

This week I got to spend some time with an old friend of mine. I haven't seen him in probably close to 30 years. But he called me up, out of the blue, because he's been watching our Thursday devotionally. He's, like, hey, I need your help. I've been watching a devotional. I really need your help, and I'm like, okay, what's going on? He's, like, well, I don't. I'm kind of embarrassed. I'm like don't be. Don't be. It's okay. Don't worry about it. What's going on? He's, like, well, I'm getting married, and I want you to do it. I'm, like, okay, great. When will you get married? He's like three weeks. Like you couldn't have planned this better? Because I got to do what my fiancée said. So, we spent about an hour the other day meeting his fiancée, because even though I've known him for 30 years, this is not the wife he had when I saw him last.

So I got to meet her, and I got to hear about all the things they've been doing with their lives the last couple years. And while we were talking, we started talking about the Book of Jonah. If you don't know, I have a very big love hate relationship with the Book of Jonah, and so does he apparently. So, we got to talk about that, and the whole time his fiancée is like, just so, you know, I'm a psychiatric nurse, and I think you're both crazy. I'm, like, well, you're not the first to say that and won't be the last. And I asked her why? Why do you think that? She started to go into her background. She was raised Catholic. She was brought up Catholic, and her view of the Bible, it's very Catholic. His view of the Bible is very, I don't have a good word to describe it. He goes back and forth. In some cases he's very literal in how he reads the Bible. In other cases, he's very imaginative on how he reads the Bible. So, an interesting discussion going back and forth, and finally at the end, like, okay, I want both of you to tell me why.

And they said, why what? I'm like, that's all I'm giving you. You have to tell me why? Well, one talked about why they loved each other. The other person talked about why they want a future together. I'm, like, that's great. Those are both fantastic answers, and we can see where you're both at in this process. But what were we talking about when I said tell me why, And they had no idea. I'm like, okay, why do you think that is, why do you think you don't know what we were talking about when I asked why. And they couldn't tell me. They didn't have an answer? Well, I told them what we were talking about. That at that moment in time with how our attention spans have been so broken up and how we have to have instant gratification on things we have to constantly be engaged. And the world is set up that way. You know, we are constantly being bombarded on social media. So, we talked about that for a little bit. We talked about where and why we're like that.

When I was at General Synod, I went a week without being on Facebook at all. And it was glorious. I was in such a better mood. My perception was better. My psych, my vision, my hearing, my paying attention to everyone because with social media when you see it, you don't know what's real, right? Anyway, I saw a picture of Satan and Donald Trump together this week on a TV show. And I know that's not real, but I went to three sources and saw the same picture. And people swore that it was real. Now, it wasn't. It was a South Park cartoon, so you know that it's not. But you still have to double check these things because we're up for the instant gratification. We want the quick fix. We want to see it real fast. And we don't always do the background research. We don't always take the time to assess what and why, and make sure that it's real.

We don't spend a lot of time reading the book of Hebrews. It doesn't really apply to us we think, because right in the title it says Hebrews. And that's not us. But, what do we know about the book? We don't really know a lot of it. In some faiths, Paul wrote the book of Hebrews.

And it's not a book. It's a letter. In other faiths, it was a random group of people that were bored, sitting together in the 400s and wrote it because they felt that the Jews were misleading and misinterpreting everything that the Christians were saying. There's another group that thinks that it was just a sermon. One person was just standing talking to a group of people who happened to all be Jewish. They heard Peter speak, and they were a little confused. So they went and they heard John speak. And they got more confused. And then they went and heard Paul, and they wanted to believe that Paul made more sense to them than anybody else, because in their mind, he was like them. He was somebody that had come forth and learned. Somebody that had been walking around, talking about who Jesus was.

No, I don't know if any of those stories are true. I know I've read seven books on it, and I've got seven different answers for where Hebrews came from. But the consistent thing that they all say is that God spoke to us long before Jesus came. And he spoke to us in a way that we could hear. He spoke to us through the prophets, and each prophet spoke at the time that they were. And they spoke to the people in that time, They spoke in a way that people could understand and hear God's love. At that time, God had spoken to all of them through Jesus, whether they believed he was the Messiah, whether they believed he was a prophet. It didn't matter to the author of this sermon. What mattered is that Jesus was sharing God's love. He was the embodiment of what God was supposed to be. He was the living, being walking among us. He died. He lived and breathed and ascended so that we can feel God's love better. Because that's how they felt God needed to speak to us. That's how God felt they needed to be a part of our lives, by going through it with us.

Instead of being on a hill and talking down to us. He came to live among us. So that not only can we have a better understanding and appreciation of him, he could have a better understanding and appreciation of us because he got to be a part of us. That's why the author of this sermon is also saying that Jesus is higher than the angels. The Angels are part of God's Army. They are up there with him already. They're part of Heaven. They're part of everything and they come and are among us. But they aren't with us. Jesus, on the other hand, was with us, which gives God a better understanding of who we are by being a part of us, by living out the troubles that we have day to day.

I would hate to imagine what Jesus would say today about social media. If you watch that South Park episode, you'll find out because he does talk about it, but it's not real. We know that, but we still have to have that instant fix, that instant gratification. And that's not what God's love is about. It's not about today. Things are going to be perfect, and it's going to be better and boom. It's easy and done. God knows that life isn't like that. They try to help us out in every way they can and show us that they love us, and that there's going to be a greater day for us. And some days it's hard to figure out that we're going to get to that day. But we will, I promise that. One day it'll all be easier, and it will all make sense. We don't have to worry about this again. Let us pray.