

HEBREWS

THE GLORIOUS JESUS

MIKE MAZZALONGO

TEACHER'S GUIDE

bibleTalk^{TV}



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Hebrews

The Glorious Jesus

Mike Mazzalongo

Originally written for Jewish converts to Christianity, the book of Hebrews describes the many ways Jesus and the religion of Christianity fulfilled and surpassed the elements and practice of the Jewish faith.



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**Teacher Guide created by
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Overall Teaching Strategy

It is recommended that teachers use a combination of informal lecture and guided discussion to present these lessons. There are discussion questions associated with each lesson that teachers may use and/or supplement their own questions. A student note guide is also provided for each lesson.

It is recommended that teachers have students view the associated video or read the text for the lesson. This helps students come to the class ready to discuss the lesson and to formulate questions of their own. Teachers should begin the class with a review of key points from the video/text before starting the discussion.

Begin each lesson with appropriate introductory statements that help students focus on the lesson. Teachers should also provide a brief summary of the previous lesson and an overview of key points of the new lesson. This helps students see the ongoing narrative of scripture.

Conclude the lesson by summarizing, or having students summarize, the information from their notes. It is also helpful to ask questions from the lesson to determine that students grasp the concepts. Asking questions in this manner serves as an assessment to ensure objectives are met.

Challenge students with a call to action to apply this information to their lives in order to help them grow spiritually and help others to do so as well. This can be accomplished by asking questions of students as to how this information relates to their spiritual development at this time and moving forward.

For more information on teaching adults, please visit:
<https://bibletalk.tv/101/teaching>

Lesson #1 - Introduction to Hebrews

The focus of this lesson is on introducing the great book of Hebrews. Some discussion is given to title, date and authorship to provide a clearer understanding of this book. Of special note in this lesson is the purpose and approach of the author.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the purpose of the Book of Hebrews.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of the Book of Hebrews as encouragement to remain faithful.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of the Book of Hebrews to our lives in order to remain faithful.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo – 2015)
- Video – Lesson 1 – Introduction to Hebrews
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 1

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Structure of the Book of Hebrews

1.1 Title

1.2 Authorship

1.3 Date

2.0 Purpose and approach

3.0 General outline

4.0 Jesus: Greater than the Prophets

4.1 Pre-eminence in History

4.2 His person

4.3 His position

5.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Describe the various reasons why Hebrews was written and why it continues to be of great value for Christians today.

Jewish Christians of the period faced challenges to their faith from many directions, especially pressure to return to Judaism. The break from Judaism had not occurred and wouldn't until many years yet to come. The book of Hebrews showed early Christians (especially those with a Jewish background), as well as ourselves today, that Christianity is more than a great choice, it is the only choice. It offers hope and life that Judaism or other religions could not offer. It encourages all to remain faithful to Christ Jesus by showing His superior glory and greatness when compared to Judaism in particular.

2. Develop the following information about the Letter to the Hebrews.

What is indicated by the title?

It was written to a specific group, but its content is relevant to all who seek to have a relationship with God.

Describe the various men thought to be the author of this epistle and why it is important to know the author of a work?

Use the content in the associated text to assist with this. A follow-up question might be, "Which of these do you feel is the author and why?" It is helpful to know an author so we can better understand the context and source of the material contained in the work.

Why do scholars think that the date Hebrews was written was from AD 63-69?

See the associated text.

3. What is the purpose and approach of Hebrews and how does this relate to us today?

The purpose was to encourage Jewish Christians to stand firm in their faith and not return to Judaism. In like manner, we too need encouragement from time to time to not waiver in our faithfulness as the things in the world and our former lives call out to us.

The author uses his knowledge of Judaism to bring these Jewish Christians to a better understanding of what God wishes them to know about the superiority of Jesus in all things. Although the writer is using two religions (Judaism and Christianity) in this letter, we see clearly that Jesus is superior to any religion or way of life. He is superior for many reasons, as Hebrews shows, but most importantly because it is only through Jesus that we have a salvation that is secure eternally because it was procured by God's own action in removing sin from mankind.

4. What are the 2 major divisions of Hebrews and how are they related?

Glory to Christ (Hebrews 1:1 – 10:18)

Glory to the Church (Hebrews 10:19 – 13:25)

They are related through Christ. One cannot separate Christ from the Church. The Jewish Christians believed who Jesus was but were having trouble separating Him from Judaism. In a similar way, many today believe in our Lord but have trouble separating themselves from the world in order to live exclusively for the Kingdom (the church).

5. Review Hebrews 1:1-3 and discuss the following questions.

How does Hebrews 1:1-3 portray Jesus?

Jesus is the one through whom God reveals His complete plan for man's redemption. In the past the fathers and prophets pointed to a hope of the redeemer. Hebrews shows how Jesus is that redeemer. It further reinforces how Jesus is deity as, "the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world." It describes the identity of Jesus as glorious and powerful, and as One who is currently reigning with God the Father.

How does Hebrews 1:1-3 relate to John 1:17 in describing how Jesus is greater than the prophets?

In John 1:17 we see a statement that Jesus brings us the gospel of grace. In Hebrews 1:1-3 we see the writer making the statement that explains how God communicated His will for a relationship with man through the patriarchs and prophets but now speaks His will for us through the teachings of Jesus. In each case, the Law served a purpose of bringing man closer to God. The Law introduced the commands of God for a holy and pure life for the Jewish nation and the necessity for the sacrificial system to achieve this. Jesus came to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17) with a superior life, teaching and sacrifice. No other message or sacrifice is needed or possible.

6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Hebrews was written to a specific audience but like the other books of the Bible, offers us insights into God's will and how we can remain faithful through Jesus Christ. The book of Hebrews clearly describes how Christ is superior to every element of the Jewish religion and in so doing strengthens the reasons why Christians today should hold fast to Jesus as the only true and living God.

Lesson #2 - Jesus: Greater than the Angels: Part 1

The focus of this lesson is on the superiority of Jesus over angels. This is the first of two parts on this topic. Of special note in this lesson is why Jesus is superior to angels and why this idea needed to be addressed.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 2 – Jesus: Greater Than the Angels
- Student Note Guide for Lesson

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Review of previous lesson
- 2.0 Angels
- 3.0 Comparing Jesus and angels
- 4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Review key points of Hebrews from lesson #1.

Who was Hebrews written to and why?

It was originally written to Jewish Christians. They were facing persecution and pressure to return to Judaism. The writer is encouraging the Christians to remain faithful by comparing the various elements of Judaism to the superiority of Jesus.

