

## GOD HAS DEFINATIVELY SPOKEN HEBREWS 1:1-2

Proposition: The greatest revelation of the nature and will of God was Jesus Himself, therefore the whole bible and our lives (if we want to obey His will) needs to be read in light of what we know about Jesus.

All of us want to know the will of God for every situation because we want to do what is right, but is that possible, really? I mean has God spoken or will God speak definitively to us about every major choice and situation we will face? I want to suggest to you this morning that there is a way to read the bible and a way of interpreting our lives in the light of His life – that will give us the most definitive keys to knowing God’s will for our lives.

This morning’s passage is very short and so I am going to read it twice. Would you stand with me please as I read from the Word of God?

### **Hebrews 1:1-2**

***1Long ago in many ways and at many times God's prophets spoke his message to our ancestors. 2But now at last, God sent his Son to bring his message to us. God created the universe by his Son, and everything will someday belong to the Son.***

The last part of verse two points again to the fact that Jesus always existed prior to the virgin birth as God created the universe through the Son and that one day everything will submit to His Son. However I want to focus on the first one and a half verses.

Whoever wrote the letter to the Hebrews, whether it was Paul or Barnabas or most likely Apollos the scholar of the early church just as Josh Hart is the scholar in our church. Whoever wrote it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this letter they began by acknowledging that God has spoken in many different ways.

Now personally I believe that it is hard for people to come to faith unless someone explains Jesus to them. However I do believe Christian radio is accessible in every nation. And I also believe that God speaks to everyone in two distinct ways even before they put their trust in the Lord. The two examples from scripture are:

### ***(1) GOD HAS SPOKEN THROUGH CREATION***

King David the Psalm writer expressed it this way

#### ***Psalm 19:1-4***

***1The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and the skies declare what he has done.***

***2Each day informs the following day; each night announces to the next.***

***3They don't speak a word, and there is never the sound of a voice.***

***4Yet their message reaches all the earth, and it travels around the world.***

***In the heavens a tent is set up for the sun.***

The heavens tell the wonders of God and the skies declare what He has done.

Kepler the father of modern astronomy coined the word satellite. He wrote the foundational book on astronomy called “The Planetary law of motion. This astronomer, this thinker said this.

“Any astronomer who is not a committed Christian is crazy?” Why? Because when you study the heavens, the stars, the cosmos, the galaxies you have to recognise the reality of intelligent design and a creator. The heavens declare the wonders of God its true. To believe in God because God has spoken through creation is the intelligent thing to do but there is a problem.

When God made the heavens and the earth it was all perfect, no storms, no extreme weather, no virus' no weeds, but when Adam and Eve, our champions sinned control of this planet was temporarily given to Satan and it remains in his hands until Jesus finally and possibly very soon takes back the ownership of this world. So God speaks through creation undeniably but the problem with creation now is that it gives mixed messages. It's no longer how it was made to be. Tectonic plates move, volcanos erupt, Tsunami's form. Snow falls in the Waitakere Range's, diseases, viruses, weeds in your garden.

So God speaks in many ways and biblically and logically he speaks through creation but ... in this day and age it's a mixed message. Wow, stars, cosmos, finely balanced eco systems, wow, but what about drought, earthquakes, disease etc. It's no longer a clear message. So how else has he spoken biblically?

### **(ii) GOD HAS SPOKEN THROUGH OUR CONSCIENCES**

Romans chapter 1 tells us that everyone knows that God is a reality. God does speak and has spoken to every individual on this planet through their conscience, that still quiet voice in your mind that whispers wisdom and intuitive truth to you. You know there is a God and you know that the creator is powerful and loving even before you hear the gospel. You gain that knowledge through your conscience, and even the knowledge of what is right and what is wrong. That is why everyone you lead to Christ will tell you that they have always known that there is a God and that they have always believed in God but until you shared the gospel with them they didn't know how to connect with God.

The problem with this way of God speaking to us is this

#### **1 Timothy 4:2**

***2They will also be fooled by the false claims of liars whose consciences have lost all feeling.***

It is possible to fool yourself about God or what is right and wrong. The bible speaks about people whose consciences have lost all feeling, meaning that God has spoken to them but they didn't want to listen to that still quiet voice and so they said no to God so many times that their consciences are no longer a conduit for Gods direction but a steel door blocking God's voice. Not only can we harden our consciences towards God but we are told in Rev 12:10 that Satan can try to accuse and condemn us through our consciences.

