

The Miracle of the Message

Based on a series by Greg Fine

Hebrews 1:1-3

In the old 1947 classic, *Miracle on 34th Street*, an old man named Kris Kringle becomes the department store Santa at Macy's in New York. In one scene a woman and her little girl come up to Santa. Kris asks her what her name is. The woman says the little girl doesn't speak English because she is an orphan that they just adopted from the Netherlands and all she understands is Dutch. SinterKlaas, as she calls him talks to her in her own language and they sing a song together. Everyone there is just amazed. It almost seemed like a miracle? Kris Kringle was able to communicate in a way that the girl could understand. He was able to speak her language.

Our Christmas sermon series is called, *The Miracle of Christmas*. It is not enough to just know about the miracle of Christmas. We need to experience the miracle of Christmas in our own hearts and lives. Today we want to focus on *The Miracle of the Message*. Hebrews 1:1-4 records this miracle of the message from God:

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

God sent His one and only Son in order to bring His message to us. God sent Jesus to communicate His message in a way that we can understand! The miracle of the message is that God speaks to us today so that we can know Him and draw near to Him!

How Did God Speak Before?

God has been speaking throughout history. Verse one says, “**God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets.**” God has not been silent. God communicates. He wants people to hear Him. He wants us to know Him, to love Him, to worship Him.

God is not just an idea to be thought about. He is a person to be listened to and understood, enjoyed and obeyed. God has been speaking throughout history to reveal Himself to us. The verse uses two words to describe the lavish variety of God's communication. The King James translates them, “**sundry times and in divers manners.**” One word describes the many portions or times that God has spoken. The other describes the many ways or methods in which God spoke.

How has God spoken? Many ways—just think about the ways God spoke:

God speaks through His creation. Psalm 19 says, “**The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters**

speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard."

God spoke to Abraham through an angel; to Jacob in a dream; to Moses in the burning bush. He spoke to the Israelites from the smoke and fire on the mountain; He spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice; to Isaiah in a vision in the temple. God spoke to Hosea through his family circumstances; and to Amos in a basket of summer fruit. He spoke to Jeremiah through a potter's clay and to Joseph through dreams. God even spoke His message through a donkey! God has been speaking His message through visions and dreams, through angels, through Urim and Thummim, through symbols, natural events, and many other means. He revealed Himself various places: in Ur of the Chaldees, in Haran, or Canaan or Egypt or Assyria or Babylon or Persia. There is no lack of variety for God's revelation is not a monotonous activity that must always occur in the same place or the in the same way. God has been speaking throughout history in a variety of places through a variety of means in order to make Himself and His will known! And through many of His prophets God had spoken about the messiah, the Son of God who would come to save His people.

God's revelations in the Old Testament were fragmentary, occasional and progressive. They could not adequately capture the full picture of God's nature. Prior to the coming of Christ at Christmas there had been about 400 years of silence. Since Malachi the prophet last uttered his messages from God, there had been no prophets proclaiming God's message until John the Baptist arrives on the scene.

How Does God Speak Now?

But verse 2 tells us, that God **"has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds."** Now, at last, God sent His Son to bring His message to us! In the Lord Jesus Christ, God revealed Himself directly to us. It is true that God revealed Himself through the words spoken by Jesus, through His message, but He did more than that. Jesus did more than just proclaim God's message – He is God's message. Jesus came to reveal God, to make Him known to us in a way that we can understand.

What Is the Message of the Son?

I. The Son Is Greater Than All of Creation.

Notice three outstanding characteristics of Christ as He relates to the universe.

A. He Is Heir of All Things: **"whom He has appointed heir of all things,"** Jesus is the unique Son of the living God. He is the sovereign Lord of the universe. The world belongs to Jesus Christ. He is the rightful heir of all things.

B. He Is the Creator of All Things: **"through whom also He made the worlds,"** Jesus did not have His beginning at Bethlehem. He was present in the creation of the world. In fact He is the Creator. The Gospel of John says about Jesus, the Word who became flesh, **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."** (John 1:1-3).

Paul says the same thing about Jesus in Colossians 1:15-17: **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”**

C. He Upholds All Things: **“upholding all things by the word of His power,”** That is, He holds the universe together. It is in Jesus that we live and move and have our being.

“Consider ...what instant destruction would happen if the earth rotation slowed down just a little. The sun has a surface temperature of 12,000 degrees F. If it were any closer to us we would burn up; if it were any further away we would freeze. Our globe is tilted on an exact angle of 23 degree, providing us with four seasons. If it were not so tilted, vapors from the oceans would move north and south and develop into monstrous continents of ice. If the moon did not retain its exact distance from the earth tides would flood the land completely, twice a day.... If the atmosphere did not remain at its present density, but thinned out even a little, many of the meteors which now harmless burn up when they hit the atmosphere would constantly bombard us.... How does the universe stay in this kind of fantastically delicate balance?” [McArthur p. 17]

Well you can choose to believe that it is the result of millions of years of evolution or you can accept that the Bible says, Jesus maintains and sustains the balance of the universe.

