~diverse~~ manners.

✓ Third, by the prophets.

These were God's messengers and they made known what they heard. We think of the prophets as the men who unvail the future. But Isaiah was a messenger of God. He was governed by the Holy Spirit in delivering the divine message. Whether by word of mouth or by written word. The prophets did not speak by the will of man. But these holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21.

Acts 3:31 says he has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began. The prophets were not all alike - they were different. And Isaiah could only say of himself, woe is me for I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of an unclean people.

Jeremiah knew his unworthness to bear the message and be the voice of God. But the Lord touched his lips, behold I have put my words in my mouth. Jer. 1:9.

John The Baptist was a prophet. He was not the light but he bore witness to a light. For example he prophesied of the salvation to come.

V. 1 - Therefore tells us that God spoke and delivered his message unto the Father. The descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - generation after generation.

That he had committed to them through his written word and his spoken word - it was the voice of God to them. And he talked to them about a new covenant.

So this took place in (times past) Now the transition in V. (2) hath in these last days - is literally the end of these things. This term frequently was employed with the connection of the coming of the Messiah. The coming of Jesus. And so now here is an exact translation that will bring to us - that in his former days, God spoke by (servants.) Whereas in these (last days) he has spoken in his son. So he has spoken often in the past and in various means. The prophets were able to declare, "thus saith the Lord". But the son was able to say, verily, verily, I say unto you. Not merely the word of a son.

It was no new thing for God to speak - he had spoken often in times past. But now he was speaking in an entirely new way - in his son.

The present speaking was (a complete) and everlasting word. The messages of the former days were in Christ. For his person, sacrifices, and office had been ordained of God.

The (pre-eminence) of the revelation of God in the Son is the last word which God has for man.

Are you waiting for some other word?

Are you waiting for some other method? For some other method of salvation to be worked out?

Do you think that God has another word for you? Something different?

God is no longer hidden. That he told all in Christ.

God has spoken in his son. He has spoken to us. May we not exclude ourselves in these last words. We ought to listen and heed this divine message. Not only that we should be saved - but that we shall be kept in the earthly pilgrimage.

✓ The (last word of God) to man tells us seven things about the Son. Here is a marvelous description in V. 2 and V. 3.

1 First, it says whom he hath appointed (heir) of all things. It means one who becomes the inheriter at the death of another. It also denotes the description of the one who possesses. Sovereignty, as Lord. This is a title employed here. The Son is the heir.

2 Two, the maker of the worlds. The (creator) In other words, God had highly exalted him, in that he is the incarnate Son over all. And every knee will bow to him and every tongue will confess that he is Lord. Even in the mouth of those under the earth. But his dominion, his sovereignty is that he was before all things and he is the one by whom the world's were brought into existence. He has the creative right in the world.

3 Third, The Son is the (brightness of his glory) The radiant splendor of divine glory - shining forth. This is God manifested in the flesh. It is the



shining forth of God as the light in this world of darkness. This speaks of the brightness of his excellence - as the glory of the Lord rested as it were in the Ark of the Covenant. So it is signified here that God is shining forth in a new way - in His Son, Jesus Christ.

4 Fourth, the very image of his substance. That is, (deity) Here is the character of the form of God. This is the exact expression of the character of God. Do you want to know what God is like - look at Christ. This is God's last word to man. This is the final revelation.

There was upon the high priest this plate of pure gold - to these words -- holiness to the Lord. Now in this last day, God had spoken and his image is discovered in His Son who is absolutely holy and without spot. The exact expressed image of his person. How much nearer God is brought to us when we realize that he is shining forth his glory, his character, his image are revealed in Jesus - our Lord and Saviour.

5 Fifth, upholding all things by a (word of his power) V. 3. That is he maintains moral order by his powerful word. Not for an instant could this universe, or the worlds, or the Heavenly bodies, or the seasons or the laws of nature, could man exist apart from him. He has things under his rule and under his authority. All things by his powerful word.

6 Sixth, purged our sins - his (redeeming activities) When he, himself, had purged our sins. Now this is the act of the Son in going to the cross. Now this was first of all godly. He purged - he made the atonement for sin. Thus, his sacrifice was for the removal of sin. Nor did he offer something else, or another, or a sacrifice

like the high priest of old. But he was made the sacrifice for sin by himself.  
What Aaron offered, the blood of bulls and goats, the lamb of God's son became.  
The blood of the Old Testament sacrifices were made in terms of credit. But here  
the son of God out of the riches of his grace, purged us by himself.

7- Seventh, his administrative position is declared. He sat down on the right  
hand of the majesty on high. Who can speak a word that will tell us more of God's  
love and God's grace. Who is full of grace and truth and finished the work of  
redemption. Having finished it, he ascended through the Heavens, and sat down at  
the right hand of the majesty on high.

He need never have left that place at the throne of God. But he did leave it.  
He submitted to the sufferings, and the glory of the Father was bestowed upon Him  
on account of his obedience. And now he is at the right hand indicating authority  
and power. An evidence that his work is perfectly done. How marvelous is the  
grace of God.

When God spoke to men in Christ, he said, everything he had to say which means  
that he said everything man needs to hear for his earthly life.

What more does a man need to hear.

No man needs to say, oh, that I knew where I might find him.

No man needs to say today, I wish that God would speak again.

God has spoken his last word in the fullness of time. He spoke not through a

human agency but in the person of his Son. It is not God sending a messenger to man to make known his will. God coming out to man in the Son. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory and it was the glory of the begotten of the Father - full of grace and truth.

God is no longer hidden, nor at a distance.

He has come down into his own world, to seek those who have been straying from him. He has manifest himself, in Christ, God told it all.

God has spoken to you first through the Scripture.

Second, through the voice of your inner impressions by the Holy Spirit.

Third, by the voice of your judgement which is your conscience.

Fourth, by the voice of providential circumstances.

I am sure we all remember the story of Francis of Assisi. This man was a monk who found an order for the service of the church. One day he said to a young man, who was with him, let us go down into the city and preach. The young man was delighted - he admired St. Francis and he looked forward to hearing his sermon.

So they walked through the streets. Here was a group of children playing - the preacher stopped, spoke to them, and made their day brighter with his smile.

There was a blind man, who Francis offered his arm and led him across the street.

So the day went on filled with little acts of everyday human kindness - but nothing else. When they returned to the monastery the young man reminded his friend that they had set out to preach and yet they had done nothing of the sort. And then he said something which made the story live.

Young man, it will (do no good for us to go to preach, unless we always preach as we go.)

When God has something to say, he said it in a life that was full of grace and truth. And men got the idea. And that is still the best answer that we know today for the problem of communications.