

TEXT – Hebrews 2:(5-8) 9-11

Hebrews 2:9-11:⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.¹⁰ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.¹¹ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Introduction: We're beginning to see more shows on T.V. about the family. Even though Jon and Kate didn't exactly work out, it was a show about the family. It was their unique family of two girls and sextuplets that intrigued viewers. Then there is the show Little People, Big World that depicts family life with little people Matt and Amy Roloff as mom and dad and one of the siblings named Zach who is also a little person. A newer T.V. show 18 Kids and counting captures a huge family of 18 kids, and now a grandchild as well. Family is good. We rely on our family. We love our family. But family can also bring heartache and a lot of hurt feelings and resentment. God himself personally designed life on this planet around the family. Through the family God provides for the physical and spiritually well-being of those to whom he has given life. But families sometimes fail in their responsibilities. The writer of the book of Hebrews, however, wants us to think about another family, our spiritual family. As he does throughout his epistle, the inspired writer wants us to focus on Jesus, our flesh and blood brother. That is in itself an amazing thought. Think about it – JESUS BECAME OUR BROTHER. He did this 1) by coming to earth, 2) by suffering for sin, and 3) by making us holy.

I. By coming to earth

- The book of Hebrews (author unknown) establishes the superiority of Christ over everything – in the first chapter it states how far superior Jesus is even to the angels in heaven
- In the verses before our text the writer quoting Psalm 8 draws the comparison of Jesus to us who were made a little lower than the angels as far as power and speed go but at the same time the rulers over all creation
- Mankind was given rule and dominion over every living thing including the angels – Hebrews 1:14, “*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*” Angels were created to serve us
- Sin has hindered our rule over all creation, sometimes animals rule over us; we have lost our dominion - the good angels created to serve us are far more holy than we are, we are dominated by sin
- In verse 8 we read “Yet at the present we do not see everything subject to him.” (that is, to mankind that was made a little lower than the angels but crowned with glory and honor)
- In Jesus, however, we see one who was also made lower than the angels like us but is now crowned with glory and honor because he did what we couldn't do – he defeated sin by his death on the cross
- By God's grace, his undeserved love and gift to us of a Savior, Jesus was able to come to this earth, to take on a human nature that is no different from ours except that he was not conceived and born a sinner like us
- Jesus came as Paul says in Philippians, “*making himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*” Jesus did this so that he could taste death for everyone, for all his fellow humans
- That was a huge step for Jesus to take in becoming our flesh and blood brother - you would probably give a kidney to a loved one or a bone marrow transplant as painful as that is
- But would you give up everything good you have, everything, and be thrown out on the streets with nothing and do it for your worst enemies - forced to live a life not of your own making, living someone else's totally messed up life? This sinful world is of our own making, our sins are no one's fault but our own
- Jesus walked this earth, kept all the commands he originally gave only for us, endured real temptation as a human being just like us, suffered ridicule and abuse he didn't deserve, and then had to suffer the greatest curse of all – a humiliating and painful physical, emotional, spiritual and eternal death on the cross
- Why would Jesus be made like us, a little lower than the angels? He came to be our brother in order to save us
- You will not find anyone who cares more about you than Jesus. You will not find anyone who loves you more than Jesus does, who actually controls the universe in our behalf and makes all things work for our good
- No matter what kind of family life you have here on earth (and for some it is a real test of faith) – remember that in Jesus you have a perfect brother who loves you dearly and who truly does everything for you

II. By suffering for sin

- It was God's grace that sent Jesus to live and ultimately to die here on a cross. It was fitting that God should accomplish our salvation by sending his Son – who else could save us except God himself in human form
- It was fitting that the Creator of all things, the one who made us and gave us the breath of life, rescue us his fallen creatures as only he could by sending Jesus to be our Savior

