

Sermon Series
The Superiority of Christ
April 11, 2021

Title: Christ: A Superior Dominion

Subject: Man, Angels, Subjection, Glory and Honor, Jesus Christ, Substitution, Death, Creation Mandate, New World Order, Rule

Theme Text: Hebrews 2:7-9 (ESV) ⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, ⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet.” Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Theme Illustration: We continue on the track of the Superiority of Jesus Christ over the angels. We find little difficulty in this category distinction because we know that the category of the Divine and the creature are unequal by orders of magnitude. Now, the Holy Spirit is teaching us that Jesus, in His incarnate humanity, is greater than the angels. In His humanity, He was made lower than the angels because angels are a higher order of creatures than man. Now the tables are turned. His incarnate perfections in holiness, righteousness, and glory elevate mankind above the angels. This flip was God’s original intention in declaring that man is given dominion authority over the earth in what we call the creation mandate. **Genesis 1:26 (ESV)** ²⁶ **Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”** The Holy Spirit’s point in our text is that man’s dominion was to be fulfilled in the second Adam, Jesus Christ. And by His exaltation, those people, redeemed

unto Him, will with Him exert this dominion in the world to come as people of a new human race.

Read: Hebrews 2:5-9

Introduction: Previously, the Holy Spirit has given proof of the superiority of Israel's Messiah over the angels. This proof was taken from the Jew's own scriptures. He stated that just as God dealt with transgressions of His law, that neglect of the salvation that brought grace's demands will bring also just retribution if the drift and neglect lead to apostasy.

Our text takes a familiar style for those who are acquainted with the apostle Paul's style of proving his points. Our blessed apostle was fond of responding to his points by offering a counterpoint that would come from someone who objected to his original point. He is disarming those who object by objecting for them only to destroy their argument before they could themselves put forth an objection. The occurrence of this style of argumentation in the book of Hebrews gave rise to the belief that the apostle Paul is indeed its human author.

Therefore, the author of the letter is going to answer objections by pointing to the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, the Holy Spirit proves the superiority of Jesus Christ to the prophets, the angels, and later to Moses using the Scriptures. This will also prove the superiority of Christianity and the new covenant to the old covenant.

Now he continues along this line, proving that in Jesus, as the obedient Son of Man, God restores the creation mandate previously mentioned. The question our apostle answers is this, how could supremacy be reconciled by the Messiah, who died while angels do not die. In their mind, Angels were superior to men. Our apostle reveals a stunning truth. The superiority of angels was a temporary condition. Through the incarnate God, man, mankind is destined to rule and thus be elevated to rule over angels.

The death of Christ did not tarnish His glory but resulted in His exaltation.

Instead, the Holy Spirit proves from Psalm eight that God placed mankind, not angels at the head of the world to come.

Transition: Our apostle answers questions:

1. Why Man? : Hebrews 2:5-6 (ESV) ⁵ For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. ⁶ It has been testified somewhere, “What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?”

The “world to come” refers to the consummated kingdom of God on earth, the new Jerusalem. Those Jews who were following Jesus expected an earthly, righteous rule in His kingdom on earth, **Acts 1:6 (ESV) ⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”** God has not placed angels in this new heaven and earth. Therefore, angels have no authority over it. One commenter on this text writes, “it is the good pleasure of God to use angels as a means of exercising His providence, law, and power. But, when it comes to manifesting His glory in Christ, God chose man.”

This question revolves around, given the incredible dimensions and glory of the creation itself, and the glorious creatures God created to serve him, why would God even consider man worth dealing with? To answer the question, The Holy Spirit points to Psalm eight. It is important to point out that angels’ assigned lane is serving the heirs of salvation, Hebrews 1:14. This inheritance as co-heirs with Christ is the new heavens and earth. Angels are not co-heirs.

We need to understand the theme of Psalm eight, the glory of God. Given **Psalm 8:3 (ESV) ³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,** why did God choose man? This Psalm makes an astounding revelation. God is going to be more glorified by advancing man from his miserable estate and condition above all creatures, including angels, than His creation. In other words, the redemption of inveterate sinners is God’s crowning achievement.

