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# The Son Superior to Angels - Hebrews 1:1-14

*Topics:* Angels, Basics of the Faith, Creation, Glory, Heaven, Jesus Christ, Prophecy, Worship

## Open It

- \* 1. What are some restaurants, vacation spots, books, movies, or other areas of interest that you consider the best of their kind?
- 2. What situations might tempt a Christian to turn his or her back on Christ?
- 3. How do you think you might react if you saw an angel?

## Explore It

- 4. How did God speak to people in the past? (1:1)
- 5. What was God's means for speaking to mankind in "these last days"? (1:2)
- 6. What unique honors or activities did God the Father delegate to Jesus? (1:2)
- 7. What works did Jesus do that only God could do? (1:2-3, 10)
- \* 8. Who is Jesus? (1:2-4)
- 9. What does Jesus show us about the nature of God? (1:3)
- 10. What astonishing feat is attributed to the Word of Christ? (1:3)
- 11. What was Jesus' primary ministry on earth? (1:3)
- 12. What did Jesus do after completing His earthly ministry? (1:3)
- 13. What does Christ's exalted status in heaven say about His similarity to angels? (1:4)
- \* 14. How is Jesus distinguished from God? (1:5)
- 15. What is the relationship of Jesus and the angels? (1:6)
- 16. To what extent do the angels honor the Son? (1:6)
- 17. What are angels like? (1:7)
- 18. What name or title applies to Jesus, the Son? (1:8)
- \* 19. What is Jesus' nature? (1:10-12)
- 20. What will happen to the enemies of Christ? (1:12)
- 21. What do angels do? (1:14)

## Get It

- \* 22. What difference does it make to you that Jesus is "heir of all things" and that the Father made the universe through Him?
- 23. Why do you think the author of Hebrews made such a point of Christ's deity to these Hebrew Christians?
- 24. What impact would you suspect these words had on Jewish Christians who were considering returning to Judaism?
- \* 25. What are some ways we can honor Christ?
- 26. What difference does it make to you that Jesus sustains everything by His powerful word?
- 27. When, if ever, have you sensed that angels were ministering to you or watching over you?
- 28. What in your life tempts you to back away from your commitment to Christ?

## Apply It

- \* 29. What steps can you take to remind yourself that Jesus is the Son of God and worth following?
- 30. In what ways can you honor the Son of God as God in your worship this week?
- 31. Who can you tell today about the unique person of Jesus Christ?

## Warning to Pay Attention - Hebrews 2:1-4

*Topics:* Angels, Backslide, Carelessness, Disobedience, Good News, Gospel, Holy Spirit, Law, Legalism, Miracles, New Covenant, Persecution, Religion, Salvation, Traditions

### Open It

1. What are some warnings you are glad you heeded?
- \* 2. What are some warnings you wish you had heeded?
3. What trouble have you gotten into from not paying attention?
4. How did you feel when you first followed Christ (or when you first realized your need for Christ)?

### Explore It

- \* 5. What did the writer of Hebrews want his readers to pay attention to? (2:1)
- \* 6. What danger awaits Christians who carelessly forget the truth? (2:1)
7. What happened to those who violated the “message spoken by angels” (that is, the Mosaic Law)? (2:2)
8. Who played a major role in delivering the Mosaic Law? (2:2)
- \* 9. What are the consequences for those who pay no attention to the gospel? (2:3)
10. Who revealed the message of “great salvation” to the world? How? (2:3)
11. Who confirmed the salvation that Jesus announced? How? (2:3-4)
12. What did God do to validate the gospel message? (2:4)
13. How did God distribute gifts of the Holy Spirit? (2:4)
14. What is the role of each member of the Trinity in delivering the gospel message? (2:3-4)

### Get It

15. Why do you think the Hebrew Christians were in greater danger if they ignored “such a great salvation” than those who violated Old Testament law?
16. How do we as modern Christians tend to “drift away” from God?
- \* 17. How do we as modern Christians fail to pay careful attention to what God tells us?
18. What advice or counsel would you give to a Christian friend who was drifting spiritually?
19. What kind of attitudes or actions would mark a Christian who is drifting?
- \* 20. How can we help ourselves pay closer attention to God’s Word?
21. Why do you think God is stricter on those who have been given more revelation than others?
22. In what specific ways can you pay greater attention to God’s Word?

### Apply It

23. What safeguards can you put in place this week to help you stay close to the Lord?
- \* 24. What are some ways you can nurture your attention span toward God this week?
25. Who can you ask this week to help you resist the temptations to drift away from Christ?

## Jesus Made Like His Brothers - Hebrews 2:5-18

*Topics:* Angels, Atonement, Creation, Freedom, Grace, Jesus Christ, Mercy, Reconciliation, Salvation, Satan, Suffering, Temptation

### Open It

1. What does it mean to be free?
2. How would you describe the ideal brother or sister?
3. What qualities or accomplishments of one of your siblings make you most proud?
- \* 4. What is the most helpful act a brother or sister has ever done for you?

