

Sons to Glory

Hebrews 2.5 – 3.6

If I asked you whether you thought you had significance or not. What would be your answer? If I said. Ok, people who think they've got significance. You go to that side of the room and the people who think they're pretty much insignificant go to the other side of the room. Which side would you go to?

(You can point if you want.)

I don't know if you find that a difficult qn or not. But I'm in two minds. I mean. I was standing on the driveway looking at the full moon the other night. And I was telling Kirsty who's two now. I was telling her how brilliant we were because we flew a ship and landed it there.

You can see here little mind ticking over...maybe she's thinking she might be able to go there. And you know. Who knows what we might be able to do in the future. I'm sure Richard Branson will get to go first. But who knows?

That's pretty impressive. What humans have achieved is pretty awesome. And it's not just the things we've done that somehow point to our significance. There's just something about humans that's different from the cockroaches and the cats. Something more significant.

But on the other hand. When you think about the size of the universe. We're part of.....That we haven't known. We're pretty insignificant. And even when you think about the rest of the people on the planet. I hardly rate at all.

So do I have significance or not?? It's a tough qn to answer. And then you get people like Peter Singer who's an aussie philosopher who says. We've got to save the whales. But at the same time grandma needs to be euthanized....it's pretty confusing.

Well let me just say there's a pretty profound answer to that question here in chapter 2 of the letter to the Hebrews.

Now again. Here's a letter written to Hebrew or Jewish Christians. Who are tempted to go back to their Jewish ways. And treat Jesus something like the latest fashion trends that you can take or leave.

And we've already heard in chapter one the reminder of the majesty of this Son. This person who's higher than angels by a long shot. Who sits on his throne.

In the past God's words came to us in lots of ways. But in these last days. They've come by this one who's at the Father's side.

We've been told. To pay careful attention... because the words of the son offer on the one hand a great a salvation or on the other, a great punishment if we ignore them and drift away.

But here's a bit more information. Because the name of this Son is Jesus. First time his name's mentioned in the letter.

Which is a reminder of his humanity. Jesus is was a pretty common name around at that time. Which is why you don't need to get all bothered when someone finds an ossuary with the name Jesus on the side of it in Palestine.

And if you're pondering your significance. Then keep listening.

Because Jesus' humanity points to a glory that makes that of angels pale into insignificance.

And verses 6 to 8 here, are a quote straight from Psalm 8.

Psalm 8. A Psalm of David. It's a Psalm that ponders on the **glory of humanity.**

If you've got a sneaking suspicion mankind was **designed for great things**, the Psalm says you're **right**. We are. Because mankind was designed with **all creation at his feet.**

Pick it up from verse 5. Because you see, "It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come..." **but to us.**

That's what the Psalmist is saying. There's a place where someone has testified.

Hebrews 2:6-8 What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁷ You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor ⁸ and put everything under his feet."

Now I'm guessing most people read those words with a screwed up nose. Because yea, the first bit what's man that you're mindful of him. If that's you and me and we're staring into the heavens then that makes sense. But what's this bit about everything being subject to him? What's this bit about glory and honour?

That's not necessarily our experience. I mean where's the glory in the suffering of a slow and painful disease? Where's the honour in the daily atrocities you hear on the news? Where's the glory in the things you're ashamed of, that you've done.

But still, there is that lingering thought. That despite all that. There's something in it.

And there is. The writer's really capturing that idea of what we were made for. He's really in a way pointing back even from where he's standing to that Genesis 1 account to the original design. Where men and women are made as the image bearers. In a way nothing else compares to.

I mean, You wonder why we can catch glimpses of understanding of everything from the sub atomic particle to the vastness of the universe? It's because we're **made in the image of God**. And God, in the original design, **left nothing** that's was not subject to humanity.

And in the beginning....God says to Adam and Eve. Rule the world – under me.

In putting everything under him God LEFT NOTHING that is not subject to him.

And yet....there last little bit of verse 8. Yet...at present we do not see everything subject to him.

You're darn right there.

When I worked in the court house at Dalby in a past life the court house was next to the police station. And one day they brought this car in that had been stolen. And the people who stole it, took it for a joy ride or whatever. And when they were finished with it. They torched it. And all that was left was this burnt out wreck.

It had resemblance of what it used to be. But it was a far cry from its original glory.

And in a way. That's the world we see.

Because Adam and Eve and you and I are rebels. The world's not what it was meant to be. Things don't work the way they were meant to.

Sin brings death. And brings our glory to nothing. Or at least not much.

At present, we see cancer and we see terrorist bombs and we see ageing and we see marriage failures and we see Tv shows proving to us we can't even control our **kids** let alone the whole creation.

Because what we see. Is the charred remains from the effects of sin. We don't see the world like it should be. But what we do see. Is Jesus.

There in verse 9.

Hebrews 2:9 ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

See if you think about the loss of glory of man. You'd have to say death's the lowest point. The ultimate ignomy.

But the picture that's been painted for us here right from chapter one verse one isn't the picture of a shiny, glow in the dark angel who we sort of admire because he's so other worldly.

It's far better than that. The picture's actually the RE-EXALTED Jesus. Who identifies with us. Those same words. Who was made a little lower than the angels.

He's come down to our level. He condescended. In a GOOD WAY. Like the members of the State Labour Party. Like Anna Bligh. Working the regular job at the hospital. He's become one of us.

For a little while. He breathed oxygen and bled and sweated. And more than that. He tasted death.

By God's grace. He suffered death for everyone.

AND NOW..... And here's the key to this idea of man's glory. Now....HE'S CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOUR.

Because of it.