In what ways does Hebrews show the superiority of Jesus?

- Jesus has preeminence in history
- Jesus was divine in nature
- Jesus is superior in position

2. How are angels described in various scriptures?

Use the text to answer this question. The intent of this question is to show how angels act as God's messengers to men and carry out God's will among men, but are not divine by nature.

- Their role
- Their description
- How they serve God

3. Why is there a tendency for some to worship angels?

Some see angels as divine beings since they serve in the presence of God. Angels are heavenly beings that exercise power from God. Their role is that of a servant and messenger and have no role or power of their own.

4. In what ways does Hebrews 4:4-14 show Jesus as superior to angels?

- He has the superior name - that is title, character, essence (v4)
- He is the Son - that is the King (v5)
- God is His father in a unique way (v5b)
- God commands angels to worship him. The lesser worship the greater (v6)
- Despite their mighty nature and power, angels are still servants while the Son is God and King (v7-8)
- The Son, not angels, made Earth and Heaven (v10)
- The Son is eternal and will supersede the current Heavens and Earth (v11)
- The Son, not angels, is exalted to God's right hand until all of His enemies are conquered (v13)

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

- Show how Jesus is superior to all.
- Show how Jesus increases in our lives (in stature and presence) as we grow spiritually.
- Show that our salvation is in Jesus, not angels or faithful followers (saints) that have gone on before us.

Lesson #3 - Jesus: Greater than the Angels: Part 2

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of our Lord's superiority over angels. Of special note in this lesson is how Jesus, for a period of time, took a position lower than angels and how this demonstrates His humanity and humility.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 3 – Greater Than the Angels – Part 2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 3

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Summary of previous lessons

1.1 Devices

1.2 Salvation: a warning

1.3 Man's position

1.4 Jesus' position

2.0 Death for everyone

2.1 Suffering was God's will

2.2 The results of suffering

3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as "right or wrong" responses.

1. Who were the audience and what was the purpose of the book of Hebrews?

The audience were Jews who had converted to Christianity and who were facing persecution and pressure to return to Judaism. In the opening portions of this letter the author demonstrates the superiority of Jesus over angels. This was done because angels had a high regard in the Jewish religion. Next to God, angels were the only spiritual beings that Jews were familiar with. The writer describes Jesus' place at the right hand of God, far above angels in order to fix Jesus' position in the spiritual hierarchy of heaven.

2. Describe the device the author of Hebrews uses to express Jesus as superior to angels.

The writer expresses the general theme of Jesus greater than angels while also introducing other ideas that will be discussed in later chapters. The example given is from Hebrews 1:14 regarding the role angels have in serving those inheriting salvation.

3. What does the author warn about in Hebrews 2:2-4 and how does this apply to us?

The author warns about the possibility of drifting away from one's salvation and the resulting punishment. To do so is to ignore God's signs, wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

This continues to be a warning for us today as we too can lose our focus of faith in and service to Jesus as our Lord. The world offers many distractions that can interfere with our faith. Some of these are not wrong in and of themselves, but if they prevent us from serving our Lord we run the risk of drifting away from our lives as disciples.

Remember that Jesus referred to those who rejected His teaching as foolish and subject to destruction (Matthew 7:24-27).

4. What does the Hebrew writer explain about man's position (Hebrews 2:5-8)?

Man will inherit with Christ a new world order, however, the angels will not. Man will reign with Christ as our King, but not the angels. He goes on to describe man's dominion over creation. We are not yet able to fully understand all that will be subject to man. Note, however, that when man fell through sin, man's dominion was cut back. Man will return to glory through Jesus following His return. This is a hope for future glory. NOTE: It is through Christ that this will be accomplished, not through the efforts of men or angels.

5. What does the Hebrew writer explain about Jesus' taking a position lower than the angels and what does this mean for us as individuals?

It may mean many things to us as individuals, but it certainly demonstrates the love that our Lord has for us that He would forgo His position as God to humbly submit himself to becoming a man and then as a dying man on our behalf.

We see Jesus and understand His glory and honor following His death and resurrection. By our Lord's victory over death, man has a chance to return to glory.

6. How does the writer describe the death of Jesus?

It was an honorable death; one that led to glory. It was not deserved. It was a substitutionary death made on behalf of mankind to pay the moral debt caused by our sins. The fact that Jesus died a criminal's death at the hands of a foreign army caused some to disbelieve or have a weakened faith.

Hebrews shows us that our Lord's suffering was according to God's will (Hebrews 2:10-13). Through it mankind can receive redemption.

Hebrews 2:14-16 establishes the idea that as a result of the suffering of Jesus Satan was rendered powerless over death. By becoming a man, Jesus was able to free mankind from death (Hebrews 2:15). All of this was aligned with the promise made to the descendants of Abraham (Hebrews 2:16). Hebrews also refers to Jesus as a "High priest" (superior to an Aaronic High Priest) serving as a mediator between God and the people. Like other High Priests, Jesus understands our weaknesses as He presents His sacrifice on our behalf in heaven before God (Hebrews 2:18), something no other priest could accomplish.

7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Jesus is greater than angels although for a time, so as to bring salvation to us, He became lower than the angels, just as man is. This was God's plan. As a result of our Lord's sinless life and resurrection from death, He destroyed Satan's power over sin and enables us to become children of God. This is not a simple concept to grasp but one that is at the heart of who Jesus is, what He did, and what He continues to do on our behalf as our savior. Our role is to pay careful attention to the teachings of Jesus and not drift away into disbelief or worldliness.

Lesson #4 - Jesus: Greater than Moses

The focus of this lesson is on the superiority of Christianity. Of special note in this lesson is how Jesus has greater authority than Moses, therefore, is greater than Moses.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 4 – Jesus: Greater Than Moses
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 4

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Moses: Background
- 2.0 Moses and Christ
- 3.0 Outline – 3:1-4:13
- 4.0 Moses and Jesus: Warning – 3:6b-19
- 5.0 Warning Summarized – 4:11-13

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Summarize the background of Moses and explain why he is a central figure in Jewish history.

The summary should include Moses' birth, calling and role in Israel's freedom from Egypt. His importance stems from his role in freeing Israel from slavery, receiving the law, and leading them through the wilderness to the promised land. Of special note is the timing of the arrival of Moses into history showing God's faithfulness fulfilled in His time.