### Explore It

5. What is our God-given place on earth? (2:6-8)
6. What is the relationship between Jesus Christ and the rest of the universe? (2:8)
- \* 7. What is Christ's present heavenly status? (2:9)
8. What actions by Christ led to His current exalted position at the right hand of God? (2:9)
9. What was unique about the death that Christ suffered? (2:9)
10. What is God's ultimate goal for us? (2:10)
11. What does Christ do to qualify a person for membership in the family of God? (2:11)
12. What is the relationship between Christ and those who experience the salvation He gives? (2:11-12)
13. What effect did the death of Christ have on Satan and his power? (2:14)
14. What effect did the death of Christ have on those who were enslaved to the fear of death? (2:15)
- \* 15. In what ways is Christ like us? (2:14, 17)
- \* 16. What makes Christ especially qualified to help Christians when they are being tempted? (2:18)

### Get It

17. In what ways are we "a little lower than the angels"?
- \* 18. What difference does it make that Christ "tasted death for everyone"?
- \* 19. What is the significance of the fact that no trial or temptation can come upon you that Christ does not perfectly understand?
20. How do the temptations Christ suffered on earth affect the way He represents us before God as high priest?
21. What counsel would you give to a Christian friend who was terrified of death?
22. How can it help you on a daily basis to know that you have a "big brother" like Christ?
23. What are the implications of the fact that Jesus' death and resurrection destroyed Satan and his power?
24. What areas of your life do you need to entrust to your understanding, merciful, and powerful high priest/big brother?

### Apply It

25. Knowing that Christ understands your temptations, how can you respond differently today to the difficulties you face?
- \* 26. What Christian friend(s) can you encourage today with the message that Christ is our sympathetic high priest? How?

# Jesus Greater Than Moses - Hebrews 3:1-6

*Topics:* Call, Faithfulness, Honor, Jesus Christ, Messiah, Obedience

## Open It

- \* 1. Who are (or were) some of the heroes of your generation?
- 2. Who would you describe as a dedicated employee at your place of work?
- 3. What assorted titles or designations describe who you are? (For example: postal clerk, husband, dad, baby brother, Sunday School teacher, president of the Rotary Club, and coach of the little league football Eagles.)

## Explore It

- 4. How did the author of Hebrews address those reading his letter? (3:1)
- 5. What blessing is promised to those who know Christ? (3:1)
- 6. What command is given to those who want to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ? (3:1)
- \* 7. Who is Jesus? (3:1-2)
- 8. How is Jesus like Moses? (3:2)
- \* 9. In what ways are Moses and Jesus similar? (3:2, 5-6)
- \* 10. Why is Jesus worthy of more honor than Moses? (3:3-6)
- 11. What has Jesus done as God? (3:4)
- 12. How are the people of God or the family of God described in this passage? (3:4-6)
- 13. How do we demonstrate that we are members of God's household? (3:6)
- 14. What qualities are necessary for us to be faithful children of God? (3:6)

## Get It

- 15. How ought our identity affect the way we live in our daily lives?
- 16. What do you think faithfulness looks like in the life of a Christian?
- 17. Why is it important for us to fix our thoughts on Jesus, our apostle and high priest?
- 18. What are some of the distractions that keep you from fixing your thoughts on Christ?
- \* 19. What great spiritual leaders do we look to today, much as the first century Jewish Christians looked to Moses?
- \* 20. In what ways is Christ greater than our greatest spiritual leaders and mentors?
- 21. In what way are we God's house?
- 22. How does biblical hope differ from ordinary hope?
- 23. How would a healthy dose of spiritual courage change the way you live on a daily basis?
- 24. What specific behaviors, habit patterns, or attitudes need to change so that you live up to your heavenly calling?

## Apply It

- 25. What can you do over the next twenty-four hours to fix your thoughts on Jesus?
- \* 26. What is one concrete way you can give to Jesus the honor that He deserves today?
- 27. What Scriptural promise or biblical truth can you hold on to today to help you remain a faithful part of God's house?

## Warning Against Unbelief - Hebrews 3:7-19

*Topics:* Anger, Deceit, Disobedience, Encouragement, Hardheartedness, Holy Spirit, Judgment, Punishment, Rest, Sin

### Open It

1. How do you decide whether you take a particular warning seriously?
2. What are the pros and cons of procrastination?
- \* 3. What is the most restful time or place you have ever experienced?
4. Why do you think some people follow Christ for a little while and then turn away from Him?

### Explore It

5. Who is identified as the author of Psalm 95:7-11? (3:7)
6. What warning (first issued by the psalmist) is repeated here by the author of Hebrews? (3:7-8)
- \* 7. How is Israel's period of wandering in the wilderness described in this passage? (3:8)
- \* 8. Why was God angry with the generation of Israelites who came out of Egyptian exile? (3:9)
9. How did the Spirit of God describe the Israelites of the Exodus? (3:10)
10. What were the consequences of the Israelites' stubborn disobedience? (3:11)
- \* 11. In light of the disobedience of the Israelites of the Exodus, what command was given to the Jewish Christians of the first century? (3:12)
12. How are those described who turn away from the living God? (3:12)
13. What is the connection between sin and unbelief? (3:12-13)
14. How might a person show that he or she has "come to share in Christ"? (3:14)
15. How long did the disobedient Israelites wander in the wilderness? (3:17)
16. What happened to the generation of Israelites who rebelled against God in the wilderness? (3:17-18)

### Get It

17. How do we "hear God's voice" in our daily lives?
- \* 18. What does it mean to harden one's heart?
19. How does a person's heart become hard?
20. What can we do to avoid hardening our hearts toward God?
21. How might the encouragement of a fellow Christian affect you today?
22. What are the consequences when Christians fail to encourage each other or hold each other accountable?
23. What circumstances or situations in your life are currently fostering an attitude of unbelief toward God?
- \* 24. What can we learn from the Israelites of the Exodus?