So God has spoken to us in many ways; but the message from creation is incomplete even confusing, and the message he gives all humanity through our consciences is even unclear as we so often disobey God and harden our hearts to his voice.

A third way that God has spoken is

### **(iii) GOD HAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHETS OF OLD**

God has used prophets to speak for him for thousands of years and these men or women come on the scene and communicate to their generation what God is saying. Often they communicate it in seemingly bizarre ways Ezekiel probably winning the prize for bizarre ways of getting the people's attention and communicating God's message. The Prophet Malachi has a questions and answers type approach. Amos has an in your face style of prophecy. Zechariah had apocalyptic visions and dreams. The prophets of old came to speak to mankind but their message was hard to understand even for them.

1 Peter 1:9-12 tell us that even though the prophets preached the word that they had been given faithfully and creatively they didn't fully understand it. They were getting revelations that they faithfully communicated that the Messiah would rule the world with an iron rod and on the other hand that he would be like a lamb being led to the slaughter, that he would be rejected and beaten horrifically and killed. They communicate faithfully but how were they ever able to fully understand God's message and put it together simply. They couldn't.

God has spoken through creation, true, but it is a mixed message now since the fall. God has spoken through our consciences to every person, that's true, but because of our hardness of hearts that message is even confusing at times. God has spoken through the prophets of old and what they said was accurate and true but even that is incomplete and even they couldn't fully understand God's message.

God has spoken to everyone on the planet. But the message was not clear and easy to understand. Now vs 2 ***But at last, God has sent his Son to bring His message to us.*** Bible scholars say that the wording of this sentence is really profound. Basically, the final, the full, the complete message that God has sent is Jesus.

#### **(iv) GOD HAS SPOKEN TO US 'IN' JESUS**

It is not that His words and His actions communicate to us God's message but rather that He is himself the fullness of the message that God wants to give humanity. Before God sent Jesus He spoke to many people and in many ways and it was a mixed message and unclear and incomplete but now we have the full, final complete message from God and it is God the Son himself, Jesus.

Most of us at some point, probably at Sunday school have heard a version of the ant story. Here is mine. In my home every Tuesday and Friday evening a member of my family vacuum cleans the whole house. That's what happens. Now imagine this. Imagine though I am so much bigger and more powerful than ants, imagine if, for some amazing reason I really cared about the well being of ants. Ants as you know belong outdoors and fulfil a valuable role in breaking down decomposing waste.

Now imagine on Tuesday lunchtime as I am preparing a sermon I see a whole bunch of ants marching over my deck and into my house through a little hole in the wall. Imagine I really loved these little guys and yet I know that later on that day like clockwork the vacuum cleaner is coming and these little guys don't stand a chance and so how do I warn them of impending danger.

First I want to convince them that there is a higher power and so I go over to the light switch and flick it on and off a dozen times. The little ants look up at the sky and see the stars going on and off and think, man someone or something must be doing that, cool but they keep on walking to their certain doom. Next a few of the ants think, hey we are outside creatures we don't belong in here and just a few of them turn around and go out again.

Next I select a couple of likely looking ants and communicate to them that certain death is coming if they don't turn around and go back, that they will face a giant black hole one day where they will be sucked up and there will be much weeping and gnashing of ant teeth. And so I put these little guys down and they go back to the ant train and say; hey fellow ants, we have been communicated with this big brown and grey thing and it tells us that we need to turn around or face certain death, a giant black hole is coming. Now they don't get it but a few of them turn around but the bulk of them are just confused and carry on. Finally in order to save them I take a huge risk, I who am infinitely bigger and more powerful than an ant choose to become a vulnerable little ant and as an ant I warn the ant train; brothers, sisters, I am not from here I am from above and have the big picture, and in ant language they can understand clearly I tell them about the vacuum cleaner and that I know the way to the back door, follow me and be saved. And because every ant has a choice some do and are saved and some reject me and get terminated in the 2000 watt bagless vacuum cleaner.

