



UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 1 - *HEBREWS 1:1-14* - AUGUST 12-18

LEADER NOTES

Today we start a new series in the book of Hebrews where we will be discovering a life changing truth, Jesus is Better. Better than what you ask? Just fill in the blank! Jesus is better than anything and everything this world has to offer. Lean into this study, and challenge your group members to lean in, and we will all see together how Jesus is far better than you can imagine.

In the study notes, you will find a primer to help you understand the background and major themes of the book of Hebrews.

Please continue to complete the Gospel Connection's and Conversations form. You can find the form [HERE](#).

You can find other sermons from our Teaching Pastor's [HERE](#).



**FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE
UPSTATE CHURCH**

COMMUNITY

OPEN THE GROUP BY CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND ALLOWING A MOMENT FOR EVERYONE TO HAVE A PLACE TO BELONG.

START THE GROUP BY TAKING PRAYER REQUESTS, FINDING OUT ABOUT PEOPLE'S WEEK, AND PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- *HAS THERE EVER BEEN A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU FELT LIKE YOU WERE CONFIDENT THAT GOD WAS SPEAKING TO YOU?*
- *HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN GOD IS SPEAKING TO US? HOW CAN WE BE CONFIDENT?*

SCRIPTURE

TAKE THIS TIME TO STUDY THE BIBLE TOGETHER. REMEMBER, THE GOAL IS NOT JUST TO CONVEY INFORMATION, BUT TO HELP PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP LEARN TO READ THE BIBLE FOR THEMSELVES.

THE POINT

THE PATH TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS STARTS AND ENDS BY STAYING CONNECTED TO JESUS.

Hebrews 1:1-14

The Supremacy of God's Son

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”?

6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

7 Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”

8 But of the Son he says,
 "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the
 scepter of your kingdom.
9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your
 God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."
10 And,
 "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the
 heavens are the work of your hands;
11 they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,
12 like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed.
 But you are the same, and your years will have no end."
13 And to which of the angels has he ever said,
 "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?
14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit
salvation?

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 1:1–14.

STUDY NOTES

A PRIMER FOR HEBREWS

"You ain't never met nobody like Jesus." - Charlie Dates

"There is a way to hell even from the gates of heaven!" - John Bunyan

The message of Hebrews is clear and often repeated in the letter's 13 chapters:
Jesus is better, and we need to stay close to Him!

Hebrews is written to Jewish Christians to remind them of the supremacy of Christ and to warn them to never drift away from Christ to other lesser things, whether worldly or religious.

CONTEXT

Who Wrote It?

This question is often asked in relation to Hebrews, but it's never answered. There are three basic options for authorship.

Option 1: Paul—The oldest church tradition is that Hebrews was written by Paul. There are severe obstacles to considering Paul the author.

- *Anonymity.* Paul's custom is to introduce his letters.
- *Experience.* The conversion experience of the author of Hebrews seems to be more subtle than Paul's drastic experience. Paul's conversion usually makes some sort of appearance in his other epistles.

(This author seems to have had no personal experience with God but had the message "attested" to him.)

- *The Early Church*. As far back as Origen (3rd century Christian scholar) noted drastic differences between Paul's epistles and Hebrews.

Option 2: Luke - There are theological and grammatical similarities between Luke's other writings and the epistle to the Hebrews.

Option 3: Apollos, Barnabas, or another disciple of Paul.

Ultimately, we must concede that the author of Hebrews is unknown because God wishes for this person to remain anonymous. However, without question, Hebrews was considered canonical because of its connection with the Apostle Paul.

To Whom Was It Written?

Hebrews is written specifically to the Christians who had Jewish backgrounds. Beyond this, it's impossible to know the specific Jewish community this letter targeted. In more modern times, it is believed Hebrews may have been addressed to a more diverse audience of Jews and Gentiles. Support for this view lies in the fact that the Old Testament was the Bible of the early church and early Gentile believers could have faced the pressure to integrate Jewish religious practices into their new Christian identity.

When Was It Written?

Most consider the letter had to have been written before AD 70 due to its lack of mentioning the destruction of the temple, an occurrence that would have surely been mentioned due to the strong Jewish allusions in the text.

Why Was It Written?

Hebrews is written to warn Christians not to drift from the faith. Whether the audience is Gentile or Jewish, Hebrews is written as an argument for the supremacy of Christ and to warn any audience not to drift from the supreme Savior.

As one commentator makes clear, Hebrews "challenges believers to go on to maturity and not to waver in their faith."