### Apply It

25. What practical steps can you take this week to soften your heart toward God?
- \* 26. What routine can you set up and follow over the next month to help soften your heart toward God?
27. Whom can you encourage today? How?

## A Sabbath-Rest for the People of God - Hebrews 4:1-13

*Topics:* Anger, Deceit, Disobedience, Faith, Gospel, Hardheartedness, Judgment, Punishment, Rest, Sin

### Open It

1. What is the most powerful sermon you have ever heard?
- \* 2. What situations or circumstances tend to make you feel restless?
3. What different ideas have you heard (from friends, neighbors, or relatives) about how a person is made right with God?
4. What is your favorite Bible verse or story? Why?

### Explore It

5. What important promise is the subject of this passage? (4:1)
- \* 6. How do we know that not everyone will experience God's rest (that is, His salvation)? (4:1-2)
- \* 7. Why didn't the Israelites of the Exodus enter God's rest? (4:2)
8. What must a person do to experience God's rest? (4:3)
9. How long has God been giving us a chance to enter His rest? (4:4)
10. What was the consequence for the Israelites' disobedience? (4:5)
11. Why did some who heard the promise of rest fail to enjoy that promise? (4:6)
12. How did the author show that the rest God promised the Israelites involved more than mere physical rest in the land of Canaan? (4:8)
13. What rest awaited God's people after Joshua and the Israelites had conquered Canaan? (4:8-9)
14. Entering God's rest has what effect on our work? (4:10)
- \* 15. How should we seek to learn from the Israelites' negative example? (4:11)
16. What is the Word of God? How? (4:12)
17. What is unique about God? (4:13)
18. What sort of future awaits all of us? (4:13)

### Get It

- \* 19. What does it mean to enter God's rest?
- \* 20. How is enjoying God's salvation a reality in your life?
21. How does disobedience or unbelief keep us from enjoying God's rest?
22. What prevents you from enjoying God's rest (or salvation)?
23. What does God's rest have to do with one trying earn salvation with good works?
24. How does the fact that God sees and knows everything about you (actions, words, thoughts, motives, feelings, and attitudes) motivate you to live a holy life?
25. What has the Word of God revealed about your own thoughts and attitudes of the heart?

### Apply It

- \* 26. What one area of your life do you need to turn over to God today?
27. What steps can you take this week to learn from the negative examples of others?

## Jesus the Great High Priest - Hebrews 4:14-5:10

*Topics:* Confidence, Faith, Grace, Obedience, Prayer, Sacrifice, Salvation, Submission, Temptation, Weaknesses

### Open It

- \* 1. To whom do you often turn when you feel discouraged? Why?
- 2. How do you typically respond to folks who get in trouble—anger? impatience? sympathy? pity? encouragement? disgust?
- 3. If Jesus walked in the room right now, how do you think you might feel?

### Explore It

- 4. To what important spiritual leader did the author of Hebrews compare Jesus? (4:14)
- \* 5. In what way is Jesus the ultimate high priest? (4:15)
- 6. In what ways was Jesus tempted? (4:15)
- 7. How is Jesus able to sympathize with us? (4:15)
- 8. Because of Jesus' superior high priesthood, how can forgiven sinners approach God? (4:16)
- \* 9. How does Christ respond to those who approach Him in faith? (4:15-16) Why?
- \* 10. What is the role and primary duty of a high priest? (5:1)
- 11. What makes a good high priest sympathetic to those he represents? (5:2)
- 12. For whom did a high priest offer sacrifices? (5:3)
- 13. Who chose Israel's high priests? (5:4)
- 14. How is Jesus like Melchizedek? (5:6)
- 15. In what priestly activities did Jesus engage while on earth? (5:7)
- 16. What did Jesus' sufferings teach Him? (5:8)
- 17. Who is described in this passage as the "source of eternal salvation"? (5:9)

### Get It

- 18. How does it encourage you to have Jesus as your high priest?
- 19. What is the difference between sinning and being tempted?
- 20. How would the need for priests to offer sacrifices for their own sins have applied to Jesus Christ?
- 21. How did suffering to the point of death give Jesus insights into obedience?
- \* 22. Why do you think suffering was part of God's will for Jesus as our high priest?
- 23. How does the sympathy and understanding nature of Christ motivate you to turn to Him when temptations arise?
- 24. What does it mean for us to approach God?
- \* 25. How can we honor Christ as our high priest?
- 26. What does it mean to you that Jesus has gone through the problems and temptations you face?
- 27. For what specific area of your life do you need to approach Jesus and ask for mercy and grace?

### Apply It

- \* 28. When will you pray each day this week, approaching God through Christ?
- 29. What steps do you need to take this week to follow the obedient example of Jesus, who did God's will even when it resulted in personal suffering?



## Warning Against Falling Away - Hebrews 5:11-6:12

**Topics:** Backslide, Denial, Holy Spirit, Judgment, Laziness, Maturity, Rejection, Repentance, Righteousness, Salvation, Spiritual Growth, Unbelievers

### Open It

- \* 1. What are some immature, childlike habits or actions that simply would not be tolerated if seen in an adult?
- 2. What theological truth or biblical concept is most difficult for you to comprehend?
- 3. What is the most disgraceful or damaging thing ever done in God's name?
- 4. What hero did you emulate and imitate as a kid? Why?