2. Explain how Moses was a "type" or preview of Christ in the Old and New Testaments.

Answers will vary. Examples from the text include:

- Moses lifting up the serpent in the desert (Number 21:4-9), Jesus being lifted up on the cross (John 3:14)
- Moses giving manna in the desert (Exodus 16), Jesus being the bread of heaven (John 6:3)
- Both threatened to be killed as babies (Exodus 1-2, Matthew 2:16)
- Both deliverers of their people. Both initially rejected (Acts 7:2-44, Romans 9:32)

3. How does Moses compare to Jesus as a faithful deliverer (Hebrews 3:1-6a)?

- Both presented God's word to the people.
- Both brought freedom to the people – Moses from slavery to Egypt, Jesus brings freedom from the slavery of sin.
- Moses was related to the High Priest (Aaron's brother) and gave him instructions for the priesthood and sacrificial system. Jesus is both High Priest and the sacrifice.
- Both were faithful to their role and mission.

4. What warning does the Hebrew writer give in Hebrews 3:6b?

The key word, "if" is foundational to God's promise. We must do our part to remain faithful in our confidence and hope. Biblical hope is described as confident expectation.

5. What was the outcome of the Jewish rebellion under Moses and how does this compare to the possibility of Christians leaving Christ?

The Jewish rebellion led to them dying in the wilderness. Those leaving Christ will die in the wilderness of sin. The Jews entering the promised land had to remain faithful to God's commands under the leadership of Moses. We must remain faithful to the leadership of our Lord Jesus. Without Him there is no hope.

6. What are the two types of rest referred to in Hebrews 3:18?

One is the Sabbath day, a one-day earthly rest from work to concentrate on one's relationship with God. It also pointed towards a future time of unbroken fellowship with God.

The other type of rest was admittance into the Promised Land, a homeland for God's people that pointed towards God's Kingdom on earth, a spiritual kingdom, not political or geographical.

In this passage the author mixes both images to tell his readers they will not reach their reward in heaven if they disbelieve. This applies to us today as we seek to enter the promised land of being in the presence God if we remain faithful.

7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Our hope for eternal life and rest is in Jesus. We cannot return to our former lives or to any other source to find salvation.

Lesson #5 - Jesus: Greater than Aaron: Part 1

The focus of this lesson is on how the writer of Hebrews shows Jesus to be superior to the Jewish religion, the priesthood and the High Priest. Of special note in this lesson is the explanation of how Jesus is superior to Aaron, the first High Priest. This foundational lesson is the first of three on this topic.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 5 – Jesus: Greater Than Aaron – Part 1
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 5

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Jesus is a High Priest – Hebrews 4:15-5:10
 - 1.1 Bridge
 - 1.2 Introduction to Aaron – Hebrews 5:1-4
- 2.0 Jesus is also a High Priest
 - 2.1 Jesus was appointed High Priest
 - 2.2 He was qualified
- 3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Review to whom the Book of Hebrews was written and why.

Hebrews was written to primarily Jews that had converted to Christianity to encourage them to remain faithful to Christ in the face of pressure and persecution. The writer explains how Christ is superior to all things physical and spiritual, and that our hope of salvation is through no other.

2. What makes Jesus a superior High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16)?

Not only is Jesus with us as our High Priest, but He has experienced our human life and now waits for us to enter the promised rest. Because of this, we can proceed with confidence.

3. Answer the following questions concerning the role of High Priest.

Who was Aaron?

Aaron was the brother of Moses and the first High Priest.

Why were sacrifices made by the High Priest?

To offer atonement for the sins of the people. Animal sacrifices go all the way back to the beginning when God covered Adam and Eve with animal skins to hide their shame for sin which was felt through their nakedness. This symbolized the innocent being offered on behalf of the guilty.

What was signified by the extensive clothing worn by the High Priest?

His clothing represented an exalted and important person prepared in a glorious way to approach God. No one else could wear the clothing of the High Priest.

What does the writer in Hebrews 5:1-4 state about the High Priest?

He was appointed from men. He had experienced sin himself and thus was familiar with the need for men to come before God wanting forgiveness for sin. The High Priest could relate to ordinary people because underneath the ceremonial garb he wore was an ordinary man also needing forgiveness for his own sins.

4. How was Jesus better qualified than Aaron as a High Priest?

- Jesus was appointed by God as a priest forever.
- Jesus traces His priesthood's human lineage to Melchizedek who lived before Aaron.
- Jesus knew our needs based upon His shared humanity yet He was without sin. He was both the one offering the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

We can have confidence in our hope of salvation because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus not only shared our experience but also waits for us in the heavenly realm.

Jesus is superior to all elements of our lives. We can have confidence in the promise of forgiveness through our faithfulness to Christ.

Lesson #6 - Jesus: Greater than Aaron: Part 2

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of the Hebrew writer's discourse on the superiority of Christ. Of special note is the writer's admonition for the readers to mature in their faith.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 6 – Jesus: Greater Than Aaron – Part 2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 6

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Review

2.0 Rebuke

2.1 Admonition concerning their immaturity

2.2 Warning against falling away

3.0 Encouragements

3.1 Be faithful

3.2 God's oath to Abraham

3.3 Oaths in general

3.4 Relationship between hope, faith, and Christ

4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Review who the writer is focusing on and why this letter is important to us today.

The book of Hebrews is written to young, immature Christians that converted from Judaism. It remains applicable today as we too face pressures to return to our old lives or former beliefs and abandon our commitment as disciples of Jesus. We must remember that there is no other source of salvation except Jesus.

2. Why would the Jewish Christians look to return to their previous association with Judaism and how does this apply to us?

Answers will vary. Look for the concept of comfort in what we know and uncertainty during change.

There is comfort in the known and fear and discomfort in the unknown. Recall how several times as the Jews wandered in the wilderness they looked back fondly at their captivity in Egypt. Judaism offered them social structure and acceptance of family and community. Christianity offered salvation, but brought these Jewish Christians into conflict with their families and society in general which at the time was not favorable towards this new religion.

3. What are some ways showing Jesus as a High Priest, superior to the High Priestly system, represented primarily by Aaron?

See the introduction to the lesson as provided in the text.

4. What two areas from Hebrews 5:11 – 6:20 does the writer rebuke these Christians and what can we learn from this?

Admonishment concerning their immaturity seen in their inability to discern truth, and failure to mature in knowledge of their faith. They ceased learning about their faith and this resulted in a regressive rather than confident attitude towards their salvation.

We too must continue to learn and grow, not just for our own spiritual development, but also for our ability to teach others about Christ. As we learn, we become capable of learning more. As we teach, we become capable of teaching a greater number and type of people at different levels of faith. All of this equips us to serve and grow spiritually as well as better withstand Satan's attacks.

