## **Explore** the Bible.

### PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE FOR THE DEAF

What is man, that You or the son of man, that You care for the You made him in for a short of

## Hebrews

David Jeremiah, General Editor

with this generation and said, "They always & in their hearts, and they have not known So I swore in My anges, "They will not enter My

n any of you an evil, unbeliet leparts from the living Got. 13 toch other daily, while it is still i

## A STEP OF FAITH

Jesus loves you and wants to have a personal relationship with you. In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to get to heaven and have eternal life? Here is how the Bible answers this question. It is answered in one word and the word is **FAITH**.

### F Is for FORGIVENESS

- Everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness. Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
- God's forgiveness is in Jesus only. Ephesians 1:7: "We have redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."

### A Is for AVAILABLE

- God's forgiveness is available for all. John 3:16: "God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."
- God's forgiveness is available but not automatic. Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

### Is for IMPOSSIBLE

• According to the Bible, it is impossible to get to heaven on our own. Ephesians 2:8-9: "You are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast."

### So how can a sinful person have eternal life and enter heaven?

### T Is for TURN

- If you were going down the road and someone asked you to turn, what would he or she be asking you to do? (Change direction) Turn means repent. Turn away from sin and self. Luke 13:3: "Unless you repent, you will all perish as well!"
- Turn to Jesus alone as your Savior and Lord. John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through Me."  $\!\!\!$ 

• Here is the greatest news of all. Romans 10:9-10: "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

### What happens if a person is willing to repent of their sins and confess Christ?

### H Is for HEAVEN

- Heaven is a place where we will live with God forever. John 14:3: "If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also."
- Eternal life begins now with Jesus. John 10:10: "I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance."

### H can also stand for HOW.

• How can a person have God's forgiveness, eternal life, and heaven? By trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord. You can do this right now by praying and asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins and inviting Jesus into your heart.

### Accepting Christ is just the beginning of a wonderful adventure with God! Get to know Him better in a number of ways:

- Follow Christ's example in baptism.
- Join a church where you can worship God and grow in your faith.
- In your church, get involved in Sunday School and Bible study.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.

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\*Evangelistic Emphasis



### SENERAL EDITOR



Thank you for making a commitment to study the Book of Hebrews. Never before in my lifetime as a pastor has the biblical portrait of the exalted Christ been so foreign to our culture. Too often, Jesus has been relegated

to the role of a trusted guide who inspires and enlightens. His throne has been removed.

With so many believers in our day talking about giving up, a study of Hebrews is desperately needed. We need to be reminded of the gap between God and man! We also need to be reminded that in Christ, He closed that gap. I pray that you will be deeply blessed as you study the Book of Hebrews.

May His Word dwell in you deeply,

### David Jeremiah

### MEET THE WRITER



**GEOGE JOSILIN** became involved in ministry with Deaf people in California in 1957 during his study at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He served as a missionary to the Deaf with the Home Mission Board (now

the North American Mission Board) for 17 years in California, Texas, and Virginia. George is now retired and lives in Springfield, Missouri. After retirement, he and his late wife, Lorene, served 18 months with the International Mission Board helping to start a Deaf church in Ecuador, South America. George spends his time writing and editing. He has published two novels related to ASL, deafness, and interpreting. He has been writing for Lifeway since 2001.



#### PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE FOR THE DEAF

#### VOLUME 24 • NUMBER 1

Send questions/comments to Explore the Bible: DEAF Nashville, TN 37234 By email to explorethebible@lifeway.com

This study was originally published as EXPLORE THE BIBLE: PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE FOR THE DEAF (ISSN 2167-8820; Item 005075111) by Lifeway Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, TN 37234, Copyright © 2014 Lifeway Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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### **BIBLE READING PLAN**