### Explore It

- \* 5. What was wrong with the group of Hebrew believers originally addressed in this passage? (5:11-14)
- \* 6. What are the marks of spiritual maturity? (5:11-14)
- 7. Of what are infant or baby Christians ignorant? (5:13)
- 8. What is the benefit of "solid food"? (5:14)
- 9. What challenge did the author give to his readers? (6:1)
- \* 10. What fundamental or basic doctrines form the foundation of our faith? (6:1-2)
- 11. In the end, what enables us to reach spiritual maturity? (6:3)
- 12. What are maturing, committed Christians like? (6:7)
- 13. What are those who fall away from the faith like? (6:8)
- 14. What does it show when Christians help other Christians? (6:10)
- 15. What danger did the author warn against? (6:12)

### Get It

- 16. What is "solid food"?
- 17. How would you describe your present level of spiritual maturity?
- 18. What actions and attitudes would you expect to find in a mature Christian?
- \* 19. How have you grown since you first became a Christian?
- 20. What decisions are you facing that call for extra discernment?
- 21. Of what does your spiritual diet consist?
- 22. How does it disgrace Christ when a person lapses back into his or her old way of life?
- 23. In what way can a Christian become useless to God?
- \* 24. What can we do to move forward, or become more mature, in our relationship with Christ a little each day?
- 25. How can you rely on the goodness of God's Word for discernment in the decisions you must make?

### Apply It

- \* 26. In what concrete ways can you strengthen your hold on Christ this week?
- 27. What changes can you make in your daily routine over the next three days to combat laziness and exercise discipline?

## The Certainty of God's Promise - Hebrews 6:13-20

*Topics:* Assurance, Believe, Faith, God, Heaven, Hope, Jesus Christ, Mediator, Promises, Sincerity, Truth, Waiting

### Open It

1. How good are you at keeping your promises?
- \* 2. What gives you a sense of security?
3. What, if anything, are you willing to die for?
4. What biblical truth gives you the most encouragement and hope?

### Explore It

5. Why did God "swear by himself"? (6:13)
- \* 6. What promise did God make to Abraham? (6:13-14)
7. How did God guarantee His promise to Abraham? (6:13-14)
8. What do we learn from this passage about God? (6:13, 17-18)
- \* 9. How did Abraham respond to God's promise, and what was the result? (6:15)
10. What is the function of oaths? (6:16)
11. How did God confirm His promise? (6:16-17)
- \* 12. Why did God confirm His promise with an oath? (6:16-18)?
13. How do we know God won't retract His promise? (6:18)
14. What happens to those who find the hope that Christ offers? (6:18)
15. How is the hope that Christ gives described in this passage? (6:19)
16. Where is the believer's hope anchored? (6:19)
17. How was Christ able to "enter the inner sanctuary behind the curtain"? (6:19-20)
18. What did Christ do on our behalf? (6:20)

### Get It

- \* 19. How does Abraham's patience in waiting for God's promise encourage you?
20. What does it mean to you personally that God gives every believer an eternal inheritance secure in heaven?
- \* 21. How does it help us to know that it is impossible for God to lie?
22. How would you describe to a friend the hope that you have in Jesus Christ?
23. What problems or troubles currently threaten your sense of security?
24. What truths in this passage give you security in your relationship with God?
25. What new insights does this passage give you about the character of God?
26. In what area of your life do you need to follow Abraham's example of patience?

### Apply It

27. What step can you take over the coming week to put your sense of security in Christ?
- \* 28. To what promise of God do you need to cling at this time in your life?
29. In what way can you express confidence in God's promises this week?

## Melchizedek the Priest - Hebrews 7:1-10

*Topics:* Blessing, Comparisons, Greatness, Heritage, Jesus Christ, Mediator, Peace, Righteousness, Tithing

### Open It

1. What does your name mean?
2. Does the meaning of your name fit your personality?
- \* 3. What person from history do you most admire? Why?
4. If you could have dinner with any three Bible characters, whom would you choose? Why?

### Explore It

- \* 5. Who was Melchizedek? (7:1)
6. How was Melchizedek associated with Abraham? (7:1)
7. What did Abraham give to Melchizedek? (7:2)
8. What does the name Melchizedek mean? (7:2)
9. What is significant about the title, “king of Salem”? (7:2)
- \* 10. What about the Genesis record of Melchizedek’s life foreshadowed or anticipated the priesthood of Christ? (7:3)
- \* 11. How do we know that Melchizedek was “great”? (7:4)
12. How did the Mosaic law ensure that the Levitical priests were provided for? (7:5)
13. Why was it unusual for Melchizedek to receive a tithe from Abraham? (7:6)
14. What did the ancient practice of one person blessing another say about the two parties involved? (7:7)
15. How did the tithe collected by Melchizedek differ from the tithes collected by the Levites? (7:8)
16. How did Levi—the yet-unborn collector of tithes—pay tithes to Melchizedek? (7:9-10)

### Get It

- \* 17. In what ways is Jesus like Melchizedek?
18. What point is there in seeing that the historical Melchizedek was greater than Abraham and Levi?
- \* 19. What does it mean to you that Christ, like Melchizedek, is both a great king and priest?
20. In what ways has Christ blessed you?
21. Why is it important to tithe or give to God?
22. What kind of behavior should the greatness of Christ elicit from us?
23. What does it mean that Christ is a high priest forever?

### Apply It

- \* 24. Because Jesus is great and worthy of our all, what gift of time, money, or energy will you give to Him this week?
25. What insight from this passage can you meditate upon today to keep you from drifting away from Christ?
26. In what way can you honor Christ this week?