This helps prevent the second rebuke in this passage, that of falling away. Falling away is another method of saying, returning to the world and our previous lives.

5. What encouragement does the writer offer the Jewish Christians and what encouragement can we gain from this?

- **Be faithful** – This begins with a recognition that we have demonstrated our obedient faith in Jesus. We must now continue to grow spiritually and strengthen our faithfulness.
- **God’s oath to Abraham** – This passage focuses on the historical promise made by God to Abraham, of which we are the recipients. We have been promised an eternal home as God’s chosen people. We are now a spiritual and eternal nation. Just as God promised Abraham a land he could call his own, we also are promised a “home” in heaven if we continue faithfully following Christ.
- **Oaths in General** – When we make an oath, we are stating that we will follow through with what we’ve promised, and as we’ve promised. The most significant oath is the one we make as we commit our lives to Christ. We make this commitment (faithfulness) before God and will be held accountable for this by Him.
- The relationship between hope, faith and Christ – We have hope (confident assurance) that God will fulfill His promise of our salvation through Christ as we’ve placed our faith in Him.

6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Just as the early Christians learned, salvation requires faith expressed in repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). This is only the beginning. We must continue to grow in our faith resulting in spiritual maturity that enables us to draw closer to God and withstand Satan’s efforts to weaken our faith and our influence. Returning to our former lives, as these Jewish Christians were tempted to do, weakens our faith and jeopardizes our salvation.

Lesson #7 - Jesus: Greater than Aaron: Part 3

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of the Hebrew writer's discussion of the superiority of Jesus. Of special note in this lesson is the relationship between Aaron, Melchizedek and Jesus.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 7 – Jesus: Greater Than Aaron – Part 3
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 7

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Background of Melchizedek – Hebrews 7:1-28

1.1 Genesis 14:11-12

1.2 Genesis 14:13-20

2.0 Melchizedek and Jesus – Hebrews 7:1-10

3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. In what ways is Jesus a superior High Priest and how does He serve us in that capacity?

Jesus is in the mold and character of a different kind of High Priest than the Aaronic line. Aaron, and the others that served after him, died and needed another to carry on his work. Jesus, however, was prefigured by Melchizedek who is described as an “eternal” type and figure in the Old Testament.

2. Summarize the event between Abraham and Melchizedek from Genesis 14:11-20.

There was a local war between rival Kings in the region of Sodom and Gomorrah. During this war, Lot was taken captive. Abraham was informed and successfully freed his nephew along with his family and belongings. Following his return, Abraham was met by Melchizedek who was described as the king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. Melchizedek brought out bread and wine and provided a blessing for Abraham. As a sign of respect for Melchizedek as a priest of God, Abram offered him a tenth of all the goods captured.

3. List what is known about Melchizedek from the text.

- King of Salem (aka, Jerusalem)
- Also refers to God and Jehovah indicating a spiritual kinship with Abraham
- Referred to as a Priest of God Most High
- Initiates a blessing on Abraham and receives both a blessing and a tenth of the goods from Abraham’s victory (a sign of recognition and respect to Melchizedek)
- Prophesied

4. How does the Hebrew writer in Hebrews 7:1-10 show the relationship between Melchizedek and Jesus?

- The Hebrew writer indicates Melchizedek as a “type” or preview of the Messiah-king who would ultimately come. This is not to say, as some do, that Melchizedek was actually Christ.
- His name means “My King is Righteous (Jesus is the only true righteous one).
- He was both a king and a Priest, as is Jesus.
- He blessed Abraham, Jesus blesses both Abraham’s physical descendants (Jews) as well as all others who believe in Him (Christians).
- His genealogy is considered endless in that there is no father or death recorded concerning him (Melchizedek). Jesus is eternal (John 1:1-3).

5. How does the Hebrew writer show that Melchizedek is greater in comparison to Levi (the source of the priestly line) and the Levitical priesthood?

See the text for this review.

6. What is significant about changing from the Aaronic type of priesthood to the Melchizedek type?

It is a changing of the basis of each. Aaron is based on law and Melchizedek is based on the power of eternal life. The outcomes are therefore different as well. The law could not resurrect men, clear consciences or draw men nearer to God. It could only remind them of sin and death. The eternal priesthood of Jesus accomplishes all of these as He fulfills the requirements of the Law and gives to mankind the power of life and freedom. There has also been given a promise of salvation from God through Christ. Unlike the Aaronic priesthood that continually offered up sacrifices year after year (since the blood of animals could never atone for sin) Jesus, the High Priest and perfect sacrifice intercedes on our behalf eternally.

7. How is Jesus described in Hebrews 7:26-28?

Holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, exalted with God in heaven, does not need to offer up daily sacrifices for Himself and for the people (the sacrifice has already been made), appointed by an oath after the law and perfect forever.

8. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Jesus is both our High Priest and King. He not only offered the sacrifice for our sins, but was the perfect sacrifice. Because of this, only Jesus offers salvation. All the former priests and sacrifices, pointed to the promised Messiah, Jesus. Once we are united with Christ through our obedient faith, we are given the blessing of salvation.

Lesson #8 - Jesus: Greater than the Jewish Religion: Part 1

The focus of this lesson is on Jesus' role as a High Priest. Of special note are His credentials to serve in this role.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 8 – Jesus: Greater Than the Jewish Religion – Part 1
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 8

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Jesus' ministry is superior to Aaron's ministry

1.1 A better place

1.2 A better covenant

2.0 Conditions of the New Covenant

2.1 Inward focused

2.2 Personal and universal

2.3 Deals effectively with sin

3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as "right or wrong" responses.

1. Summarize how Jesus is superior to Aaron as High Priest.

(See chapter introduction)

- Aaron and descendants were appointed by the Law, temporary and serviced by sinful men.
- Jesus is appointed by God, eternal (Melchizedek type), and serviced by a perfectly righteous Divine Being.

2. Discuss your personal reaction if someone explained to you that your religious beliefs were wrong or inadequate.

- How would this make you feel and how would you respond?

- How would you recommend someone approach another on this subject?

The intent of this question is to help students understand what Paul faced as he tried to keep the Jewish Christians faithful. He was addressing people who had grown up in a religious system that was a part of every element of their lives. They knew God's promise to Abraham that they would be His people. Now, they were being told that they had misunderstood or had been taught in error and needed to change. We find many people today who grew up in a religious system that seems right to them, but now are being told that they are in error and need to change. This causes the same dilemma that the Jews faced from family and associates to not change their present convictions, or if they have, there is a constant pressure to return to their previous lives.

