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**From:** [William and Beverly Salmon](#)

**To:** [biblestudy@triumc.org](mailto:biblestudy@triumc.org)

**Cc:** [William Salmon](#)

**Sent:** Friday, January 17, 2003 2:43 PM

**Subject:** Re: Trinity UMC Bible Study: Janaury 14

**Membership--**

**Below is a copy of my personal reflections. Some of my comments also are responses to some of you who send your work in by e-mail. Does everyone know that Bob Barhydt is now attending on Tuesday mornings. Also, Bert Cook, the UPS man who delivers to Trinity is interested, and I'll call him today after he gets home.**

**Isn't this fun! <-)**

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [William and Beverly Salmon](#)

**To:** [Trinity UMC Bible Study Mailing List](#)

**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2003 1:13 PM

**Subject:** Trinity UMC Bible Study: Janaury 14

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Session: Tuesday, January 14, 2003**

Since beginning on November 6, 2002, we have now completed our initial material: Great Story-- Jonah (differences in translations/transliterations); the Liturgical Year (Ephesians 1: 15 - 23); Advent; Christmastide and Baptism of our Lord Sunday references. **OUR PURPOSE now is to survey a variety of the Bible references. LATER we can do deeper digging.** Now the fun begins! The letter to the Hebrews!

The only difficulty in reading this letter is the many "code words" the writer uses to accomplish his message. Remember, this is a common problem in bible study, because these "code words" were once clearly associated with their meaning. After nearly 2100 years, the "meaning" is lost, but the "code words" remain. HENCE, OUR TASK IS TO MINE THE MEANING.

There are 13 chapters to study. It is my guess we can study one chapter at a time. However, chapter 5, 6, and 7 may take two weeks each. If we add a week after chapter 13 to review what we have learned, we can anticipate 17 to 20 weeks. The end of May can be our goal without rushing things.

1. Look up the background information about the Authorship, Date Written, Purpose, and To Whom It Is Written. Make some brief notes below.

**Kark Stutterheim's work in this section gives a very good summary of the problem. Save his info with this lesson, if you are keeping a file. When I told the Trinity staff we were going to study**

Hebrews, Pastor Susan replied, "Oh, that's the letter written by Priscilla!" Just like a women, eh? One way to look at the problem of authorship is to understand that it was the Pauline School of Scholarship who wrote the document under the supervision of Paul! Scholars can detect enough of Paul to make it his, but they see unique things that belong to others as well. By turning to Hebrews 13:23, the personal note concerning Timothy makes it certain that Timothy was absent that day from the Pauline School because he had been in jail.

Karl, you note in this paragraph "The intent of the letter was to present sufficient evidence as to the superiority of Jesus Christ over angels." As a "Salmonite" I prefer the word "the centrality of Jesus Christ" instead of the word "superiority." Jesus Christ is like yeast, he permeates everthing.

2. Read Chapter 1 Remember to read with the intent of determining the "DEEPER PROBLEM." Why would the author (one of those we might call the "District Superintendents of the Early Church) write this letter? **When reading all of the letters in the New Testament, attempt to define the "DEEPER PROBLEM" to which the letter is an answer.**

Karl notes correctly the deeper problem in Hebrews is that of the Judaizers; these people believed it was necessary for gentile Christians to first be circumscized--to be made Jews--before they could be Christians. This was the first heresy. It is by faith and not works of surgery that we are saved.

Karl you wrote the statement "God created only one thing that is permanent--Jesus." My added comment is that the word "Jesus" be replaced with the word "Christ." It is a common misconception that Jesus and the Christ are the same.

Well, in the second sense of that word they are the same. In the first sense of that word THE CHRIST is the dynamic presence to which John 1: 1 and 2 refers "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This "Word" is a translated word from the Greek (Logos) meaning The Christ! THE CHRIST is one way of understanding the nature of God.

Now, in Jesus, The Word became flesh!

Ah, well, chew on this for a while.