## Jesus Like Melchizedek - Hebrews 7:11-28

**Topics:** Atonement, Blessing, Comparisons, Eternal Life, Greatness, Heritage, Inadequacy, Mediator, Messiah, New Covenant, Perfect, Prayer

### Open It

- \* 1. When might a person want to be represented by a lawyer? Why?
- 2. What is something that you have replaced or gotten rid of recently?
- 3. What is one regular task or chore that you hate doing?
- 4. How might you react if you found yourself alone in an elevator with the president or the Prince of Wales?

### Explore It

- 5. Why did a new priest from the order of Melchizedek come along to replace the order of Aaron? (7:11)
- 6. What does a new priesthood require? (7:12)
- 7. What made Jesus unique as a member of His tribe? (7:13-14)
- 8. From what tribe did Jesus Christ come? (7:13-14) How is this significant?
- 9. What connection did Jesus' tribe have to the Jewish priesthood? (7:14)
- \* 10. On what basis did Christ become a priest? (7:15-16)
- 11. Why is the new covenant superior to the old covenant of law? (7:18-19)
- \* 12. How is Jesus unique among the priests who represented Israel before God? (7:23-25)
- 13. What does Jesus do for those who come to God through Him? How? (7:25)
- \* 14. What is Jesus, our high priest, like? (7:26-27)
- 15. What did the Levitical priests have to do before they offered sacrifices for the sins of the people? (7:27)
- 16. How did Jesus perform His function as high priest when he was on earth? (7:27)

### Get It

- \* 17. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is praying for you at this very moment?
- 18. What does this passage say to people who feel the need for a human priest?
- 19. What role does the law of God play in making us right before God or giving us the power to live for God?
- 20. What comfort can we find in Jesus' role as our high priest?
- 21. What could you say to someone who says, "I don't see what Christ accomplished by dying on the cross"?
- 22. How is the resurrection of Christ important?
- \* 23. In what way can Christ's priesthood give us confidence to draw near to God?

### Apply It

- 24. How can you make a special effort each day this next week to draw near to God?
- 25. For whom will you pray every day this week?
- \* 26. How can you honor Christ as your high priest in your prayer throughout the coming week?

## The High Priest of a New Covenant - Hebrews 8:1-13

**Topics:** Change, Comparisons, Forgiveness, Heaven, Inadequacy, Jesus Christ, Limitations, Mediator, Messiah, New Covenant, Sacrifice

### Open It

1. What is involved in knowing someone?
2. What is involved in having an intimate relationship with God?
- \* 3. What items in your home or office would you consider obsolete? Why?
4. Why is it so difficult to forget the wrongs others do to us?

### Explore It

5. Where is Christ right now? (8:1)
6. With what title is God described? (8:1)
7. What is Christ doing presently in heaven? (8:2)
8. What is the “job description” for a high priest? (8:3)
9. How do earthly sanctuaries and tabernacles differ from the heavenly one in which Christ is currently serving? (8:2, 5-6)
10. Why would Jesus not be a priest on earth? (8:4)
11. What do the terms “copy,” “shadow,” and “pattern” indicate about the Levitical priesthood? (8:5)
- \* 12. In what ways is the new covenant superior to the old? (8:6)
- \* 13. Why did God decide to initiate a new covenant? (8:7-12)
14. How did Israel handle their part in the old covenant? (8:9)
15. How did God say the new covenant would be different from the old one? (8:10)
16. What is God’s response to sin under the new covenant? (8:12)
- \* 17. What became of the old covenant when the new was introduced? (8:13)

### Get It

18. How does it make you feel to realize that under the new covenant, you can have an intimate relationship with God?
- \* 19. How motivated would you be to love and worship God if you had to depend solely on animal sacrifices offered by a stranger?
- \* 20. What do we learn about God from the fact that He set aside the old covenant in favor of the new?
21. What three words best describe how you feel knowing that Jesus Christ is in the presence of God representing you before your Creator?
22. How much do biblical principles and God’s truths govern your thoughts and actions?

### Apply It

23. In what ways can you show your thanks to God today for the fact that He remembers your sins no more?
- \* 24. What can you do this week to get to know God better?
25. How can you use the truths of this passage in coming days to help a friend who is struggling to earn God’s approval?

## Worship in the Earthly Tabernacle - Hebrews 9:1-10

**Topics:** Atonement, Comparisons, Forgiveness, Holy Spirit, Inadequacy, Jesus Christ, Limitations, Mediator, Messiah, New Covenant, Sacrifice

### Open It

1. What is the most beautiful church, cathedral, or religious shrine you have visited?
- \* 2. If you could show three objects or artifacts that best tell the story of your own spiritual journey, what items would you show? Why?
3. What religious customs do you observe that you really don't understand the meaning or purpose of?

### Explore It

4. What aspect of the old and new covenants is compared in this passage? (9:1)
5. What was in the first room of the earthly tabernacle? (9:2)
6. What was the first room called? (9:2)
7. What was behind the second curtain in the tabernacle? (9:3)
8. What two objects were in the room behind the second curtain? (9:4)
9. What was inside in the ark of the covenant? (9:4)
10. What was above the ark? (9:5)
11. During the year, who typically ministered at the tabernacle, and in which part did this ministry take place? (9:6)
- \* 12. What three severe restrictions were placed upon entrance to the inner room of the temple? (9:7)
13. For whom was blood offered on the Day of Atonement? (9:7)
- \* 14. What truth was the Holy Spirit teaching through the once-a-year offering for sin under the old covenant? (9:8)
- \* 15. What symbolic truth did the Mosaic tabernacle teach about sin? (9:9-10)

### Get It

16. From Hebrews 9:1-5 and the background information in Exodus, what is your impression of the old covenant's "regulations for worship"?
- \* 17. What does the earthly tabernacle and sacrificial system tell us about Christ's once-for-all sacrifice for sin?
18. What do you think went through the high priest's mind on the Day of Atonement as he prepared to enter the Holy of Holies?
19. What is significant about the contents of the ark of the covenant?
20. How can we alter our lives to reflect the fact that God dwells only in holy places?
21. What arbitrary religious rules or traditions make it difficult for you to serve God?
- \* 22. How does Christ's sacrifice enable us to have a clear conscience?
23. How can we be sure to approach God as the holy God He is?