Regardless the answers, look for the need to show compassion, patience and sound reasoning based on evidence from the Bible rather than feelings or opinions. Feelings are important, but in the search for God's will we must study the Scriptures and what they say about salvation. Impress on students that convincing family usually takes time, thus the need for patience.

3. Answer the following questions about How Jesus' ministry is superior to Aaron's ministry:

How does Jesus minister in a better place? (Hebrews 8:1-15)

He does not minister in a man-made place, but at the right hand of God, in the presence of God. The position of being at the right hand of God signifies a place of honor and authority. In this position, Jesus serves as our direct mediator with God.

How does Jesus minister to a better covenant? (Hebrews 8:6-13)

Covenant is a word that means a binding promise or agreement. God established the covenant between Himself and mankind – not mankind. It is a covenant with all who hear and obey. It cannot be changed by men. It is the culmination of all of God's actions throughout man's history. A major component of the covenant is that Jesus is the One who mediates between ourselves and God.

4. From the text, summarize the three conditions of the new covenant.

The new covenant is inward focused and spiritual in nature.

The Old Testament had many complex external rituals and God's commands written on stone for all to see, learn and be judged by. The people could not directly approach or be near God. This is because they were unworthy to come before God.

With the new covenant, we know God's laws and desire to obey because we have a better sense of who God is. We have an internal understanding due to God's will written in our hearts and revealed by the Holy Spirit as we grow and mature. This begins with the new birth (John 3:3-6) and continues to transform us.

The new covenant is both personal and universal.

Under the old covenant only scribes and rulers could teach. In the new covenant, the promise was made that there would be personal, intimate knowledge of God and all would have access to the knowledge of God and His will.

Deals effectively with sin.

Unlike the Old Covenant that required the priests to continually offer the sacrifices of dead animals to cover the sins of the people, the New Covenant has the Son of God both as the One offering a sacrifice and that sacrifice is Himself (Jesus dying on the cross and resurrecting three days later). This offering to God actually removes sin from man forever so that there will never again be the need for a sin sacrifice.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

If we enter into God's covenant by our obedient faith, we receive God's forgiveness of sin and the promise of continued forgiveness as we live faithfully (1 John 5:10). This begins our journey of spiritual growth that steadily brings about a transformation in our lives. By remaining faithful, we are prepared for the Lord's return.

Lesson #9 - Jesus: Greater than the Jewish Religion: Part 2

The focus of this lesson is how the writer of Hebrews continues to demonstrate the superiority of Jesus over the Jewish religion. Of special note is how the service of Jesus produces superior results.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 9 – Jesus: Greater Than the Jewish Religion – Part 2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 9

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 The Tabernacle ritual (Hebrews 9:1-5)
- 2.0 The work of the priests – Hebrews 9:6-10
- 3.0 Jesus’ ministry described – Hebrews 9:11-22
 - 3.1 Effectiveness of His sacrifice
 - 3.2 Reason for His sacrifice
 - 3.3 Superiority of His sacrifice
- 4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Answer the following questions based on the introduction of this lesson:

How is Jesus' ministry superior?

It is done in a better place – the right hand of God, a place of honor and authority.

How is the result of Jesus' ministry on our behalf superior?

It leads to the actual forgiveness of our sins through our obedient faith in Jesus.

2. Describe the worship elements of the tabernacle from Hebrews 9:1-5.

The intent of this question is to familiarize the learner with the complexity and specificity of Old Testament worship as a foundation for showing how the New Covenant offers a superior way and outcome in our worship to God. It is difficult for us to understand this completely due to our lack of first-hand experience in Tabernacle worship. Perhaps if one has participated in worship at a cathedral setting or other ornate structures, we might gain some understanding. This is important to understand since early Jewish converts grew up in a system that emphasized the grandeur of the Temple.

Information for this is in the lesson text and well as Scripture.

3. Describe the work of the priests from Hebrews 9:6-10.

Along with the setting of the tabernacle, the role of priests was specifically outlined in God's commands. The priests performed complex tasks each day and on special annual dates. The role of the High Priest was especially important since only he could enter the Holy of Holies and perform the rituals required on the Day of Atonement.

The significance of this system of sacrifice was to emphasize the holiness of God and man's inability to approach God without a special mediator (the priest).

4. Describe Jesus' ministry from Hebrews 9:11-22.

The writer of Hebrews begins the comparison of Jesus' ministry to that of the priests by using the word, "but". This is a clear indicator of the lesser giving way to the greater. He begins by describing how Jesus' sacrifice was more effective. He entered a greater and more perfect tabernacle in heaven into the very presence of God, by His own sacrifice. His offering was not for Himself since he needed no forgiveness, rather it was for our sins. His more valuable sacrifice resulted in a more valuable outcome, eternal redemption from sin for all those who came to Him by faith.

5. What are the reasons Jesus was sacrificed? (Hebrews 9:15-21)

A sacrifice requires death. This has been a requirement by God since an animal was sacrificed to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. Their sin caused death, and only a life offered in death could remove sin. Ultimately, it was the death of Jesus that atoned for all sin thus permanently removing it.

In order for a new covenant (will) to be executed, a death had to occur. In order for us to receive the benefits of God's plan (will) then a death had to occur. The only acceptable sacrifice was the offering of a perfect sacrifice. Jesus fulfilled this requirement by living a perfect human life. This death given on our behalf enabled us to be forgiven for sin and inherit eternal life.

6. How is the superiority of Jesus' sacrifice described in Hebrews 9:23-28?

The tabernacle and religious objects were purified with the blood from animal sacrifices. Jesus needed a better sacrifice to enter into the presence of God in heaven. This sacrifice had to be spiritual in nature. Because Jesus was Divine as well as human, the value of His perfect sacrifice would be superior to the thousands of sacrifices previously offered under the Old Covenant.

7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

One day, Jesus will return to claim those who have been made clean by His sacrifice and remained faithful to Him throughout their lives here on earth. These will be transformed into glorified beings who are able to be in the presence of God forever.

Lesson #10 - Jesus: Greater than the Jewish Religion: Part 3

The focus of this lesson is the final discussion of how Jesus is superior to the High Priest. Of special note is that the Lord's ministry yields a superior result.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how Jesus is superior to all things in heaven and on earth.
- **Feel:** Defend the superiority of Jesus.
- **Do:** Submit to the lordship of Jesus by obedient faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 10 – Jesus: Greater Than the Jewish Religion – Part 3
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 10

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 The result of the Jewish High Priests' work – Hebrews 10:1-4
- 2.0 Christ's sacrifice – Hebrews 10:5-10
- 3.0 Final summary of Christ's superiority – Hebrews 10:11-18
- 4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as "right or wrong" responses.

