

# Same Message, Two Audiences

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## Colossians and Hebrews

Detailed Outline from the Sermon on July 13, 2008

### Knowing your audience

#### Who was Paul writing to?

- Greek, non-Jewish Christians with only the barest, probably developing ideas of how Christ is the fulfillment of Jewish Messianic hopes. They knew he was the answer to their emptiness and the salvation of their souls but were multi-religious...superstitious...pagan, etc.

#### Who was the Hebrew's author writing to?

- Jewish (Hebrew) Christians, people steeped in faith in the One True God, but stifled by religion that was never quite fulfilling or fulfilled until an encounter with the Messiah.

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The two books are almost identical, and I've taken the time to show the parallel verses and ideas in light of their slight tilts based on audience.

If you look at basic content and some word usage, you'll take the traditional stance that Paul authored Hebrews. If you look at language cues and other textual clues, you'll base authorship on others...but be astonished by how well and how quickly the basic doctrine of faith had found uniformity.

### Who is this Jesus?

*The theme and real substance of these books – and of our faith.*

The image of the invisible God (Col. 15:1)

*The radiance of God's glory (Heb. 1:3)*

The vessel of God's fullness (Col. 1:19)

The fullness of the Deity in bodily form (Col. 2:9)

*The exact representation of God's being (Heb. 1:3)*

Creator of visible and invisible realms (Col. 1:16)

*Maker of the universe (Heb. 1:2)*

In Him all things shall hold together (Col. 1:17)  
*Sustainer of all things (Heb. 1:3)*

Before all things (Col. 1:17)  
*The same yesterday, today, forever (Heb. 13:8)*

Supreme One (Col. 1:18)  
*The one at God's right hand (Heb. 1:3)*  
*Superior to angels (Heb. 1:4)*  
*Greater than Moses (Heb. 3:1-6)*

Head of the Church (Col. 1:18)  
*God's prophet for a new day (Heb. 1:1-2)*

First Born over all creation (Col. 1:15)  
*Heir of all things (Heb. 1:2)*

- The place of honor due the eldest son.
- Higher than the kings of earth: position, status, and heir.

Reconciler of things in heaven and on earth (Col. 1:20)  
*Purifier of sins (Heb. 1:3)*  
*Merciful High Priest (Heb. 2:17-18, 4:15, 5:1-10, 6:20-9:14)*  
*Mediator of a new covenant (Heb. 9:15-10:18)*

A mystery Fulfilled (Col. 1:26-27)  
*A sacrifice fulfilled (Heb. 10:8-10)*

**In light of whom Jesus is**  
***Lifestyle distinctive flow out of truth and relationship. Now then...therefore...***

Set your minds on things above (Col. 3:1-4) (mind...)  
*Fix your eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2) (eye...)*

Don't be captive to hollow philosophies (Col. 2:8-23)  
*Don't be carried away by strange teachings (Heb. 13:7)*  
*Be careful not to drift away (Heb. 2:1-4)*  
*Hold firmly to your faith (Heb. 4-14)*  
*Hold firmly to the hope we profess (Heb. 10:23)*

As you received Him, now live in Him (Col. 2:6-7)  
*Live by faith (Heb. 11:1-40) (a whole chapter on OT heroes)*  
*Whatever you do, do it in the name of Jesus (Heb. 3:17)*

Don't let anyone judge you by "shadow things" (Col. 2:16-17)  
(What you eat or drink or how you do festivals)

*Don't throw away your confidence (Heb. 10:35)*

*Approach God with confidence (Heb. 4:16)*

*Draw near to God with a sincere heart (Heb. 10:22)*

- You don't need a priest. Let go of the guilt.

Put to death your earthly nature (Col. 3:5-11)

*Throw off the sin that entangles you (Heb. 12:1, 12:16, 13:5)*

Clothe yourself in a new way (Col. 3:12)

*Do good and share with others (Heb. 13:16)*

- Rules against and rituals aren't enough. Prophetic call has always been for real justice, mercy and love.

Above all, put on love (Col. 3:14)

*Keep on loving each other (Heb. 13:1)*

Be wise toward outsiders, making the most of every opportunity (Col. 4:5)

*Don't forget to entertain strangers (Heb. 13:1-2)*

- The ultimate failing of Israel...exclusivity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts (Col. 3:15)

*Make every effort to live in peace with all (Heb. 12:14)*

Bear with each other, forgiving (Col. 3:13)

*Don't let bitter roots grow (Heb. 12:15)*

Let your conversation be seasoned with grace (Col. 4:6)

*Don't miss God's grace (Heb. 12:15)*

- You miss the whole show if you do.

Let the world of Christ dwell in you richly (Col. 3:16)

*God's word is living and active (Heb. 4:12)*

Wives and husbands, submit and love (Col. 3:18)

*Honor marriage and the marriage bed (Heb. 13:4)*

Devote yourselves to prayer (Col. 4:2-3)

*Continually offer a sacrifice of praise (Heb. 13:15)*

Sing songs and hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16)

*Worship with thanksgiving, reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28)*

Remember my chains (Col. 4:18)

*Remember those in prison (Heb. 13:3)*

Remember what you learned from Epaphras (Col. 1:7)

*Remember the leaders who spoke God's word to me (Heb. 13:7)*

Be encouraged in heart and united in love (Col. 2:2)

*Meet and encourage love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24-25)*

### **So let's know our audience...audiences.**

On any Sunday – diverse hopes and experiences

- Refueling station...spiritual connection...social connection...mobilized...kingdom service...**SETTING PEOPLE FREE** from bad religion and igniting the good.

Every other day, who are we preaching the gospel to with our words and actions?

- People who have a vague notion of God, but little refinement or definition.

### **Definition**

People want to love God but have an ill-defined understanding...why?

1. Populist faith notions
2. They haven't heard
3. What they have heard sounds restrictive. (e.g. "Your parents are strict!")
4. First people need to know God
5. Spraying John 14:6 all over isn't the answer.
6. Leading with behavioral standards isn't the answer (though).
7. God is knowable!
8. We can enjoy the benefits of God's influence and live in ways that reshape the world.