What Style Was It Written? (Genre)

Hebrews is an epistle, but it is different from any other epistle in that it's essentially a sermon of the early church, sent as a letter.

Best Commentaries and Additional Resources

- [Christ Centered Exposition](#)
- [New American Commentary](#)
- [Preach The Word](#)
- [Tyndale New Testament Commentary](#)
- Alistair Begg's Hebrews Sermons
 - [Part 1](#)
 - [Part 2](#)
 - [Part 3](#)
- [John Piper's Hebrews Sermons](#)

WEEK 1 NOTES : Hebrews 1:1-14

Christianity is full of staggering, world-altering, life-changing truths. Sadly, there are times when Christians take these big truths for granted because we've become so familiar with them. Hebrews is meant to shake us from our familiarity and make us worship God in a fresh way.

As we read the very first verses of Hebrews we are introduced to the first of the letters' big truths. **GOD SPEAKS.**

In the 17th and 18th centuries Deism was a popular belief among many intellectuals. Deists believed there was a God who created the world and set history in motion, but after getting things started He stepped back from all human affairs. Simply put, God created the car but then He took his hands off the wheel and exited the driver's seat. Hebrews Chapter 1 clearly refutes this idea. We do not have a God who has abandoned us. We have a God Who is intimately involved in the affairs of mankind. God is so involved in our affairs He speaks to us.

There is a progression to God's speech to us. Previously, He spoke to the prophets. We have a record of the things He spoke to our ancestors in the faith, we call this revelation the Old Testament. However, God was not content to reveal Himself in words alone. Instead, the God of all creation came to us in human form as Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God.

When God wanted to give us a final word, a word that would never need addition or clarification, He spoke to us through Jesus Christ. The author of Hebrews says Jesus is the final word for two reasons. First, Jesus is the final word because Jesus is the final authority. God the Father has appointed Christ as the heir of all things. That means everything in this world, seen and unseen, stuff that's yours and stuff that's mine, actually belongs to Jesus. It's His stuff. This is His world. He's in charge. So, we don't need a second opinion on anything. What Jesus says is sufficient for

any question we come across in life. Jesus is the final word because He's the final authority.

Secondly, Jesus is the final word because He is the final revelation of God. God has revealed Himself in many ways in the course of scripture. God revealed Himself as a pillar of smoke to Abraham when He made Covenant with Abraham. He revealed Himself in a burning bush to Moses when He called Moses to liberate the people of Israel. He revealed Himself as a cloud of smoke and a cloud of fire when He guided the Israelites into the promised land. Every revelation prior to Jesus was a dress rehearsal though. In Christ, we have the full and final revelation of God to the people of God. Jesus is the exact imprint of God. Look at Jesus and you see God. Jesus is the final word because He is the final Revelation.

Jesus Is the Son of God.

When Jesus speaks to us as the Word of God, the final authority and the final revelation of God, He has every right to do so because He is the son of God. The author of Hebrews makes clear that Jesus is not like other beings. He is not like human beings. He is not even like heavenly beings. He is higher than even the angels. He is a creator not a creature. He is the Son of God, not a creation of God. While that may be confusing, it is a major theme in the book of Hebrews. Jesus is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. Because of Who Jesus is, the Son of God, we don't need other sources of revelation or authority, we don't need other heavenly experiences, or some other form of heavenly wisdom. Jesus is all we need. Jesus is the Son of God.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- *Why is the Old Testament important if we know Jesus Christ is the final Word that God has for his people?*
- *How can we know God is speaking to us if Jesus is His final word to His people?*
- *In your own words, how would you explain the Trinity to someone? Why is it important to hold on to the Trinity even if it's confusing at times?*
- *Why is it so often easy to drift away from God even when He has spoken clearly to us through Jesus Christ?*
- *How can we live so we can be sure to hear God when He is speaking to us?*

COMMISSION

AS YOU WRAP UP YOUR GROUP, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WE GO INTO THE WORLD ON MISSION FOR JESUS. USE THIS TIME TO FOCUS EVERYONE TO LIVE ON MISSION AS YOU LEAVE.

- JESUS HAS COME AS THE FINAL WORD SPOKEN BY GOD. THAT MEANS WE HAVE GOD'S WORD FOR THE PEOPLE IN THIS LOST AND BROKEN WORLD. IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SHARE GOD'S WORD TO THE WORLD AROUND US.

WHO IS GOD CALLING YOU TO SHARE JESUS WITH?

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