1. Answer the following questions from Hebrews 10:1-4:

What would be the result of the Old Testament sacrifices had they been sufficient?

It would have cleansed the consciences of the worshippers and the people would no longer need to offer sacrifices.

How is the Law described and why is this significant?

The Law was a shadow (an image, not the very form) of good things to come. If it is a shadow, then it is inferior to what was to come. It was only a reflection, not the actual thing itself.

How does the writer describe the sacrifices in verses 3-4?

They reminded one of sins each year because they did not take away sins.

2. What does David express as the essential truth about spiritual life and how does this apply to our spiritual lives today? (Psalm 40:6-10; Psalm 51:16:17).

Obedience to God's will and a humble heart are what God desires over sacrifices. Jesus' sacrifice was according to God's will. Jesus was willing to sacrifice Himself as a perfect sacrifice. With His sacrifice, there is now no need for the continuance of the animal sacrifices from before. This sacrifice was made on our behalf and removed our sins and enables us to stand clean/acceptable before God.

3. How does the author compare Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood (Hebrews 10:11-18)?

The Levitical priests continued to offer sacrifices but for no reason except to remind the people of sin and the punishment for it. Jesus, however, as a perfect sacrifice, and according to God's will, offered a final sacrifice and is now seated with God in a position of honor and authority. No other sacrifice remains. Jesus, as our High Priest, presents us before God.

4. What is the ultimate end of God's work among His people? (Hebrews 10:15-17)

A new covenant (better promise) with intimate knowledge of Him and His will. We are now able to go to Him directly. We are now serving God as priests offering ourselves as sacrifices that are acceptable to God. We do this by offering our praise, thanksgiving, service and prayers to God through Christ our Lord!

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

As followers of Christ, we receive full forgiveness of our sins because of His sacrifice. Since sin is removed through Him, and only through Him, no other sacrifice is acceptable or needed. This forgiveness allows us to stand before God continuously cleansed of our sins (1 John 1:5-10).

Lesson #11 - The Glory of the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ Endures

The focus of this lesson is how the church glorifies Christ. Of special note in this lesson is the need to remain faithful. NOTE: Teachers should consider breaking this lesson into two parts given the complexity and scope of the content.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how the church glorifies Christ.
- **Feel:** Recognize the need to be a part of the body that glorifies Christ.
- **Do:** Glorify Christ by being a faithful part of His body.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 11 – The Church of Christ endures.
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 11

Body of the Lesson

1.0 The glory of the faithful church – Hebrews 10:19-25

1.1 Draw near to God with faith

1.2 Hold fast our confession of hope

1.3 Consider one another in love

2.0 The unfaithful will be punished - Hebrews 10:26-31

3.0 The faithful church endures – Hebrews 10:32-39

4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered “right or wrong” responses.

Part 1

1. Defend the premise that if Jesus is superior to the Jewish faith and its system, then His people, the church, are glorious as well.

Answers will vary but look for responses that say we, as Christians, reflect God and Christ. It is not our glory, but the glory of the Father that shines through us as we become more Christlike. In doing this, we not only grow spiritually and strengthen our faith, we also show our Lord to a lost and dying world. This is in keeping with Jesus' statement from Matthew 5:13-16.

2. What is the author of Hebrews saying in Hebrews 10:19-20?

Answers will vary. Look for responses centered around our confidence in coming before God because of Christ's sacrifice and our obedience to Christ.

3. What encouragement does the writer of Hebrews offer to the faithful in Hebrews 10:21-22 and how does this apply to us?

We have a priest before God that allows us to approach God in obedient faith. Therefore let us continue to do so. This is a direct result of the new covenant made by God and continues into eternity. It is available to all those who come to Jesus Christ in humble obedience.

4. What is our “confession of hope”? (Hebrews 10:23)

Our faith in Christ and the associated promise gives us confidence in our salvation.

5. Discuss the meaning of Hebrews 10:24-25 in context of the book of Hebrews.

The intent of this question is to have students understand the context of this often misquoted and misapplied verse. This verse is often used to encourage regular attendance for worship and Bible study. However, this is not its primary meaning or intent.

Recall that the writer is discussing the freedom we now have in Christ to live faithfully and approach God directly. The result of a lack of faithfulness is devastating to our souls since there now remains no sacrifice to remove our sins if we reject Christ. We are to approach God in a variety of ways now that we are free to do so:

- In faith without fear
- In hope without doubt
- In love without hesitation

This passage about not abandoning the assembly is set in the larger context about the freedom we now have to approach almighty God...so now that we have this great opportunity let us not abandon the assembling of ourselves together as is the habit of some.

The writer is not laying down rules about attendance, he's encouraging his readers to not miss the opportunity to approach (which was not there before) now that it's available through Christ and which some are neglecting.

Although we must make every effort to meet together and encourage one another, there is more to this passage than an exhortation to regular attendance for worship and bible study. Remember that the Jews who converted to Christianity were being pressured into returning to their former religion. To do so would be to forsake Christ and the hope of their salvation. Furthermore, it likely would weaken the faith of others and prevent some from coming to Christ in the future. The writer strongly encourages Christians to stay faithful and thus remain in hope and in doing so encourage others. This passage further communicates the idea that there needs to be an active participation in the worship of God and not simply the confirmation of one's membership in the church by occasionally attending a worship service.

Part 2

6. What are some possible understandings of the expression, “day drawing near” and how does this relate to us?

Possible applications include: The Lord’s day, the destruction of Jerusalem or the return of Jesus. In context, the most likely application is the return of our Lord. We must continue in our faithfulness to Christ so as to be prepared for His return.

7. What does the writer of Hebrews warn us about sinning willfully? (Hebrews 10:26-31)

If we’ve obeyed God’s will for our salvation, then intentionally return to a life of sin, or continue to purposefully sin, we will have no other way to return to our Lord if we so desire. Although this passage had an immediate application to the early Christians, there is also a direct lesson for us as well. We must remain faithful so as to not put our salvation at risk. See also 1 John 1:5-10 and Romans 6:1-14.

8. How does the writer of Hebrews encourage Christians to endure? (Hebrews 10:32-39)

The writer tells the Christians to remember their former days and how they now had a better understanding of God's will and the resulting hope of salvation. Furthermore, he encourages them to not discount the persecution they and others have endured.