And we see him. There's the glory and honour of man. In the exalted God-man who tasted death. Who died....but who lives forever.

Crowned with glory and honour not instead of us. But as the first of many.

That's the point there in verse 10

Hebrews 2:10 ¹⁰ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

The word author there is translated a few different ways in the different English versions. Founder, author, pioneer. The idea is that Jesus is the trail blazer who forges through as the first.

Jesus is the trail blazer of salvation. Who brings many sons and daughters to glory.

It's important to understand, the whole **point** of what God's done in Christ, the whole **essence** of it, the whole **beauty of it...** is his genuine humanity.

And it's fitting.

It's not as though Jesus wasn't perfect already. But for our redemption.

It was fitting. That Jesus become perfect in the sense of identifying with us. Lowering himself, suffering, dying. To bring us the glory.

Now we recognize the value of condescension. That's why those politicians did the day job thing. There's nothing worse than to be seen to be out of touch.

I remember Peter Beatty when we were having the big water restrictions boasting about his four minute showers. We're in it together.

And in the next few lines there's a bit more of an explanation of why it's fitting.

Number one. It's fitting. Because otherwise we're not family. He hasn't called us to be angels. I mean, you'd have to be happy with that if that was it. That'd be pretty good. Eat Philadelphia cream cheese all day.

But it was fitting for Jesus to be like us. Because the glory God's got in mind for man. In a way it's hard to get your head around. Is to be brothers and sisters.

With the one for whom and through whom everything exists.

Hebrews 2:11 ¹¹ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

And then three quotes from the Old Testament that all make the same point. That **god's messiah** is of the **same flesh** as **God's people**. A member of the **family**. A quote from Psalm 22, verse 12:

He says, "I will declare your name to **my brothers**; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises."

Same point in verse 13 from **Isaiah chapter 8**.

Now I'm not sure whether or not my brother'd be prepared to own up to me in public. But we're told Jesus is not ashamed to own up to us. In the midst of the congregation.

We don't see everything under man's feet. But we see the glorified exalted Jesus our brother. Because he lowered himself and tasted death for us. To bring us to glory and honour.

Second thing.

It was fitting. Because he needed to deliver us.

Verse 14.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might DESTROY the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Death comes as the end result of the power of sin. But of course. That affects life before death. There's a kind of slavery we're enduring in life because of the fear of the death to come.

The prisoner on death row has a different mindset to the average Joe doing ten years.

And it's interesting to analyse that a bit. I mean. I don't think that many people are lying awake at night in a cold sweat because of the fear of death. In that sense. Some are. If you're a soldier in Afghanistan. There's something wrong if you're not.

But why is it.....we don't' speak about death? Maybe that's a manifestation of our fear?

Why is death taboo? To the extent that we try not to even use THAT WORD at funerals. We go for one of the range of euphemistic alternatives.

But if you're young and fit.

And you've got insurance you can probably get by without thinking about it too much.

But that doesn't necessarily mean you're not a slave to it.

I mean even the idea of living life to the full. Where you ring every last bit of fun and success and adventure you can out of life. At base, is that driven by the fear of death?

This is it. No more. So get what you can now.

Is that a sort of fear of death running in the background even when people are in the prime of life?

Instead of seeing the true glory God's won for you in the man Jesus. You spend your life trying to make your own. In one way or another.

Whatever it looks like for you. Jesus has rescued you from it. So you can live life without that same fear of death. So you can live differently.

The fitting weapon to destroy the power of the devil. The fitting weapon of mass destruction. Was a body like hours. A suffering and a death like ours.

It wasn't angels who needed that sort of help. It was humanity. Which is the reason, says verse 17, that he had to be made like us in every way. So he could be the **mediator** between God and Man. The **high priest**. Which is the Old Testament picture. And we won't go into it in detail, because there's more of it in a few chapters time. But the high priest. Who makes **sacrifices** on behalf of the people. Makes **atonement** for the **sins of the people...** it means he **clears the debt**, he makes up for the wrong, he **turns aside the anger**. In Old Testament times, that was the High Priest's **job**. And now Jesus has done it once and for all. Not just a **high priest**. But a merciful high priest. A high priest who **knows what it's like**.

See, what do you reckon you're going to meet when you come face to face with God? How's it going to be? Let me tell you, you're going to meet his **middle man**. You can't even just **bow in** to meet the **prime minister**. Maybe one of his minions

if you're important. Well, you want to meet with God you've got to meet with his **high priest; Jesus**. And what are you going to **find?** What sort of reception? He'll say, **I know what it's like. I've been there**. He'll say, **good on you for keeping going**. Because it's tough, isn't it?

And he'll say, come right through and meet **our father**. There's nothing you have to do. Because I've **made atonement for your sins already**:

For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a **merciful and faithful high priest** in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to **help those** who are being tempted.

It's great news, isn't it? And if you keep in mind that this is at first a message for people who are tempted to **turn back from Jesus** to the ways of the Old Testament, to their **Jewish ways**, who are tempted to **turn back to the laws of Moses...** it's no wonder that we finish at the start of chapter 3 with a call to **fix our thoughts on Jesus**. Because even though Moses was a **worthy and faithful servant in god's house...** the Old Testament laws he gave, they were **good laws** that were pointing to the future. But in Jesus Christ, the **future had arrived**. Verse 5 and 6.

Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

He became like us so we might become like him. He destroyed the power of the devil to save us from the fear of death.

Whatever other glory there might be out there on offer. None of it holds a candle to what we see in our risen Lord, our brother.

So lets fix our thoughts on him, the author and perfecter of our faith.