

The writer of Hebrews does an amazing job of showing us who Jesus is, in the first four verses of his letter.

Hebrews 1:1-4 "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they."

The point the writer of Hebrews is making is very similar To the point that John is making in our text this evening.

The writer of Hebrews is waving red flags, jumping up and down, And screaming that the whole thing points to Jesus.

If you miss Jesus, you have missed it all.

- If you spend a lifetime in church, but miss Jesus
- If you hold to every religious ritual, but miss Jesus
- If you memorize the Bible, but miss Jesus
- If you travel to every foreign country, but miss Jesus
- If you live a life of perfect morality, but miss Jesus
- If you achieve every feat imaginable, but miss Jesus
- If you gain the whole world, but miss Jesus
- If you know every piece of knowledge, but miss Jesus

THEN YOU HAVE MISSED IT ALL.

Jesus is very exclusive.

You find in Him what you cannot find anywhere else in this world.

If you miss Jesus, you have missed it all.

This is John's point as well, as he has thus far spent this first chapter explaining to us the phenomenon of Jesus.

We have seen that He is the Living Word of God.

We have seen that He is the Light of the World.

- He is vitally important
- He is informative
- He is irritating to sin
- He is irreplaceable

Tonight John brings this amazing portion of Scripture to a conclusion As we see yet again a very amazing truth of Jesus.

Tonight we see the Incarnation of Jesus.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"

We have talked many times about the importance of the incarnation.

The incarnation is a picture of Jesus sympathizing with you.

Hebrews 4:15 "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin."

The incarnation is a picture of Jesus battling your enemy.

Hebrews 2:14-15 "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

The incarnation is a picture of Jesus coming to your aid.

Hebrews 2:18 "For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted."

It is amazing that God would love us enough to be willing to enter our race just so He could know what it was like to be one of us.

The incarnation is very much a picture of God Coming to learn what it was like to live as a human.

Hebrews 5:7-10 "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek."

The incarnation was in part about God coming to learn about you.

BUT THAT ISN'T IT BY A LONG SHOT

The incarnation was also about God coming So you could learn about Him.

- Immortality put on mortality*
- Perfection invaded imperfection*
- Eternity stepped into time*

BECAUSE IF HE HADN'T GOD WOULD STILL BE A MYSTERY

Colossians 1:24-29 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me."

Paul proclaimed Jesus, the explanation of the mysteries of God

If it were for Jesus, there is much that we would not know.

This is John's point in writing these verses here.

And this just echoes the truth

That if you miss Jesus, you have missed it all.

I want you to see **4 truths** about Jesus tonight, that will hopefully solidify in your mind that **if you go through life and miss Jesus, you've missed everything**

#1 JESUS IS THE EMBODIMENT OF GLORY

John 1:14

Did you catch what John said?

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory"

Now, don't forget what we are talking about
When John once again refers to Him as the Word.

We are talking about His eternal reign- "in the beginning was the Word"
We are talking about His supernal status - "and the Word was with God"
We are talking about His supernatural nature - "and the Word was God"

**Each of these statements cause us to ask
Why would the Word become flesh?**

*Why would the eternal God step into time?
Why would the supernal One leave His place of glory?
Why would God Himself clothe Himself in human skin?
And most certainly, why would He dwell "among us"?*

One of the reasons is to show you glory.

"and we saw His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

How many times have we sang the song by Third Day, "Show Me Your Glory?"

"Show me your glory, send down your presence, I want to see Your face. Show me your glory, majesty shines about You, I can't go on without You Lord"

GOD DID - He called Him Jesus.

And that term glory is an amazing thing.

It literally refers to "the honor deserved from having a good idea"

It denotes both prestige and high position.

But in the Old Testament, it speaks also of power.

The glory in the Old Testament was a powerful thing,

And the truest glory of God was off limits.

That doesn't mean they never saw His glory at all.

They caught glimpses of glory as God would manifest Himself in symbols.

They saw the pillar of fire by night, and the cloud by day.

They saw Sinai consumed in God's glory.

Exodus 24:16-17 "The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top."

But no man was allowed to see the true glory.

Exodus 40:34-35 "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."

1 Kings 8:10-11 "It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD."

The closest anyone in the Old Testament came
To seeing the glory of God was Moses.

Exodus 33:17-23 "The LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name." Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

God's glory was off limits to men, it was a mystery.

UNTIL JESUS

"and we saw His glory"

Matthew 17:1-5 "Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

John actually saw it on the mountain top,

But it was seen in Jesus as "the only begotten from the Father"

All that was worthy of honor, all that was glorified,
We see it in Jesus.

TURN TO: 2 CORINTHIANS 3:4-18

The best law in the Old Testament was the end of what was fading,
But in Jesus "we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

**We see the glory of Jesus, now in changed lives,
And in new hearts, in righteousness revealed.**

**And here is the point John wants you to see.
We wouldn't know glory if it weren't for Jesus.**

When Jesus came the veil was removed and glory was revealed.

Hebrews 10:19-20 "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh"

#2 JESUS IS THE EPITOME OF GREATNESS

John 1:15

To get a good appreciation for this verse
You must understand the greatness of John the Baptist.

The people regarded John very highly

Matthew 21:25-26 "The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?" And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' "But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet."

It is apparent that many thought John might have been the Christ.