In a very real way, this applies to us. We should be able to easily compare the sense of desperation we felt as we realized how lost we were and then the wonderful hope (confident assurance) of salvation we then found through Christ.

9. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

We have a hope in sharing in the glory of Christ by drawing closer to God. We hold on in faith, look forward in hope and encourage one another by the witness in good works motivated by our faith in Christ and hope of heaven when He returns.

We recognize the difficulty of remaining faithful. Therefore, each day we must renew our commitment. In doing so, we remain encouraged and encourage others to do the same. Remember, the race is about endurance, not speed (See II Timothy 4:7-8; Matthew 7:13, Hebrews 12:1-3).

Lesson #12 - The Glory of the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ is Faithful

The focus of this lesson is on the faithfulness of the church. Of special note in this lesson is a description of the “Heroes of Faith” and what we learn from their example.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the concept of faith.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of faith.
- **Do:** Apply the examples from Hebrews 11 to grow in faith.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 12 – The Glory of the church of Christ
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 12

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 The lesson from Hebrews 11:1-40
- 2.0 Basic elements of faith
 - 2.1 Assurance
 - 2.2 Conviction
- 3.0 Heroes of faith
- 4.0 The importance of faith to God
- 5.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. What two basic lessons are communicated to us from Hebrews 11:1-40?

Answers will vary but look for:

Faith has always been a key response God desires from us. He does not demand perfection, nor does He value ceremonies or eloquence over faithfulness.

We are recipients of the faithfulness of those who have preceded us. We see their beginning, growth and result of their faithfulness.

2. Compare faith in the Old Testament times to faith in New Testament times.

See the associated text from the introductory information.

3. Answers the following questions from Hebrews 11:1.

What are the two basic elements of faith; what do they mean?

Assurance – The foundation of our faithfulness

Conviction – The evidence that sustains our faithfulness

What does “hope for things not seen” mean?

The result of our faith; “Hope for things not seen” are the blessings and promises made by God through Christ. They include the promise forgiveness, resurrection and eternal life which cannot be seen by the human eye but are grasped through the eyes of faith and delivered by the word of God.

4. Which individual or group listed in Hebrews 11 is your favorite or most impactful example of faith and why?

Answers will vary. Look for how the examples of how they expressed their faith, remained faithful, grew in faith and how they were rewarded by God.

Look also for how they gained approval from God by developing the knowledge of God, trust in God and obedience to God.

5. Why are faith and faithfulness important to God (Hebrews 11:6)?

We may not possess eloquence or full understanding of God's will, but faithfulness is achievable by all. God does not demand perfection, but does demand faithfulness and rewards it.

6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Faith is one of the most important elements in our relationship with God. It must exist before we can know God. Our spiritual growth is linked to our growth in faith.

Lesson #13 - The Glory of the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ is Holy - Part 1

The focus of this lesson is on the type of people who make up the church which is the Body of Christ. Of special note the lifestyle expected of those in the church. NOTE: Given the scope and depth of this lesson, teachers should consider breaking this into two presentations.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the holy lifestyle expected of those in the Body of Christ.
- **Feel:** Recognize the impact of faithfulness on ourselves and others.
- **Do:** Strive to live faithfully according to God's will.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 13 – The Church of Christ is Holy – Part 1
- Student Note Guide for Lesson

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Review

2.0 Hebrews 12

2.1 The example of Jesus - Hebrews 12:1-3

2.2 Discipline, proof of sonship – Hebrews 12:4-12

2.3 Encouragement – Hebrews 12:12-13

2.4 Warning – Hebrews 12:14-17

2.5 Exhortation – Hebrews 12:18-29

2.6 Obedience to God is necessary – Hebrews 12:25-27

3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

Part 1 – Hebrews 12:1-17

1. Answer the following questions as a review of the Book of Hebrews.

Who was Hebrews initially written to?

Jews converted to Christianity.

Why was Hebrews written?

To encourage these Jewish converts not to return to their former Jewish faith.

What is the overall theme of Hebrews?

The superiority of Jesus over all things.

How do we glorify Jesus?

By our faithfulness.

2. Answer the following questions from Hebrews 12:1-13.

What is indicated by the writer's use of the word, "Therefore"?

It is a transitional device used by the author. The author is stating that the examples from Hebrews 11 are to be considered as he moves forward with his encouragement of faithfulness.

What is the purpose of calling attention to the "great cloud of witnesses"?

A witness testifies to something he or she has knowledge of (e.g., testifying at a trial), or to ensure that something is carried out (e.g., witnessing the signing of a document). The writer is encouraging Jewish Christians to pay attention to the testimonials of former saints so as to be encouraged to live faithfully now.

What are encumbrances that prevent us from our faithful service, and how does this differ from sin?

An encumbrance is not necessarily a sin. These are events or situations that cause us to lose focus on the important goal of a faithful life in service to God. These are not necessarily sinful in themselves, and may in fact, be good and necessary. However, we must not let them keep us from living a holy and faithful life before God. Therefore, we should use everything about our lives to strengthen our faithfulness and bring glory to God.

The writer uses both the concept of encumbrance and sin in the context of running a race. He communicates that we must put off those things that weigh us down or prevent us from completing our race.

What image is presented by the expression "Let us run with endurance"?

Our Christian lives are marathons, not sprints. The examples of Hebrews chapter eleven demonstrate lives that were full of challenges and contradictions. Sometimes the saints mentioned were weakened in their faithfulness, but over time they

overcame their obstacles and were successful in finishing their lives faithfully serving God. We are encouraged, by their examples, to endure the marathon of a faithful life. We learn from others to imitate the qualities that they presented and avoid the weaknesses that sometimes hindered their faithfulness.

Why is it important to remain focused on Jesus as the founder and perfecter of our faith?

Jesus is our ultimate “witness”. We follow His teachings and examples. He is the source of our salvation and the fulfilment of our hope. All the others presented in Hebrews 11, and the countless numbers not mentioned, looked forward but never witnessed the deliverance of Jesus. He endured everything so as to bring us into the presence of God. He lived a pure and holy life, free from sin. He lived a life faithful to God the Father. God, in His infinite grace, recognizes our weaknesses and therefore accepts the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf.

Discuss the Hebrew writer’s use of discipline.

Living holy and faithful lives requires discipline. Discipline can mean punishment to correct undesired behavior. It can also mean training to prevent undesired behavior or facilitate good behavior. God disciplined (punished) those of old for their sins and will discipline those today not living holy and faithful lives. He often teaches and encourages us to do His will by telling us what His will is and the consequences of either our disobedience or obedience. The goal of God’s discipline is not to seek revenge or to shame us, but rather to correct us.

