

Sermon Series: Jesus the Perfect...Gazing on His Glory in the Book of Hebrews
Sermon Title and Text: Jesus the Perfect...Son - Hebrews 5:7-9

Sermon Points:

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Application: Rest in Jesus and Run Like Jesus

Father we have disobeyed you a million times showing our lack of trust and love for you. We have sinned like Adam and Israel and been disobedient children. Yet, your Son Jesus, the perfect Son has brought us eternal life by his perfect obedience. Lord, help us rest in his perfect, finished obedience on our behalf. And help us saturate ourselves in word and prayer by the Spirit you have given us to run like Jesus.

Introduction: See, Savor, and Spread

One of the amazing things the Bible does is to purposefully develop themes throughout the whole thing that all point to Jesus as the ultimate, glorious fulfillment.

Now, what's amazing to me, is that these themes are developed in a book that was written over thousands of years and by a multitude of different authors and yet they fit so well together.

So often, people that produce sequels to movies can't even get all of the plot right from the first movie to the second movie and yet here we have a book developing themes that are purposeful thousands of years apart without error. Only God could write a book like this.

That is what we will be looking at throughout this series, the way that Jesus comes and fulfills the Biblical themes of Son, Sabbath Rest, King, and Sacrifice.

Now, why are we spending four weeks doing this at Advent this year? Three reasons.

First, these themes are some of the major reasons Jesus came and therefore the reason we celebrate Christmas. We celebrate Christmas because the baby in the manger was the perfect Son, the perfect Rest for all mankind, the perfect King, and the perfect sacrifice.

And second, we hope that as we see these perfections of Jesus we will savor him more. In other words, we won't just say, "Jesus is the reason for the season" but we will actually believe it and love him more than we have before.

And finally, if we see him clearly and savor him deeply, then our prayer is that you might be prompted to spread him boldly this Christmas season.

So, that's the goal these four weeks. See the perfections of Jesus. Savor the perfections of Jesus. And then spread the perfections of Jesus to your friends, family members, coworkers, and anyone else you have the opportunity to share with.

Two Disobedient Sons We've Followed to Death

So the first theme we're going to look at is the theme of "sons" we find in the Bible. There are two main sons that the Bible points out to us before we get to the New Testament. Let's look at them now and see how we've followed them.

Adam (Luke 3:38, Genesis 3)

In Luke chapter 3 we find a genealogy that goes all the way back to the beginning and in Luke 3:38 Adam is called a "son of God." So, here is the first son of the Bible.

The first five days God creates everything we see in this world and says it is "good." Man was created in the image of God, given dominion over the earth, and blessed by God with the call to multiply and fill the earth with billions of image-bearers.

We find out in chapter 2 that Adam is called in the Garden to work it and to keep it (2:15). That is to care for it and protect it. This place is paradise. The God of the universe created a perfect place to dwell with his son, Adam.

Then, God gives Adam seemingly one rule in this perfect place in 2:16-17.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

There are lots of beautiful trees to eat from. Adam can even eat from the tree of life, which means he can dwell in this perfect place in the presence of his creator forever! But, he simply can't eat from one tree because if he does, he will die. Notice the lavish love of God. He provides the place. He provides eternal life with him. And then he gives Adam a loving warning to avoid one tree.

Finally, God, in 2:18 says that he will provide the perfect partner for Adam. God puts Adam to sleep and when he wakes up, there is Eve, who has been formed from him. Adam sees her and sings the first song. "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." And Adam and Eve are naked and unashamed. Do you know what that means? They are totally happy. They are totally committed. They share the most intimate, joyful relationship of knowing each other and being known in perfect love that we could imagine. And God sees all this happen and he says it's "very good."

Perfect place. Perfect partner. Perfect presence of God. Permanently if they will just obey the one rule. But, we all know what happens next in chapter 3.

In 3:1-6 Satan comes as a serpent and begins to engage the woman. Now before we get really hard on Eve, let me point out two things. First, the whole time the serpent is talking, every time he says "You", it is in the plural form, which means that the devil is talking to a couple different people. Then, look down at verse 6 and see that it says Adam was "with her," and I believe he was with her, watching the whole time.

So, what does Satan do? He first tries to make Eve question God. "Did God really tell you that you should not eat of *any* tree in the garden?" What's he doing? He's distorting God's word. He's trying to make them doubt God's goodness. God told them they could eat of every tree except one and Satan knows it. He's trying to make God seem harsh and untrustworthy and undesirable to be with.

Eve responds by saying they can eat of the other trees, just not the one tree, and they can't touch it either or they will die. Now, she's starting to take the bait. God never said she couldn't touch it, but she's beginning to add to God's word, just like the devil and perhaps beginning to think God is a bit

overbearing. And we don't know what Adam thinks because he apparently is standing off to the side saying nothing.

Satan lies once more and says, "You will not die, in fact, for God knows you'll be like him and able to know good and evil." Do you see what he's doing? He's lying. Sure, they won't die immediately, but death will come. And he's trying to convince her that God is just an ego-maniac. He just doesn't want you to be like him.