### Apply It

- \* 24. What are some practical steps you can take when you feel touched by a guilty conscience?
25. What do you want to remember the next time you approach God in worship?

## The Blood of Christ - Hebrews 9:11-28

*Topics:* Atonement, Comparisons, Death, Forgiveness, Heaven, Holy Spirit, Inadequacy, Jesus Christ, Judgment, Limitations, Mediator, Messiah, New Covenant, Sacrifice

### Open It

1. What are some ways people typically try to deal with their own mortality?
- \* 2. What images come to mind when you hear the phrases “blood sacrifice” and “cleansed with blood”?
3. What do you imagine death being like?

### Explore It

4. How is the heavenly tabernacle in which Christ serves as high priest described? (9:11)
5. By what means did Christ enter the Most Holy Place? (9:12)
6. How many times did Christ enter the Most Holy Place? (9:12)
7. What ritual cleansing ceremony did a high priest typically complete before he entered the Most Holy Place? (9:13)
8. To what degree was a high priest considered clean? (9:13)
- \* 9. How was Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf different from the usual sacrifice for sin on the Day of Atonement? (9:14)
- \* 10. What benefits do believers in Christ derive from the sacrifice Christ made on their behalf? (9:14)
11. What is our promised eternal inheritance? (9:15)
- \* 12. What must happen in order for sins to be forgiven? (9:22)
13. As a high priest, why did Christ enter heaven instead of an earthly man-made sanctuary? (9:24)
14. How is Christ categorically different from every other high priest? (9:25-26)
15. What fate awaits every person? (9:27)
16. How will Christ’s Second Coming differ from His first advent? (9:28)

### Get It

17. In what ways was Christ an unblemished sacrifice?
18. What does it mean that Christ fully and completely satisfied God’s wrath over sin and can make us right with God?
19. Why couldn’t we receive our promised eternal inheritance apart from the death of Christ?
- \* 20. Why do you think the author kept emphasizing that Christ’s sacrifice was “once for all”?
21. How would it change the way we live if we kept in mind the fact that we all will be judged?
- \* 22. If Christ has done all these fantastic things for us, why are we so prone to stray from Him?
23. What might motivate you to be more consistent in your commitment to Christ?
24. How can the fact of our own mortality (that is, our lives on earth are temporary) motivate us to a holier life-style?

### Apply It

- \* 25. In what concrete way can you show gratitude for Christ’s sacrifice?
26. With whom do you want to share the good news this week of a Savior who offers forgiveness, freedom from sin, and eternal life? How?

## Christ's Sacrifice Once for All - Hebrews 10:1-18

**Topics:** Atonement, Comparisons, Forgiveness, Heaven, Holy Spirit, Inadequacy, Jesus Christ, Legalism, Limitations, Mediator, Messiah, New Covenant, Perfect, Sacrifice

### Open It

- \* 1. What is one thing you would buy at a very high price if paying that price meant you never had to pay for it again?
- 2. What jobs would you consider unfulfilling, frustrating, or even futile?
- 3. What are some ways people try to deal with bad habits?

### Explore It

- 4. How is the Law compared to the new covenant brought by Christ? (10:1)
- \* 5. In what way was the Law of Moses glaringly inadequate? (10:1-2)
- 6. How did the author of Hebrews show that the Law was inadequate? (10:2)
- 7. What function did the annual sacrifices serve? Why? (10:3-4)
- 8. How successful were animal sacrifices under the old covenant? (10:4)
- 9. Why wasn't God pleased with the sacrifices and offerings of the old covenant? (10:5-6)
- 10. What was the attitude of Christ when He came into the world? (10:7)
- 11. What evidence of the futility and emptiness of the old covenant did the author cite? (10:8)
- \* 12. If God neither desired nor was pleased with old covenant sacrifices, why did the Israelites make them? (10:8)
- 13. What role does a believer play in earning God's approval? (10:9-14)
- 14. What did Christ's single act of dying accomplish for those who would trust in Him? (10:14)
- 15. How did the new covenant change the way God motivates His people to live for Him? (10:16)
- \* 16. What effect did the sacrifice of Christ have on the way God views our sins? (10:17)
- 17. Why are additional sacrifices for sin unnecessary? (10:18)

### Get It

- 18. What has Christ done for us?
- 19. How would you contrast the shortcomings of the old covenant with the blessings of the new covenant?
- 20. Why do Christians still feel guilt when God says He forgives and forgets their transgressions?
- \* 21. How does being cleansed of sin by Christ change us?
- 22. What do you think prompted or motivated Jesus to make the sacrifice He made?
- \* 23. In what sense have we "been made holy" (10:10) while at the same time "are being made holy" (10:14)?
- 24. What insights from this passage can we use to show that being saved from sin requires faith in Christ?