Turning a sinner into a saint is greater than the creation itself! You, saint, are a greater work of God than a summer full moon, the rings of Saturn, majestic mountains, the stars, or a field of wildflowers. This demonstrates the power, holiness, justice, love, mercy, and grace of God. Also, when thinking of God's electing grace, the question I hear most often is "why me?". Let me put it this way, the worse person you are or could become glorify God in your salvation and redemption. So the Holy Spirit reveals God's intent and purpose for man, to rule as His collective vice-regents over the earth. The word for man in this Psalm is the word for fallen man.

I may add that any system of thought or belief that diminishes human life as made in the image of God is in error. Man is special not because we say so, but because the Holy Spirit says so. Any rebellion against the created order that God has called for man's flourishing is heresy. This applies today to the controversies over gender, sexuality, and the unborn. When a child is aborted a future ruler is being aborted.

Transition: In our next section, it may be described this way, if so, why do we not observe this as a present reality? We only see:

2. Man Diminished: Hebrews 2:7-8 (ESV) ⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, ⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet." Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.

God originally made man with governing dominion. His assignment was to extend the garden to the ends of the earth and populate that garden with fellow God's image-bearers. What happened please notice the words, God made him lower than the angels. In short, man fell. So we must ask, in what sense has God made fallen man "A little while lower than the angels."?

Verse seven refers to the humiliation of man, verse eight God's exultation of man. Notice the tense of the verbs are past tense. This was God's decree and declares God's eternal purpose. Saints, its fulfillment is certain.

The second half of verse seven refers to the coming glorification of Christ's redeemed, **Romans 8:30 (ESV)** ³⁰ **And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.** The phrase crowned with glory and honor refers to the redeemed. The fact that the redeemed are going to be crowned is taught in Scripture, **2 Timothy 4:8 (ESV)** ⁸ **Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing** and **James 1:12 (ESV)** ¹² **Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.**

To be crowned with honor means to receive the esteem of others. To be crowned, thus, is to be elevated to the highest rank. To be crowned with glory means that we will be made excellent in our person. Being thus so honored, Saints of the Lord will take and possess the kingdom forever.

Verse eight has already said, under man, all things are placed underneath his feet. The only exception is Christ himself, **Revelation 21:7 (ESV)** ⁷ **The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.** Saints, we will gain much much more than Adam ever lost.

Transition: We may not see man in this exalted state now. However, in Christ we see:

3. The Son of Man Exalted: Hebrews 2:9 (ESV) ⁹ **But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.**

The Holy Spirit through the human author takes this question head-on. We see man's exultation in the exultation of Jesus as the vindicated, resurrected, last Adam, and reigning God-man. With the humiliation of Christ,

mimicking the humiliation of man, and his subsequent exaltation foreshadowing the exaltation of the redeemed man.

Do we ask in what way do we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor? We see this Jesus first through the eyes of faith based upon the word of God. Just as vividly as His enemies crowned him with thorns, we see Him crowned with glory and honor. Every true Christian agrees with Job, **Job 42:5 (ESV)**
⁵ **I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;**

We have seen Him leaving heaven and coming to earth to seek and save His lost sheep. We have seen His perfect life and so we see Him as our sacrificial substitute. And, we have seen Him rising in triumph from the grave. We have also seen Him ascend to the right hand of the Father. The exaltation of Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit's provided proof and guarantee of the final glorification of all of His people. The verses in our text from Psalm eight refer not to Adam nor mankind as a whole, nor Christ alone, but to Christ and His redeemed. We are being compelled to see Jesus as the ground and guarantee of our approaching exaltation.

Conclusion: Oh believer, when you asked the question, what is man that the Lord should consider us? When we think of our utter insignificance, when we think of the glory of God's majesty, then we must ponder our sinfulness and our destination in this life to dust, we are prone to question these truths.

We must remember saints, in heaven, there is a man in glory, and that man Jesus is the sum of God's thoughts concerning all of God's redeemed you and me. We have been chosen to be conformed to His image, but as a joint heir to share in His inheritance.