Eve listens. She she's it look good for food and looks appealing to her eyes and she wants to be like God, so she eats it.

Two lies. That's all it took. Satan convinces them not to trust God by insinuating that he's harsh and vain and therefore perhaps not someone to trust and perhaps not someone to listen to and obey.

Now just two things: First, stop and realize how preposterous that is. God just **created** Adam and Eve out of nothing. Like, they didn't exist before and now he can't be trusted? Now he doesn't want what's good for them? He created them. He put them in paradise. He gave them everything they needed, including each other. And he gave them the tree of life to be with him and his perfect presence forever in paradise. We should be slow to put God on the hook for this as we talk about evil.

Second, we should be slow to let Adam off the hook. What would you do in a movie if a man stood there and watched a woman get beat up by a sinister, wicked, evil henchman. You'd be mad at the guy. "Get in there. Do something! She shouldn't be fighting him!" And that's what Adam should have done as the one to care for and protect the Garden. God put him in charge as son and he failed to obey.

The first son fails to trust and obey God and sins against his creator. Sin enters the world and sin deserves death. And here we are picking up the pieces thousands of years later.

Israel (Exodus 4:22, Hosea 11)

Now, the next son we see show up in the Bible is the nation of Israel when they are under slavery in Egypt. This is what Jesus says to Moses right before Moses is supposed to lead them out of Egypt:

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.' (Exodus 4:22)

Of course, Pharaoh doesn't listen right away, so God sends 10 plagues in Exodus 8-12, the last plague being the angel of the Lord coming and killing the firstborn sons of Egypt while Israel is protected by putting blood of a slaughtered lamb on their doorposts. They are protected and safe from death by the blood of the Lamb.

Finally, Pharaoh lets them go. God has delivered them and loved them. Then God leads the miraculously with pillars of fire and cloud. Then God miraculously parts the red sea and saves them while destroying the Egyptians in their last ditch effort to re-enslave Israel in Exodus 14.

Want to know what happens in chapters 15-17 right after this miraculous delivery? The people complain. About food. About water. They complain! He created them. He just rescued them. But, they're angry with God now because they're a bit thirsty and hungry and think they'll now die in the wilderness. Like they haven't seen God do some miracles lately to care for them. But, they don't trust him. They want what they want. And God, mercifully doesn't destroy them, but provides.

Then, he gives them the ten commandments in Exodus 20 as ways that are good for them to live in relationship with him. Then we get a bunch of the laws for 11 chapters. More regulations now to be

more specific to restore the brokenness from Adam. And the next time we see the people, they are bored and frustrated with how Moses has been gone and they build a golden calf as an idol and seem to be having a sexually immoral feast and party, breaking the commandments the very next time we see them. God wants to kill them, but Moses prays and God hears his prayer and has mercy.

The rest of the history of Israel is bleak and more of the same kind of up and down disobedience, with Israel even running after other idols.

In fact, listen to how the prophet Hosea talks about them in Hosea 11:

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more they were called, the more they went away; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols. (Hosea 11:1-2)

Israel and Adam. Created by God. Loved by God. Given loving warnings by God. Given paradises to live in the presence of God. Sons of God who failed miserably to obey God and in fact openly doubted him, disobeyed him, and forgot about him in high-handed, treasonous ways.

But, have to admit that we've followed them. We've all doubted God, disobeyed God, and forgot about him. We've all been tempted to think he's a bit harsh or perhaps doesn't really care that much if we disobey. We've been tempted to just sneak a bit of the world's fruit that looks so much easier and tastier than what God calls us to.

We've forgotten that he is our Creator and the one who has saved us. We've indulged in sin and been disobedient sons and daughters. And like Israel and Adam, we deserve death for our treason and disobedience. If human history has taught us anything it is that humans will foolishly and flagrantly rebel against God, despite his care and provision for us. In fact, if anything, we try to be gods ourselves and do things our own way, throwing off his commands as if they're optional. There is no hope for relationship with God in ourselves. There is no hope to save ourselves. We are a messed up, disobedient, high-handed bunch of sinners, following after Adam and Israel. So, who can save us from death from our sin?

The Perfectly Obedient Son Who Brings Eternal Life (Hebrews 5:7-9)

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

Now, let me just summarize these verses for you. The author of the book of Hebrews very clearly believes that Jesus is God. I could take you to a bunch of places, but just listen to Hebrews 1:8 where the author of Hebrews is saying what God says about Jesus, quoting from Psalm 45:6:

But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever."

God the Father calls his Son, "God" and says his throne is forever and ever. So, what we have in Hebrews 5:7-9 is astounding. The Son of God, that is the God-man, Jesus Christ, came in the flesh. Notice that right away. God came in the flesh and he came to become the source of eternal salvation.

So, Christmas, Jesus coming in the flesh, is about Jesus coming to save people from their sins.