### Apply It

- 25. In what specific areas of your life today do you need to follow the example of Christ in saying, "I have come to do your will, O God"?
- \* 26. What can you do this week to show trust in Christ's provision for forgiveness?
- 27. When could you speak with a friend or relative who would be encouraged by the truths of this passage?



## A Call to Persevere - Hebrews 10:19-39

**Topics:** Atonement, Backslide, Encouragement, Forgiveness, Hope, Jesus Christ, Joy, Judgment, Love, Mediator, New Covenant, Persecution, Perseverance, Rewards, Salvation, Sincerity

### Open It

1. When in your life did you “hang in there” the longest in the face of an extremely difficult situation?
2. Who has encouraged you the most in the last six months?
- \* 3. How highly does your boss value perseverance in his or her employees?

### Explore It

4. Why did the author say that those under the new covenant could draw near to God? (10:19-22)
5. What has Jesus done for those under the new covenant? (10:20)
6. What privilege comes to those who are part of the “house of God”? (10:22)
7. What must happen before a person can draw near to God? (10:22)
8. What happens to the guilty conscience of those who put their faith in Christ? (10:22)
- \* 9. Why are Christians able to persevere in following Christ? (10:23)
10. What kind of behavior should believers in Christ exhibit toward one another? (10:24-25)
11. What will happen to God’s enemies? (10:26-27)
12. Why is rejecting Christ more serious than rejecting the old covenant? (10:28-29)
13. What did the author consider “a dreadful thing”? (10:31)
- \* 14. How had the Hebrew Christians responded to persecution at first? (10:32-34)
- \* 15. What is promised to those who persevere? (10:35-39)

### Get It

16. How does the complete forgiveness and help offered by Christ motivate you to draw near to God?
17. When in your life have you felt the cleanest or most innocent? Why?
- \* 18. How could someone best spur you on “toward love and good deeds”?
19. How do you personally feel about going to church or involvement in Christian groups?
- \* 20. How does the certainty of God’s judgment challenge you?
21. What is behind the ups and downs in your spiritual journey?

### Apply It

- \* 22. What is one small project you could complete today to encourage a Christian friend to persevere in his or her faith?
23. What can you do differently in your devotional times this week to “draw near to God”?
24. Since we are called to live by faith (10:38), what is one bold step of trust in God you can take today?

## By Faith - Hebrews 11:1-40

*Topics:* Believers, Circumstances, Danger, Endurance, Faith, Glory, Heroes, Obedience, Promises, Risk, Trust, Waiting

### Open It

1. If you were able to listen to your own funeral eulogy (Tom Sawyer style), how would you like to hear yourself described?
- \* 2. When you were a child, what are some ways you showed trust in your parents?
3. What do you consider the greatest example of faith you have ever seen? Why?

### Explore It

4. What is faith? (11:1)
5. What does faith help us to comprehend about the creation of the world? (11:3)
6. How did Abel demonstrate faith? (11:4)
7. What was unusual about Enoch? (11:5)
- \* 8. What role does faith play in approaching and pleasing God? (11:6)
9. What did Noah's faith prompt him to do? (11:7)
10. How did faith affect Abraham's life? (11:8-12)
11. How does faith change a person's focus and perspective? (11:13-16)
12. What ultimate test of faith did God put Abraham through? (11:17-19)
13. What hard choices did Moses make because of his faith? (11:24-28)
14. What "secret" enabled Moses to persevere through rough times? (11:27)
- \* 15. What were some of the victories enjoyed by faithful Old Testament believers? (11:32-34)
16. How does this passage disprove the notion that faith always leads to earthly blessing? (11:35-38)
- \* 17. What happened to a great many Old Testament saints who exercised faith in God? (11:39)

### Get It

18. According to this passage, what is the only way we can please God with our lives?
- \* 19. What prompts committed followers of Christ to continue to exercise faith even when He never seems to "come through" for them?
- \* 20. Why do you think the author said that "the world was not worthy of" the heroes of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11?
21. How do you think the individuals praised in Hebrews 11 were looked upon by those of their day?
22. Why do you think God sometimes leaves us in the dark about His will?
23. What are some examples from your life of both trusting God and doubting Him?
24. Which characters named in this chapter would you most like and least like to trade places with? Why?
25. In what concrete ways can we demonstrate the truth that we are "aliens and strangers" on earth? (11:13)

### Apply It

26. What is one way you can remind yourself to live as an alien and stranger at work and in your community?
- \* 27. With what do you need to trust God even though you can't see what the future holds? How can you show this trust?

## God Disciplines His Sons - Hebrews 12:1-13

*Topics:* Barriers, Discipline, Encouragement, Fruit, Holiness, Jesus Christ, Peace, Perseverance, Perspective, Righteousness, Sin, Weaknesses

### Open It

1. What is your favorite sporting event? Why?
2. How were you disciplined or corrected as a child?
- \* 3. What do you think was good or bad about the way you were disciplined as a child?
4. When did you endure difficult or arduous circumstances only because you knew you would later be rewarded?

