

**Hebrews 1:1-3**  
**Week of January 22, 2012**

Text:

Notes:

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<sup>1</sup>Long ago, at **many times** and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these **last days** he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the **heir of all things**, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the **radiance** of the glory of God and the **exact imprint** of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the **right hand** of the Majesty on high...

*Many times* – Literally “many portions”. Referring to the fact that the books of the OT were written over the course of possibly 800 years in 39 different books reflecting different historical times, locations, cultures and situations.

*Last days* – Jews understood the last days to mean the time when the Messiah would come. Since He came, it has been the last days.

*Heir of all things* – Everything that exists will ultimately come under the control of the Son. This inheritance is the full extension of the authority which the Father has given the Son (Dan 7:13-14, Matt 28:18) as the firstborn.

*Radiance* – The term is used only here in the NT. It expresses the concept of sending forth light or shining. The Son is not just reflecting God’s glory; he is God and radiates his own essential glory.

*Exact imprint* – The term is used only here in the NT. In extrabiblical literature, it was employed for an engraving on wood, an etching on metal, an impression on clay, etc. Thus, Jesus is the perfect imprint, the exact representation of the nature and essence of God.

*Right hand* – The right hand is the place of power, authority and honor.

## Discussion:

Spend a couple minutes on your own reading through the passage and the text notes.

*Hebrews is a letter prepared in response to a crisis of faith. In the aftermath of the great fire of Rome in 64 AD, Christians suddenly discovered how fragile they were. Identification as a Christian could lead to violence; open acknowledgement that you were a Christian could seal your death warrant. The members of this church were severely shaken. They felt abandoned by God.*

*The author of Hebrews confronts his ambivalent friends, troubled by the apparent silence of God, with the indisputable fact that our God is the God who speaks. He spoke in the past through the prophets and he has spoken through the Son. God has repeatedly taken the initiative to disclose himself because he wants to be known. (William Lane, Hebrews p.27-29)*

1. Have you ever experienced a time in your life when you felt God was silent? Why were you feeling this way?

How did you realize that God was actually speaking to you the whole time? Was there a verse, a sermon or a conversation that suddenly spoke to you and reminded you of the truth?

2. Split into 2 groups and discuss your question. Then come back together and share your findings with the other group.

Group 1: Read Jonah 1:1-3, Isaiah 6:5-9 & Ezekiel 12:23. How did God reveal his word in the OT? What were some of the challenges of this method?

Group 2: Read Matthew 5:17, Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34 (*What phrase is being repeated*) & John 1:1-2, 14, 18. How is Christ a far superior messenger of the Word?

3. This comparison should not cause us to minimize the inerrancy or value of the OT and the Prophets, but should instead draw us towards the Greater Prophet. How does Christ's role as our Prophet affect and change the way we live our lives? Read Deuteronomy 18:15-19, John 1:1, 14-18.

4. In verses 2-3 the author is trying to establish the deity of Christ. What does he say to convince these Jewish Christian readers of this truth?

5. Read Colossians 1:15-16, 2:9-10. Several years ago I was meeting with a young man who was a devout follower of Sun Myung Moon. The young man was the campus leader of the Unification Church ("Moonies"). Once, he prayed for our meal and ended his prayer with, "In Jesus' name we pray. Amen." I asked him why he ended his prayer acknowledging a person who he believed was merely a man. He answered, "I love Jesus. He is an example of a man who demonstrated true love."

The author of Hebrews is telling us that Jesus is much more than a caring man who set a good example for us. He is our God. How does understanding the deity of Christ change the way we view him and the way we live our lives? How should our lives as Christians be different from the lives of those who follow Sun Myung Moon?