So, how will he accomplish that? Look at verses 8-9. He'll accomplish it by learning obedience, through suffering, and being made perfect. And through his perfect obedience, he will save all who believe in him from their sins. Let me show you two places it tells us this:

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:8)

*For as by the one man's disobedience (**Adams**) the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:19)*

Jesus will obey perfectly through suffering, all the way to the cross, in great humility. And for all who believe, his obedience counts for ours. Hear the grace of God here.

Adam sinned and brought sin into the world. Israel failed and continued the wicked sin against God. We've picked up the baton and continued to reach for the fruit of sin over and over again instead of enjoying the presence of God. So, God then sends Jesus, his Son, the God-Man into the world, to suffer perfectly obediently to the point of death, because we've created the penalty of death for ourselves with our sin. We've been disobedient and deserve death and God sends Jesus to be obedient to the point of death to bring us life!

Now you might say, how could he be made perfect? Wasn't he already perfect? And the answer is, Yes, Jesus was perfect. He was born of the Holy Spirit, born without sin. However, he had a mission to obey perfectly where Adam, Israel, and we have all disobeyed. He had a mission to avoid all sin and overcome all temptation and march all the way to the cross to die our death for our disobedience. If he fails at any point, he's not perfect. He's learning obedience through what he suffers. His faith is being refined in the fire and it never fails. He trusts God perfectly at every point in suffering. He loves God perfectly at every point in suffering. He delights in God perfectly over every other thing in suffering. This obedience will bring him into the presence of God again and this obedience allows him to go to the cross as the unblemished sacrifice for sin, so that his obedience pays for our disobedience.

O Christian, gaze upon the glory of the obedience of Jesus!

He is the perfect Son, who obeys completely until the end and can shout, "It is finished" once-for-all because of that obedience. And if we will look at him, and see him, and savor him, and believe, his obedience counts for ours and he takes all of our sin in his obedient death on the cross.

Application: Rest in Jesus and Run Like Jesus

First, we rest in the obedience of Jesus. We admit that we have been disobedient a million times. We admit we've been sinners. We admit we've done shameful things and chosen a million things over God's presence and power, over and over again.

But, then, we turn and fix our eyes on the cross, where the obedience of Jesus reached its climax and he paid for our sins. We remember that his obedience counts for our if we've trusted him. We stop trying to obey our way into God's favor now, because we know that when God looks at us, he sees us in Christ, and in his obedience and he sees our sins nailed to the cross. Just like Israel, we are safe by the blood of the Lamb, the blood spilled out in perfect obedience for our sins on the cross. We rest in the obedience of Jesus.

And then, we run with Jesus! I just want to take two minutes and show you how Jesus obeyed, and how we can, as those resting in the obedience of Jesus, follow him in his obedience.

Verse 7 of our passage says that God heard the desperate prayers of Jesus to save him from death. So, Jesus persevered by praying to his Father and trusting his Father's promises. In Mark 14:36, we find Jesus praying this way,

Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.

And in Romans 8, Paul tells us the Spirit of God cries Abba, Father within us. Later on, Jesus tells the disciples with him that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. Jesus is fighting to trust the Father

in prayer by the help of the Spirit of God. Jesus is fighting in the Spirit, through prayer against his flesh to trust God, to resist temptation and sin, and to obey to the cross. And we can do this. We can fight temptation by prayer empowered by the Spirit. In fact, we are told we will have to daily bear our crosses, and we can through Spirit-empowered prayer.

But, also notice here that Jesus prayed for God's will to be done, which tells us as we pray, we must know God's will and God's promises. We see Jesus do this as well over in Matthew 4.

Remember how the devil snuck up on Adam and Eve, and remember how Israel failed miserably in the wilderness with disobedience? Well, in Matthew 4, Jesus is led by the Spirit, into the wilderness to do battle with the devil.

This is the moment where he will either follow Adam and Israel and fail like they failed or will succeed in the wilderness against the devil where they failed.

Satan comes and begins the lies again, meant to make Jesus doubt God's goodness and entice Jesus to take things into his own hands. And what does Jesus do three times? Quotes Scripture back at Satan to resist his lies.

Jesus obeys perfectly in suffering in the wilderness against the devil and succeeds where Israel failed in the wilderness and where Adam failed against the devil by being saturated in the word of God, which is filled with the promises of God and the will of God.

And Jesus obeys perfectly in the Garden where Adam and Eve failed miserably in the Garden by knowing that will and pleading with Jesus. So, how did Jesus obey perfectly?

By the word of God and prayer to God empowered by the Spirit of God. We can do that. We have the Spirit. We have the word. We have access to God in prayer.

So, this season, make it the deepest season of resting in the finished, perfectly obedient work of Jesus ever. Lay down your need to earn your way to God. Lay down the guilt. Lay down the shame.

And this season, make it the deepest season of word-saturated, prayer-devoted, Spirit-empowered obedience ever. Follow him. Be with him. How will you rest in Jesus and in sin?

Love his obedience as your salvation. And live his obedience in your sanctification.

And as you find deep joy in your deep rest and deep obedience, invite others into that joy who don't yet know they're great need for a perfect Savior.