### Explore It

5. What should motivate followers of Christ to live for Him? (12:1)
6. What kind of athletic imagery did the writer of Hebrews use in this passage? (12:1)
7. What warning is given to those who would run the race of the Christian life? (12:1)
8. What should be the focus of those who would live for Christ? (12:2)
9. How is Jesus described in this passage? (12:2)
10. What is the benefit of remembering what Christ has done? (12:3)
- \* 11. What measures does the Lord sometimes take toward those who are His “sons”? Why? (12:5-6)
- \* 12. What do we learn about God from the fact that He disciplines us? (12:6-7)
- \* 13. What sobering truth can be inferred by those who never experience the discipline of God? (12:8)
14. Why does God discipline His children? (12:9-10)
15. In what sense does discipline have two sides? (12:11)

### Get It

16. How well are you running the Christian race?
17. What wrong attitudes or actions tend to stop your spiritual growth?
18. What do you think it means to “fix our eyes” on Jesus? (12:2)
- \* 19. What are some specific ways God disciplines us?
20. How can we tell when God is disciplining us?
- \* 21. What state might your life be in if God neglected to discipline you when you went astray?
22. How has God’s discipline made positive changes in your life?
23. Why should we not lose heart when the Lord rebukes or corrects us?

### Apply It

24. How can you focus your thinking on Christ this week?
25. How could you call on your Christian friends this week to help you persevere as a Christian?
26. What do you want to remember the next time God disciplines you?
27. What step of obedience can you take beginning today to eliminate the need for God to discipline you?

## Warning Against Refusing God - Hebrews 12:14-29

*Topics:* Angels, Bitterness, Celebration, Heaven, Holiness, Immorality, Jesus Christ, Judgment, Mediator, New Covenant, Peace, Unbelievers

### Open It

1. What causes bitterness?
2. How do you think you would react if your life were suddenly threatened by a severe earthquake, volcanic eruption, or avalanche?
- \* 3. What are some warnings that you have been grateful for? Why?

### Explore It

4. To what extent are Christians to try to resolve conflicts? Why? (12:14)
5. In what way should believers pursue holiness? Why? (12:14)
- \* 6. Why is holiness important? (12:14)
7. What wrong attitude should we watch out for? (12:15)
- \* 8. What kinds of things do Christians need to watch out for? Why? (12:15-17, 25-27)
9. What did Esau do that is described as godless? (12:16)
10. What did Esau's godless behavior cost him? (12:17)
11. In what ways was the old covenant intimidating or frightening? (12:18-21)
12. How is Mount Sinai described—the place where the old covenant was revealed? (12:18)
13. How did the author describe the new covenant? (12:22-24)
14. In what way were God's thunderous pronouncements from Sinai only a foreshadowing of what is to come? (12:26-27)
15. Of what kind of kingdom are Christians a part? (12:28)
16. How should God's promises and glorious kingdom affect believers? (12:28)
- \* 17. How should we worship God? Why? (12:28-29)

### Get It

18. Why is it difficult to get along with some people?
19. When we have conflicts with one another, why do we typically want the other person to make the first move toward reconciliation?
- \* 20. What roadblocks make it difficult for you to pursue holiness?
21. How would you counsel a friend who was extremely bitter?
22. What are some ways wrong values and impulsive actions might bring heartache and grief?
23. What does it mean to live at peace with everyone?
24. What is dangerous about bitterness?
25. How is your view of God different as a result of studying this passage?
26. For which of God's acts on your behalf are you most thankful?
- \* 27. What does it mean to worship God with reverence and awe?

### Apply It

28. What bitter or unforgiving attitudes do you need to confess today?
- \* 29. What practical steps can you take this week to avoid becoming bitter toward someone who has hurt you?
30. What actions do you need to take today so that you can truly say you have made every effort to live in peace with everyone?

## Concluding Exhortations - Hebrews 13:1-25

*Topics:* Angels, Atonement, Challenge, Confidence, Heaven, Holiness, Immorality, Jesus Christ, Judgment, Leadership, Love, Marriage, Materialism, Mediator, Money, New Covenant, Peace, Praise, Prayer, Unbelievers

### Open It

1. What would you want to say to your loved ones if you could write them a last letter or make a final videotaped message?
2. What images come to mind when you hear the word “authority”?
- \* 3. What is one change you’d like to make but don’t think you can right now?
4. How do you think angels are involved in human affairs?

### Explore It

5. What kind of love are Christians to demonstrate? (13:1)
6. Why did the author encourage his readers to entertain strangers? (13:2)
7. What kinds of people does God want Christians to try to help? (13:3)
8. Why is sexual purity important? (13:4)
- \* 9. What attitude toward money ought Christians to have? Why? (13:5)
- \* 10. What fact about God can foster a contented spirit? (13:5)
- \* 11. How can we learn to be content? (13:5)
12. How should Christians view their spiritual leaders? (13:7, 17)
13. What attribute or characteristic of Christ is highlighted here? (13:8)
14. What illustrations did the author use to challenge his readers to resist the temptation to go back to Judaism? (13:9-14)
15. What kind of sacrifices should we offer to God? (13:15-16)
16. What are the benefits of obeying one’s spiritual leaders? (13:17)
17. What did the writer pray would happen to his readers? (13:20-21)

### Get It

- \* 18. Why do you think it is so difficult to be content?
19. What is significant to you about the fact that Jesus never changes?
- \* 20. How can we draw contentment from God’s unchanging nature?
21. What Christian leaders do you look up to and consider worth imitating? Why?
22. What does hospitality mean or entail?
23. How are you able to extend hospitality to others?
24. Why do you think praise of God is so important for us to practice?
25. How would you counsel a friend who was struggling in the area of sexual purity?
26. What are some practical steps we can take to avoid temptations to immorality?
27. How do you think you should respond if a Christian leader corrected you in a personal matter?

### Apply It

28. What can you do to show love to a person who is in prison or being mistreated?
- \* 29. What one action could you take this week to practice contentment with what you have?
30. What Christian friend or friends can you encourage to continue walking with Christ? How?