



Summer Study Discussion Guide #9

Sermon Title: Jesus is Better

Biblical Reference: Hebrews

Date Preached: Sunday, August 7, 2022, @ 11am

Summer Study Date: Wednesday, August 10th, 2022

Sermon Summary

Paul is believed to be the author of the book of Hebrews. It appears Paul wrote it after Timothy was established as his disciple and working closely with him. Timothy was the one that penned the book for Paul. (Heb 13:25 Grace be with you all. Amen. Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.) Hebrews was written in Italy either while Paul was imprisoned in Rome or shortly after his release.

The epistle was written before the temple was destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D. This puts the date anywhere from 63-68 A.D. The letter was written to the “Hebrews,” the Jews in the “dispersion” (Jewish communities outside Jerusalem).

Three groups of Jews are addressed in the letter:

1. **Believing Jews:** The believing Jews upon conversion during that era would face persecution from their friends and family. Many times, they would lose their income, they would lose their community and be alone. Their community and religion are what the Jew’s life entirely revolved around (the feasts, the sacrifices, the synagogue). When they were separated from all they had ever known it was a very distressing situation. They needed to be reminded of what they had in Jesus.
2. **Struggling Jews:** They were the ones who were tempted to go back to the old ways because of the trouble and persecution. They needed to understand why they should keep going.
3. **Undecided Jews:** These were the Jews that were knowledgeable about Jesus but still had not decided to fully embrace Christ and leave Judaism yet. They needed to be taught that Jesus was God, and He was so much better than what they currently had. The theme of the book of Hebrews is “Jesus is better.” It was written to the Hebrews who already had a deep understanding of the old covenant, the sacrifices, and the priesthood. He was telling them it is time to leave the old covenant and embrace the new covenant because Jesus is better. In fact, verse four says He is *so* much better.

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything you heard for the first time or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Were you able to apply something you learned from the sermon this week?

My Story

This past Sunday we heard about how the Hebrews faced persecution for their faith in Jesus. Have you ever been persecuted or singled out for negative treatment because of your faith?

Paul was teaching the Hebrews how Jesus was better than what they had under the Old Covenant. He wanted to encourage the believers, help the struggling ones to continue, and warn the undecided ones to embrace Christianity and leave the old ways. Which group would you most identify with and why?

Digging Deeper

Ask a volunteer to read:

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (different times and different ways)

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Heb 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

The Jews were used to God speaking to them through the prophets. God spoke to Moses and then Moses spoke to the people. But in these last days (the time between His first coming and second coming) He now speaks to us in a new way. God Himself spoke through Jesus to us. Paul is teaching them this is better than the prophets. The One that created them was speaking directly to them. Jesus's words were preserved and confirmed by them that heard Jesus. His Words are preserved for us in the New Testament.

Discussion Questions:

- In what different ways has God chosen to communicate to people? How does God primarily speak to us today? What are the benefits of this method?

- Can you give an example of how the above verses could help people that struggle with their faith or someone who has yet to trust Christ?
- What are some ways the above verses could be used to help someone involved in a cult that believes they have received a new message from God?
- What do you imagine the original hearers must have thought when they heard the above verses?
- Knowing we have the Word of God, what is an example of how this can encourage a person in their daily struggles?
- Can you give us an example of how knowing that we have the preserved Word of God is important to you? How often do you consider this?

Ask a volunteer to read:

Heb 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Verse three contains a fivefold description of Jesus Christ. Who, being the brightness of His glory and express image of His person, shows that Jesus is the lens through which we can know what God is like. We cannot see the sun, but we see the sun's rays. We cannot see God, but we see Jesus and we can know the person and character of God through Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the most striking description of Jesus in verse three?
- What can we learn about God from this verse we can thank and praise him for?
- Why would Paul emphasize that after Jesus purged our sins He sat down?
- Where is He now and what is He doing there?

Ask a volunteer to read:

Heb 1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Heb 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Heb 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Heb 1:7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think the author spends so much time showing that Jesus is superior than the angels?
- What proofs does the author use to show that Jesus is indeed superior to the angels?
- How will our actions and lives change if we truly recognize and live by the fact that Jesus is better than all things?
- In Luke 2:8-14, we are given an account of how the angels worshiped Him. In what ways can we follow their example of worship?

Ask a volunteer to read:

Heb 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Heb 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Heb 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

Heb 1:11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

Heb 1:12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

Discussion Questions:

- In verse 8 God the Father calls Jesus God: How does it help us to know that Jesus is God?
- How could Jesus's example in verse nine help us with mental health and our daily walk?
- In verses eleven through twelve we learn about the future earth. What are the implications for your life? What are the implications for the unbelievers in the world around us?
- In verse ten through twelve Jesus is contrasted with the earth. Which contrast is most significant to you and why?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of hearing the message:

1. What point in this message was most impactful for you?
2. How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?