- It was fitting that God who wanted us to share in his eternal glory plan a perfect rescue mission to save us from our sins and bring us into everlasting glory with him in heaven as he had desired from the beginning
- God carried out this rescue mission in Jesus – he was made perfect through suffering, literally Jesus reached his goal, his mission to save us which was completed or fulfilled through his suffering.
- On the cross Jesus said it all when with gasping and dying breath he shouted out, *“It is finished.”* The same word is used here – God’s plan of salvation was finished, completed, perfected in Jesus through his suffering
- What exactly did Jesus suffer in God’s plan? He suffered everything we deserved as sinners. He suffered death because the wages of sin is death and we had sinned.
- Jesus suffered hell, he was cursed eternally for our sins. *“Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”* From that tree of the cross Jesus cried out, *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*
- That’s hell to be without God, to have God turn his back on you, to give you no blessing at all, only hatred
- Jesus did it all. He is the author, the originator, the one who made it all happen. He brought salvation to us. It is ours. There is nothing we need to do, no debt to pay, no good works to do. Jesus did it all. It is finished!
- Through faith in Jesus, trusting in him alone for our salvation there is eternal life in heaven; but before we try to take credit even for our faith and trust in Jesus, we remember that *“No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord’”*
- Sinners hate to acknowledge that they are not good enough, that they are by nature completely sinful, that they cannot by their own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ their Lord or come to him
- Faith, our faith is also a precious gift from God, worked in us by the Holy Spirit himself, yet another act of God’s grace – *“No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.”* Paul tells the Thessalonians, *“God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”*
- Our brother Jesus suffered and died for our sin and gave us salvation in heaven, the more time we spend with him through his Word the more we truly understand and appreciate what he has done for us

III. By making us holy

- Jesus is the one who brings us into God’s holy family. He is able to bring us into this holy family because he is the only one who can make us holy as well
- Jesus suffered and died as our flesh and blood brother; his precious blood shed on the cross, his life offered up to God as a sacrifice for sin washes away all the guilt and punishment for our sins
- Each time a sinner is brought to faith in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit another family member is added to God’s holy family, another sinner is made a saint, another holy person can call actually Jesus their brother
- Paul writes in Colossians, *“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.”*
- Through faith in Jesus we call him our brother who made us holy, but just as comforting is the fact that Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers and sisters; Jesus made us his own; we belong to him
- The surgeon sat beside the little boy’s bed and the boy’s parents sat across from him. "Tomorrow morning," the surgeon began, "I'll open up your heart." "You'll find Jesus there," the boy interrupted.
- The surgeon looked up, annoyed. "I'll cut your heart open," he continued, "to see how much damage has been done." "But when you open up my heart, you'll find Jesus in there."
- The surgeon looked to the parents, who sat quietly. "When I see how much damage has been done, I'll sew your heart and chest back up and I'll plan what to do next." "But you'll find Jesus in my heart. The Bible says He lives there. The hymns all say He lives there. You'll find Him in my heart."
- The surgeon had had enough. "I'll tell you what I'll find in your heart. I'll find damaged muscle, low blood supply, and weakened vessels. And I'll find out if I can make you well." "You'll find Jesus there too. He lives there."
- The surgeon left the room with the parents. Calmly he told them that their son had a damaged aorta, a damaged pulmonary vein, and widespread muscle degeneration. There was no hope for a transplant, no hope for a cure. Therapy would be painkillers and bed rest. The prognosis he told them was death within a year.
- The parents responded, “Our son, Jesus’ little lamb, was not meant for being a part of our family for long, he is part of God’s flock and will be with his Savior Jesus forever. He will feel no pain and will be comforted more than you can imagine. One day we will see him again in heaven with Jesus.” The surgeon wept.
- After the surgery the surgeon sat beside the boy’s bed with the boy’s parents across from him. The boy awoke and whispered, "Did you cut open my heart?" "Yes," said the surgeon. "And what did you find?" asked the boy. The surgeon said, "I found Jesus there."

Conclusion: It nice to see from time to time family life portrayed in a positive way as the blessing it really is from God. A few T.V. shows even show family life as a blessing that it is. It is a blessing despite the damage we cause to it by our sin.

Our family life may not always be everything we want it to be living in a world affected by sin. But then there is our real family, God's family. As members of God's family we have no issues at all. Jesus became our brother by coming to this earth, by suffering for our sin, and by making us holy. We are now part of God's family with Jesus in our heart. And it doesn't get any better than that.