God's complete and perfect message came not through creation or consciences or the prophets but through the Person of Jesus Christ. And there is nothing that needs to be added to it. There will never be after Jesus, a new revelation of salvation, or of the universe, or of whom Jesus is that supersedes Jesus. In the past God has spoken in many ways but now the final and complete message is Jesus Himself. If the Mormons or the Watchtower society or the new agers say there is new revelation, a greater revelation of who God is and what he wants they are lying. The final, complete and perfect message from God was Jesus Himself! Like a perfect completed work of art' if you add anything else to it, the new addition will devalue and deface and downgrade the original.

What is God like people may ask you? Tell them that He is not like you and I; that He is not like their fathers on earth. That He is not like some ones idea or new revelation. Tell them God is just like Jesus, that Jesus is the perfect revelation of God. He is the perfect revelation of God's message and character and will. Previous messages have at best been confusing. In Jesus God's final message is complete. What are the implications of this for daily living?

### **How does this affect the way I read the bible?**

Sometimes when you are reading what people wrote about Jesus e.g. Paul or Matthew or Peter or prophet in the OT we can possibly look at Jesus through their eyes and through what we think is their perspective. The reality is though we were never meant to do that, instead we are meant to read all God breathed scripture through the eyes of Jesus. Let him interpret for us each of the writings. Let me give you an example.

Genesis 3:9 Adam and Eve have disobeyed God and are hiding behind a bush when He comes to look for them. Vs 9 tells us that God called out "Where are you?". Now did he say (like a policeman) "where are you?" or like a parent with a wayward child "where are you?" The bible doesn't tell us the tone of God's voice but as we interpret it we know the tone anyway. God is just like Jesus. In another garden a man far worse than Adam came up to Jesus and betrayed him with a kiss. When he did, Jesus said "friend, what are you doing?" in other words hey mate think about this.

What was the Father's tone to Adam? It would have been the same as Jesus' friend, Adam, where are you?" God's character and personality doesn't change, what is He like? He is just like Jesus.

### **How does this affect the way I interpret my life?**

A close friend stabs me in the back and lets me down. God what do I do? What do you want me to do? And then I remember what Jesus did when His friends betrayed and abandoned Him and spat on him. He said Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

I stuff up and sin in some serious way. I am not sure if God will forgive me and take me back but then I recall Jesus telling the story of the Good Shepherd who left the 99 to get the one back and the welcome of the father in the parable of the prodigal son, and I remember the words of Jesus to a lady caught having sexual relations outside of marriage He told her that she was forgiven, to go and sin no more.

Maybe I am full of the flu, or I'm facing cancer or I am really sick in some way. What does God think about me in my situation? When I read the gospels and study the life of Jesus I see that God is always compassionate, always caring, always on the side of healing (although that didn't always happen straight away) and I know because of who Jesus is exactly what God thinks about my current situation. Does God care about what is happening in my life or the big decision I have to face next week?

### ***Romans 5:8***

***8But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful.***

If I look at how God has spoken to us through Jesus, and I consider the fact that He sent Jesus to pay the fine for our sins even though at that point in time we were God's enemies; in light of the Jesus revelation I know that He cares and He is for you and me and we can trust Him to put you and I where we need to be in that job, in that ministry, in that relationship.

Read any gospel; Matthew, Mark, Luke or John to find out what Jesus is like and therefore what God is like, then use that knowledge to interpret the whole bible and to give you direction for every aspect of your life. There was a day in history when Peter, James and John climbed up Mount Hermon with Jesus. At the top they were met by Elijah the prophet and miracle worker and Moses the Law giver. Peter puts his foot in it and starts talking before he engages his brain, Oh, oh, oh, hey you great guys, you three are the big honchos, shall we make a tent in honour of each of you?

God then speaks to Peter from heaven.

"This is my beloved Son – listen to Him!" and then Peter looks around and Elijah and Moses are gone and only Jesus remains. Moses was good. Elijah was a great man also, the Law and the prophets were good, but

they are inconsequential in comparison to Jesus. The fullest revelation you will ever get in this life about who God is and what his message is and what He is like; the fullest, the complete, the final revelation is Jesus.

God has spoken, in the past through many different ways and through the prophets. Now we have the full, complete one who is the Word of God, through whom we are to interpret the entire bible and through whom we gain wisdom for all of our lives.