Furthermore, the writer reminds us that if God did not love us, He would not discipline us. He regards us as “sons” showing us that we have a special relationship as His children and heirs. By our positive response to His discipline, we will be successful in our faithfulness and thus will be rewarded.

3. Answer the following questions from Hebrews 12:14-17.

What is the value of avoiding conflict? (vs. 14a)

Living at peace with those around us enables us to demonstrate God's love and teach others about Jesus. Peace is also a reward God grants us as we live faithful lives.

Why is holiness important? (vs. 14b)

Recall that holiness, like sanctification, means to be set aside. We are made holy and sanctified by God through our obedient faith. We learn obedience through the discipline of our Lord's teaching. Without being set aside (sanctified, made holy) we cannot see God.

Note: These statements of peace and holiness are critical elements of this chapter.

How can we avoid preventing others from coming short of God's grace?

By our example of enduring faithfulness along with peaceful and holy lives.

Part 2 – Hebrews 12:18-29

4. What is the Hebrew writer communicating by comparing the real event of Mount Sinai from Exodus 19 and 20 to the new covenant under which Christians live today? (Hebrews 12:18:24)

The author is contrasting how the people were not allowed to go up on Mount Sinai but how Christians can approach God on Mount Zion (the church; Kingdom of God). God's barring the approach to Mount Sinai symbolized the gap in the relationship between God and man. It further emphasized man's sin and inadequacy. The Mount Zion referred to in Hebrews 12:22-24 does not refer to an actual physical mountain, but to God's spiritual Kingdom. Man's sinful condition barred anyone from approaching God at Mt. Sinai, however we can now approach God (Mt. Zion) because we have been made holy and thus worthy to approach God, by Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf.

5. What is the warning in Hebrews 12:25-29 and what does it mean for us?

We are not to reject God. Instead, we are to submit to Him. Because of all that God has done for us, and our knowledge of it, we have no excuse for unfaithfulness. If we do not submit ourselves to God after the opportunity God has given us through Christ, then like the Hebrew nation that rejected God, we too will fall short of entering God's eternal kingdom.

6. From Hebrews 12:28-29, what should be our response to God?

We are to be grateful for God granting us entrance into His eternal Kingdom. He didn't have to grant us access; that was done according to His grace. Our response should be sincere gratitude shown through faithful living. When we fully realize what God has done for us, we cannot but worship God.

There is an element of warning in this final statement. We are to come before God (worship) on His terms. This includes reverence and awe both for who He is and what He has done. The warning is that God is capable of total destruction (a consuming fire).

7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

If we understand what God has done for us and what Jesus endured on our behalf, we should be compelled to seek God's will and live faithful lives. Yet, even in our weaknesses, God will recognize us as His children because of the sacrifice of Jesus. We can and must continue to repent and seek to do His will in our lives. The following of God's will includes at its core a worshipful attitude which brings into balance our fear of His justice and acceptance of His love.

Lesson #14 - The Glory of the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ is Holy - Part 2

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of the type of people who make up the church which is the Body of Christ. Of special note is the lifestyle expected of those in the church and some final thoughts on holy living.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the holy lifestyle expected of those in the Body of Christ.
- **Feel:** Recognize the impact of our faithfulness on ourselves and others.
- **Do:** Strive to live faithfully according to God's will.

Support

- Series – Hebrews – The Glorious Jesus (Mike Mazzalongo 2015)
- Video – Lesson 14 – The Glory of the Church of Christ – Part 2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 14

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Hebrews 13:1-6

- 1.1 Love the brethren
- 1.2 Sexual purity
- 1.3 Contentment

2.0 Warnings against strange doctrines – Hebrews 13:7-16

- 2.1 Remembering
- 2.2 Considering
- 2.3 Obeying

3.0 Closing remarks

4.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. How is Hebrews 12 tied to Hebrews 13?

Hebrews 12 states the importance of living holy and faithfully as God’s people by pointing to Jesus and emphasizing 3 key concepts:

- Remaining faithful
- Avoiding conflict and immorality that could cause fellow Christians to lose faith
- Expressing gratitude to God for our salvation

In Chapter 13, the writer provides more specific examples of what holy and faithful living looks like.

2. Answer the following questions from Hebrews 13:1-6:

What are some practical ways we show love for our brethren?

Answers will vary. Look for examples which apply the concepts taught by Jesus and the apostles. More than likely, general concepts such as love and showing compassion will be provided. If not provided, follow-up this question by asking for specific ways to implement these concepts.

How is showing hospitality to strangers related to showing love for the brethren and how does this relate to John 13:35?

The core characteristic of Jesus' disciples is love (John 13:35). We certainly show love to fellow Christians, but when we express this through hospitality to strangers (others), we continue to show Christ through our actions.

What will be the outcome of those who practice sexual impurity?

God will judge them. This indicates, as in other scriptures (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 18; I Thessalonians 4:3-5; Colossians 3:5), that sexual immorality is not tolerated by God and will result in punishment.

Why does the Hebrew writer encourage contentment?

This is a way to show our faith, the assurance that God will provide for our needs. While there is nothing wrong with possessing things, if that becomes our priority and we don't use what God provides to glorify Him, then we are susceptible to practicing a form of idolatry (letting something of greater value come between ourselves and God.).

3. Summarize what the writer states in Hebrews 13:7-16 regarding following strange doctrines.

Remember those who brought you to faith. Remembering is another way of showing honor and appreciation to those who taught us about Christ.

Consider their teaching versus false doctrine. Warnings about false doctrine have been a concern from the beginning. Recall that the purpose of this epistle was as a warning against returning to Judaism, or some form of Law-keeping as a way to salvation. It is a false to suggest that Judaism, or any other form of religion, is superior to Christianity.

Obey present teachers. We belong to a community of believers who are led by Godly men such as elders, teachers and evangelists. They help us to remain faithful (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Timothy 5:17).

NOTE: Although God's word specifies leadership roles are fulfilled by men, we also honor the women in our lives who teach and encourage us. Leadership, no matter the gender of a person, is described as the ability to influence. The faithful women among us influence us to honor God through our faithfulness.

4. How does a faithful and holy church glorify its Lord?

See the outline associated text for this question.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Our Lord does not demand perfection, but He does demand faithfulness. We strive for perfection using Jesus Christ as our standard. As we are faithful, God continues to forgive our sins and satisfy our thirst for righteousness through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

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