This is why when Jesus started baptizing they came and told John.

John 3:26 "And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him."

Herod himself had great fear of John

Matthew 14:1-2 "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus, and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

We even see evidence that a sect arose to worship him.

Acts 19:1-5 "It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. He said to them, " Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, " Into John's baptism." Paul said, " John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Jesus Himself said,

Matthew 11:11 "Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The point is John was a model of greatness.

He wasn't hung up with material possessions - he lived in the wilderness.
He wasn't big on public fame - he looked like a madman
He wasn't a people pleaser - he preached repentance
He didn't even value his own life - he even preached at Herod

John was a model of greatness.

BUT JESUS IS THE EPITOME OF GREATNESS

"He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me."

John readily points out that Jesus is even greater than himself.

John the Baptist knows this because of the eternal nature of Jesus.

But it goes even further than that.

Jesus is the ultimate standard of perfection.

He is the plumbline of righteousness

He is the level of justice

He was perfectly obedient, perfectly humble, perfectly righteous

**We most certainly do not have the time to speak of all
That Jesus did to reveal His greatness on the earth.**

Aside from committing not one single sin...

Aside from refusing the world for the sake of obedience...

Aside from willfully submitting to those He could have crushed...

Sickness wasn't safe around Him

Death couldn't rest around Him

Despair had to flee around Him

John 7:31 "But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?"

John 21:25 "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written."

We would not know greatness if it weren't for Jesus.

WHO WOULD YOU MODEL YOUR LIFE AFTER?

John the Baptist? - He gets too whiny in prison

The Apostle Paul? - He gets defensive while on trial

Jerry Rice (GOAT) - Not even close

There is no suitable model except Jesus.

We wouldn't even know greatness if it weren't for Him.

He is the epitome of greatness.

#3 JESUS IS THE ESSENCE OF GRACE

John 1:16-17

I really like what John says here.

"For of His fullness we have all received"

Other words, we have seen what fills Him.

- We have seen Him under attack*
- We have seen Him in the midst of temptation*
- We have seen Him in mourning*
- We have seen Him in extreme popularity*
- We have seen Him in anger*
- We have seen Him in amazement*

We know what makes Him tick.

Jesus Himself summed it up by saying,

John 8:29 "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."

But John sums up what fills Jesus with another phrase.

John says, "and grace upon grace"

**Just when you think you have all the grace imaginable, He gives more
Man has never been able to exhaust the resources of His grace.**

THINK OF A TIME WHEN JESUS RAN OUT OF GRACE FOR YOU.

And then John says this.

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ."

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?

It means we didn't know grace or truth before Jesus.

All we knew was Law.

The Law didn't give grace, the Law gave judgment.

The Law didn't give truth, they Law gave type.

But when Jesus came He was the very essence of grace and truth.

Apart from Jesus there is no grace, there is only works.

Ephesians 2:4-7 "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

Romans 5:20-21 "The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Apart from Jesus there is no grace.

There is no aspect of you getting what you don't deserve.

Without Jesus all you get is what you deserve.

There is no truth apart from Jesus.

John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees and said,

John 8:31-32 "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

**The reason we have so many people searching for truth
Is because they don't know Jesus.**

If you don't know Jesus, then you don't know the truth.

John 18:37 "Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, " You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Do you see John's point?

You wouldn't know glory if it weren't for Jesus.

You wouldn't know greatness if it weren't for Jesus.

You wouldn't know grace if it weren't for Jesus.

#4 JESUS IS THE EXPONENT OF GOD

John 1:18

Now I like this word exponent. **You may only recognize it as a math term,**
So let me give you the definition of the word exponent.

Exponent - "A person or thing that is an example of something, or one who expounds or interprets."

That is exactly what Jesus is.

He is both the explainer and the explanation of God.

You can listen to His teaching and hear Him explain God.

Or you can watch His life and see God explained.

Jesus is the greatest teaching on God there is.

John 14:8-11 "Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."

Jesus point was that He is God.

Colossians 1:15 "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."

Hebrews 1:3a "And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power..."

All throughout the Old Testament, you can see God's attributes.

You can see His power You can see His holiness

You can see His deliverance You can see His mercy

But you cannot see God.

"No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

If you want to know **what God is like**, then look at Jesus.
If you want to know **what angers God**, then look at Jesus.
If you want to know **what moves God**, then look at Jesus.
If you want to know **what frustrates God**, then look at Jesus.

He is the explanation of God.

And this is perhaps the greatest point of them all.
If it weren't for Jesus, we wouldn't know God.

Does this not explain why people worship creation, or superstition, or humanism?

They have failed to see Jesus, and so they have no clue who God is.
John 12:45 "He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me."

You wouldn't know God if it weren't for Jesus.
Do you see how important the incarnation is?

Jesus came to be able to identify with you,
But even more so, He came so you could know Him.

You wouldn't know God if it weren't for Jesus.

Not only that, but you couldn't know God if it weren't for Jesus.

He is the payment for sin,
He is the mediator,
He is the only source of salvation.

You skip Jesus, and you'll never get to God.

It is impossible.

He is the Embodiment of Glory
He is the Epitome of Greatness
He is the Essence of Grace
He is the Exponent of God

DO YOU KNOW HIM?
DO YOU SHOW HIM?

Colossians 1:18-20 "He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."