What was its "underlying purpose." **A KEY WORD is in chapter 1, vs. 3 "he sat down" referring to Christ's finished work.** OK, read vss 1 - 4 and list the work Christ finished. **The following is my list and the Salmonite interpretation:**

First, don't ever read scripture with your "moral." "pietistic" or "holy -fied" glasses on. Be ready to drag the scriptures through your gut--to relate them to your life. When you approach scriptures from this point of view, they begin to tell you the story of the meaning and significance of who you are!

Vs. 2 -- "Appointed Heir" == Jesus Christ (see above!!) is the Son of God. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the LITTLE PICTURE of what the BIG PICTURE (God) looks like. When you see the term Jesus, or Jesus Christ used, think "LITTLE PICTURE" and you will see what God's Love looks like when viewed through the sacrifice of the Cross.

Vs 3 -- "Radiance of God's Glory" and "Exact representation of his being," and "Sat at the Right Hand of God:" These phrases all point to THE REALLY REAL. The "Really Real" is a "Salmonite term" described in Genesis 2 and 3. God created us to live AT-ONE with all things. When we are at-one, we experience a deep satisfaction, and a peace that passes understanding. When you

experience any of this, you are experiencing THE REALLY REAL--the world God created for us to live in.

In Genesis 3 we find out that our human-ness is lived in pain, discomfort, anger, disappointment, etc. These are the human experiences demonstrating that WE WERE KICKED OUT OF THE GARDEN OF AT-ONE-MENT into the world of The Way Life Is! (TWLI)

Now, back to Hebrews -- The terms we are examining describe The Christ revealed in Jesus that paints us a picture of The Really Real. Jesus Christ is the photograph of The Really Real: the Authentic, the Real, the Genuine; i.e., the SIN-LESS. (see below!)

Vs 3 continued -- "Purification of sins." Remember, "Sin" is experienced as the opposite of "AT-ONE-MENT." When people and things are pushed away from us, this is SIN. Anger, abuse, misusing the environment, are all experiences of what the Bible means by "Sin."

In this verse, Jesus Christ is the "PURIFICATION OF SINS." In other words, Jesus Christ is the one in whom we experience AT-ONE-MENT.

Think for a moment. We humans always will live in TWLI. Even when we are purified in baptism: we die to abusing AT-ONE-MENT, and we are raised up as abusers of AT-ONE-MENT = this is the meaning of being human! So, what to do?

Ah, ha! When I come up out of the baptismal waters, I now have a personal relationship to JESUS CHRIST who is AT-ONE with all things. When I have a personal relationship to Jesus Christ, I am now AT-ONE with all others and all things "through Christ who strengthens me."

Now, our job is to start living like it!

The last of vs 3: "Superior to the Angels." Paul and/or the Pauline School, are absolutely on target here. THE CHRIST is superior to the angels who were thought to have direct access to God! The early Jewish/Christians believed Jesus Christ was a "superior" angel. NOT TRUE! Jesus Christ is the SON (the Little Picture) of God (the Big Picture), and who is what ATONEMENT looks like!

Now, go back and write beside each finished activity what you believe the meaning is?

Why was the deeper social problem the early church faced that made the writing of this letter necessary. Take an intuitive guess.!

3. Vss 5 - 14 illustrate the purpose of the writer that undergirds the whole letter. Summarize this part of the chapter, and make note of the overall purpose achieved in this chapter. Also, think and share why you believe the author quotes several references to the Hebrew Testament. (From now on, I'll use the term "Hebrew Testament" to refer to the "Old Testament.")

The use of the Hebrew Testament references in the rest of this chapter is PROOF TEXTING. Deuteronomy and Psalms are quoted extensively. The quotes each support the notion that THE CHRIST is more than an angel!

PLEASE SHARE YOUR THINKING AND INSIGHTS. I'LL SHARE MINE LATER IN NEXT WEEK!

Had enough? Well, I'm through for the moment. You'll soon get next weeks assignment covering Chapter 2.

Later, gators! Pastor Willy