II. The Son Is Greater in His Relationship with God the Father.

Just who is Jesus Christ anyway?

A. Jesus Is God's Son: **“by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things,”** Jesus is unique in that he is the only begotten Son of the Living God.

B. Jesus Is the Brightness of God's Glory: **“who being the brightness of His glory.”** That is, He is the radiance. Jesus radiates the glory of God. Now and again one encounters a believer who is so filled with Christ, one can see Jesus in them to a degree.

Moses face shone. He reflected God's glory. Stephen's face shone as if it were the face of an angel. He too reflected the Glory of God. Jesus did more than just reflect God's Glory. God's glory radiated through Him.

C. He Is the Express Image of His Person: **“the express image of His person,”** The word translated “image” (charakter) carries the idea that Jesus is an “exact representation of the very substance of God.” What we know of the person of God we know through Jesus!

At the beginning of his gospel John explained in 1:18 **“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”** Jesus was and is God of very God. Only Jesus could say, **“He who has seen Me has seen the Father,”** (John 14:9).

III. The Son Is Greater in His Relationship to Mankind.

God revealed Himself in His Son and the Son revealed God to mankind. Jesus is God's prophet. He is also the WORD. He is the message as well as the messenger. He is great because of what He has done for us.

A. He Purged our Sins: **"when He had by Himself purged our sins,"** in His own person, by His blood, by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross, He purged our sins. He made possible our salvation, our forgiveness, and our eternal life.

B. He Sat Down in Majesty: **"sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"** "Sat down" speaks of the completeness of His great work on our behalf.

"We know a great deal about the temple (in Jerusalem) and its furnishings, but, fascinatingly, there were no chairs in this billion dollar building that took 46 years to complete. There were no chairs because the priest of Israel never sat down. They never sat down because their work was never done. Their work was never done because the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin. It was a stop-gap; it was temporary; it was incomplete. And so, priest after priest, course after course, year after year, century after century, with monotonous repetition, would come to the Temple; and they would function, but they would never sit down. They could never rest for their work was never done, the task was never completed." [Marv Rosenthal. Israel My Glory. "He Sat Down" (April/May, 1987) p. 4]

Jesus completed the work of our salvation. He completely purged our sins. The cross need never be repeated. His work was once for all. Following His resurrection and ascension, Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

The writer of Hebrews will later explain (10:11-12) **"And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God."**

Jesus did it all, paid it all, all to Him I owe. God said it all through Jesus. He is the final word. Nothing more needs to be said. Michael Card has given us such a message, based on these verses in Hebrews. In his song "The Final Word" he sings this about the Son:

You and me we use so very many clumsy words
The noise of what we often say
Is not worth being heard
When the Father's Wisdom
Wanted to communicate His love
He spoke it in one final perfect Word

He spoke the Incarnation
And then so was born the Son
His Final Word was Jesus
He needed no other one

Spoke flesh and blood so He could bleed
And make a way divine
And so was born the baby
Who would die to make it mine

And so the Father's fondest thought
Took on flesh and bone
He spoke the living luminous Word
At once His will was done
And so the transformation
That in man had been unheard
Took place in God the Father
As He spoke that final Word

He spoke the Incarnation
And then so was born the Son
His Final Word was Jesus
He needed no other one

Spoke flesh and blood so He could bleed
And make a way divine
And so was born the baby
Who would die to make it mine

And so the Light became alive
And manna became Man.
Eternity stepped into time
So we could understand.

He spoke the Incarnation
And then so was born the Son
His Final Word was Jesus
He needed no other one

Spoke flesh and blood so He could bleed
And make a way divine
And so was born the baby
Who would die to make it mine

The miracle of the message is not just that God spoke in the past, but that God speaks to us today so we can know Him and draw near to Him. God speaks to us today to tell us how much He loves us and cares for us. He knows exactly what we are going through. He understands our pains and problems, He understands our trials and temptations, He is speaking to us today.

The miracle of the message is not just in the fact that God speaks to us today through His Son, but that the message has the power to transform our lives. The message changes everything.

CONCLUSION: God is speaking to you today. God is communicating His message to you this Christmas. Through Jesus we hear God speaking clearly, "I love you. There is nothing you can do that would cause me to love you any more than I already do. There is nothing you can do that would cause me to love you any less than I already do. I love you. I sent my Son so you would know beyond a shadow of a doubt, how very much I love you."

The miracle of Christmas is the miracle of the message – God has sent His Son to save you! Are you listening? Believe the message God is speaking to you and your life will never be the same! What is God saying to you today?

PRAYER: God, our Heavenly Father, in this holy, sacred moment you are speaking to our hearts through your Holy Spirit. Thank you for speaking so wondrously and clearly through your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for revealing to us the depths you would go in order to communicate your message to us in a way that we could understand. We want to be still and listen to what you have to say to us today. In the stillness of these next few moments would you speak your message to our hearts, the message that each one needs to hear today. Put that thought in our mind that is your message for us this morning. Lord, speak, for we are listening right now. (Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection)