

Christ is Superior to the Angels
Hebrews 2:11-13
Part Thirteen

Families are complex. Not only do we have the relationship between husbands and wives and parents with children, and fathers with children and mothers with children, but we also have the relationship between siblings.

And though all these relationships within the family are special in their own kind of way the relationship between siblings is particularly unique in respect to the solidarity that can be forged between them, through shared common experiences growing up together, especially if those siblings who are of the same sex.

And what I am sharing with you is not theoretical. I have lived it. I have a brother named David and through all the things that we shared together growing up we have this wonderful forged bond between us because we went through so many things together.

We were the ones who each and every day were sleeping in the same bedroom, fighting over the same bathroom, living under the same parental rules and regulations, and suffering the same consequences if we failed to honor those rules and regulations.

David is my brother and we formed a fraternal bond between us in the midst of these shared common experiences both good and bad. And even though I know that at times I failed him growing up, I also know that he certainly is not ashamed to call me his brother and that is a very wonderful thought for me to reflect on.

But this pales in comparison to another fraternal relationship that we can all can enjoy in Christ through faith in Christ, that also has at its core the kind of closeness that can only be forged by having gone through the same kind of shared common experiences of growing up together.

And hopefully this thought will come alive for us this morning as we once again return back to our study of Hebrews where an unknown author, in an attempt to strengthen the faith of a group struggling Hebrew Christians living in Rome, wrote to them about the superiority of Christ.

So how did the author see Christ as superior? First of all, the author of the Book of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the Old Testament prophets in Hebrew 1:1-4.

Secondly, the author of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-2:18. This is the section we are presently studying and we have broken this section of Scripture into four parts and we have now completed our examination of three of those parts.

So, what was the first part? The author of Hebrews explained Christ's superiority to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-14.

And what was the second part? After the author had explained the superiority of Christ to the angels, he then sounded a warning in Hebrews 2:1-4. This warning of course was based on the explanation that he had just given, concerning Christ's superiority to the angels.

And what was the third part? Christ's superiority to angels is not contradicted by His humanity (Hebrews 2:5-9). We saw this in **Hebrews 2:5-9.**

And what is the fourth and final part of this larger section dealing with Christ's superiority to the angels that we are presently examining? Christ's superiority to angels is not contradicted by His suffering because His suffering was necessary (Hebrews 2:10-18). This is the fourth and final part of this larger section that we are presently examining.

So why was Christ's suffering necessary according to this author in these verses?

First of all, according to this author, Christ's suffering was necessary to complete His identification with humanity (Hebrews 2:10-13). And where do we see this thought communicated to us by this author? We see this thought communicated to us in **Hebrews 2:10-13.**

So how far have we gotten in our examination of these particular verses? So far we have only examined **verse 10.** So, what did we learn from **verse 10?** The author, in seeking to communicate that Christ's suffering was necessary

to complete His identification with humanity, began by communicating to his readers the appropriateness of Christ's suffering in Hebrews 2:10.

So let us now go back and read **Hebrews 2:10** and see if this is not so. **“For it was fitting [or in other words appropriate] for Him [referring to God the Father], for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation [or in other words to bring to completion the plan that He had for His Son] through sufferings.”**

So based on this verse, as the author sought to establish the necessity of Christ's suffering, did he begin by communicating to his readers the appropriateness of His suffering? Absolutely! And why was His suffering, which was a part of God's eternal plan in bringing many sons to glory, fitting or appropriate? First of all, His suffering was fitting or appropriate because Christ's suffering was in perfect alignment with who God is or in other words in perfect alignment with His holiness and His love. But even beyond this there is another reason why Christ's suffering was fitting. It was also fitting because without His suffering He would not have been able to be completely identified with man, and of course without His complete identification with man He would not have been a worthy substitute for us on the cross, which leads the author to his next thought and what was that thought.

The author, in order to show Christ's suffering was necessary to complete His identification with humanity, emphasized His fraternal relationship in Hebrews 2:11-13.

So now let me read these verses for you. **“For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, (12) saying, ‘I will proclaim your name to My brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.’ (13) And again, ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.”** So did the author here in **Hebrews 2:11-13** emphasize Christ's fraternal relationship with humanity after he had communicated the appropriateness of Christ's suffering in bringing many “sons to glory” in **Hebrews 2:10**? Yes, I believe, based on these verses that he did.

So let us now examine these verses and see if this is not so. And we will begin with **verse 11**. **“For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”**

Obviously the word **“sanctify”** is very prominent in this verse, as the author draws attention to both **“He who sanctifies”** and **“and those who are sanctified.”**

So, what does this word “sanctify” mean? The word translated “to sanctify” (HAGIAZO) means “to set apart.”

So in what way would the one **“who sanctifies”** set apart those **“who are sanctified”** in this context? The one “who sanctifies” would set apart those “who are sanctified” by making it possible for them to become the sons of God (Hebrews 2:10).

How do we know this? We know this because this is the context. What did **verse 10** say? **“For it was fitting [or in other words it was appropriate] for Him [referring to God the Father], for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many [what to glory? In bringing many] sons to glory.”**

So in what way would the one **“who sanctifies”** set apart those **“who are sanctified”** in this context? The one **“who sanctifies”** would set apart those **“who are sanctified”** by making it possible for those who are sanctified to become the sons of God.

So if this is true, then who is the one **“who sanctifies?”** The one who sanctifies would be Christ. For it is Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who in becoming a man and suffering as a man made it possible for other men to be set apart as the sons of God.

So, what does a man or woman have to do in order to take advantage of what Christ made possible through His suffering? Let me read for you **John 1:12**. **“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name [Whose name? Christ’s name].** So, what would a man or woman have to do in order to take advantage of what Christ made possible through His suffering? They would

need to exercise faith in Christ, and if they did so what would they become? They would become a “son of God.”

And why would exercising faith in Christ make it possible for someone to become a son of God?

When a person, such as ourselves, believes on Christ, the Scriptures tell us in **1 Corinthians 12:13** that the Holy Spirit baptizes us or in other words immerses us into Christ. And when this happens we are joined to Christ, and because we are joined to Christ, who is God’s Son, we become a “son of God in Christ” or in other words we are sanctified or set apart in Him.

Now this is a wonderful thing for us to focus on isn’t it? It is an incredible thing, that we through faith in Christ can be set apart in such a way by Christ that we can become a son of God in Christ. This is mind-boggling! But this is not, in any way, the focus of this verse or the two verses following.

The focus of this verse and the two verses following is the fraternal relationship between God the Son and those who have become sons in Him.

When we exercise faith in Christ and are baptized into Christ, we do not only become a son of God in Christ but we also in Christ become His brothers and sisters and this is the focal point of **verse 11** as well as the two verses following.

So let us continue to look at **verse 11** and see if this is not so. **“For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father.”**

This last phrase **“from one Father”** though an acceptable translation is a controversial translation and I do not believe that it is the best translation.

The Greek phrase (EX HENOS) translated “from one Father” in the NAS literally means “out of one” and should not be understood as “out from one Father” but rather should be understood as “out from one shared common physical human experience.”

And why would I say this? Though the phrase **“from one Father”** is an acceptable translation in light of the fact that sonship in relationship to God is certainly an emphasis in this passage, it is not the focal point of this

passage. Rather the focal point of the passage is Christ's participation as a man with other men in one shared common physical human experience.

And if there is any doubt about this being the focal point of this verse and the two verses following let us continue to read the verse. **“For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He [or in other words Christ] is not ashamed to call them brethren.”** Or we could say it this way.

Because Christ the sanctifier and those who are sanctified have all shared the same common physical human experience, Christ is not afraid to call them “brethren.”

Could God the Father say the same thing as Christ, about His other sons who are in Christ? No! Why? His other sons are not His “brethren.” Or in other words, they are not His “brothers and sisters.” They are His sons.

God the Father has never been a fetus in a womb. But God the Son and the sons of God both have been in the womb, for they both have come out from that same common physical human experience.

God the Father has never passed through the birth canal. But God the Son and the sons of God both have, for both God the Son and the sons of God have both passed through the birth canal, for they both have come out of the same common physical human experience.

God the Father has never had to toddle as He learned to walk. But God the Son and the sons of God both have toddled, for both God the Son and the sons of God have both come out of the same common human experience.

But even though God the Father has never shared with us the same common physical human experience, His Son the Lord Jesus Christ has, and because He has shared with us the same common physical experience, what is Christ not ashamed to call us? He is not ashamed to call us **“brethren.”**

He is not ashamed to call us His brethren, for we together have shared together the very same human experience. The only difference between Christ and us is that He was able to pass through it without sin.

But even in spite of His success and our repeated failures in respect to that shared common human experience, He is not “ashamed to call us brethren,” for He has sanctified us and set us apart as the sons of God in Him. In this way not only is His Father not ashamed to call us His Sons, but also Christ is not ashamed to call us “His brethren.”

Now that is something to get excited about. So, what does the author do next?

The author, after making the point that Christ is not ashamed to call those whom He sanctifies “brethren,” then drove this point home by quoting Psalm 22:22 and Isaiah 8:17-18). And where does He do this? He does this in **Hebrews 2:12-13**.

So let us first of all look at **verse 12**. **“Saying, ‘I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.’”** This is a quotation is from **Psalm 22**, which the early church would have viewed as messianic.

In the first 21 verses of this Psalm the psalmist provides us an insight into Christ’s felt need for His Father’s help as He faced the horrors of crucifixion. And then when he comes to **Psalm 22:22**, the passage that we see quoted in here in **Hebrews 2:12**, where in an outburst of trust, He praises His Father.

And to whom do we see Him praising His Father? We see Him praising His Father to His brethren in the midst of the congregation.

So, what was the purpose of this quotation? Clearly it was to support Christ’s solidarity with His brethren and in other words His felt sense of identification with the people of God.

So, what was the next Old Testament quotation? Let us now read **verse 13**. **“And again, ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.’”**

This quote is from Isaiah 8:17-18, which again would have been understood by the early church as a messianic Psalm. But the author did not present this quotation as a single quote. He actually broke it up into two parts.

First of all, he emphasized the latter half of **Isaiah 8:17** by quoting the words at the beginning of **verse 13**, “**And again, ‘I will put My trust in Him.’**” So, what was the author seeking to communicate by quoting these particular words? The author, knowing that those whom he was addressing would see this as a messianic Psalm, was hoping that they would see these words as an expression of trust in His Father in the midst of difficult times.

He then, after making this point, went on to quote the first part of **Isaiah 8:18** in the latter half of **Hebrews 2:13**. And what was that quote? “**And again, ‘Behold I and the children whom God have given me.’**” And why did author introduce this particular part of the quotation at this particular point?

He introduced this particular part of the quotation at this particular point to communicate that that Christ’s earlier expression of trust in His Father in **Isaiah 8:17**, one who had expressed trust in God in the earlier quotation taken from **Isaiah 8:17**, was doing so in a fraternal or familial relationship with other children. In other words, both He and His brethren were in difficult times in this particular Psalm and were expressing their trust in His Father.

God the Father is our Father, but God the Son is our brother for unlike God the Father we have come out from one shared common physical human experience.

And even though within this one shared common physical human experience we have repeatedly failed Christ, even so He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

Not because we have been perfect brothers but rather because He in sanctifying us through what He has suffered has made it possible for us to be perfect sons and brothers in Him.

May God give us the grace to understand that Christ, who has sanctified us and set us apart as sons, is not ashamed to call us brethren.