#### MONTH 1

- Hebrews 1:1-4
  Hebrews 1:5-7
- □ Hebrews 1:8-9
- Hebrews 1:10-12
- □ Hebrews 1:13-14
- Hebrews 2:1-4
- Hebrews 2:5-9
- Hebrews 2:10-13
  Hebrews 2:14-15
- □ Hebrews 2:14-15
- Hebrews 3:1-3
- □ Hebrews 3:4-6
- Hebrews 3:4-0
  Hebrews 3:7-11
- Hebrews 3:7-11
  Hebrews 3:12-14
- Hebrews 3:12-14
  Hebrews 3:15-19
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- □ Hebrews 5:11-14
- Hebrews 6:1-3
- □ Hebrews 6:4-6
- Hebrews 6:7-8
- □ Hebrews 6:9-12
- □ Hebrews 6:13-15

### MONTH 2

Hebrews 6:16-18 Hebrews 6:19-20 □ Hebrews 7:1-3 Hebrews 7:4-7 Hebrews 7:8-10 □ Hebrews 7:11-13 Hebrews 7:14-16 □ Hebrews 7:17-19 Hebrews 7:20-22 Hebrews 7:23-25 □ Hebrews 7.26-28 Hebrews 8:1-3 Hebrews 8:4-6 Hebrews 8:7-9 □ Hebrews 8:10-13 Hebrews 9:1-5 □ Hebrews 9:6-7 Hebrews 9:8-10 □ Hebrews 9:11-12 □ Hebrews 9.13-14 □ Hebrews 9:15 □ Hebrews 9:16-18 Hebrews 9.19-22 Hebrews 9:23-24 □ Hebrews 9:25-28 □ Hebrews 10:1-4 □ Hebrews 10:5-7 □ Hebrews 10:8-10 □ Hebrews 10:11-14 □ Hebrews 10:15-18 □ Hebrews 10:19-22

### MONTH 3

□ Hebrews 10:23-25 □ Hebrews 10:26-27 Hebrews 10:28-31 Hebrews 10:32-35 Hebrews 10:36-39 □ Hebrews 11:1-3 □ Hebrews 11:4-7 □ Hebrews 11:8-12 Hebrews 11:13-16 □ Hebrews 11:17-22 Hebrews 11.23-29 Hebrews 11:30-38 □ Hebrews 11:39-40 □ Hebrews 12:1-2 Hebrews 12:3-6 Hebrews 12:7-10 □ Hebrews 12:11-13 Hebrews 12:14-17 Hebrews 12:18-24 Hebrews 12:25-27 Hebrews 12:28-29 □ Hebrews 13:1-3 □ Hebrews 13.4-6 Hebrews 13:7-9 Hebrews 13:10-12 Hebrews 13:13-15 Hebrews 13:16-17 □ Hebrews 13:18-19 Hebrews 13:20-21 Hebrews 13:22-25



### ACCEPTING CHRIST



I grew up in a Christian home. I was the only Deaf person in my family. I went to church with my family, but there was no interpreter. I had a bad attitude and bad behavior. I did not know about Jesus.

Inside my heart I was bothered. I felt lost and did not have a good life. I felt guilty about my past and my

bad attitude. One day I saw a drama that showed the devil and Jesus. I felt scared and lost. I knew I had to make a decision. I had to decide to ask Jesus Christ into my heart.

About the same time I learned about a Deaf camp from the Deaf ministry pastor and his wife. I went to the camp when I was 13 years old. I learned about Jesus during the Bible study at the camp. I had time to fellowship with other Deaf young people. At the camp, I realized that Jesus wanted to be my Savior. I accepted Jesus Christ into my life at that time.

After that, I left my family's church and joined the church with the Deaf ministry. I got involved with the ministry at Parkwood Baptist Church. I started to learn the different Bible stories and learned more about Jesus. I became involved in the church. I felt good and happy. I knew my old life was gone and I started a new life with the change from the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells me in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that anyone who believes in the Christ is a new creation. The old is gone!!! The new has come!!

Maybe you want to have a new life in Jesus. It is not hard. You can be a new creation if you follow these easy steps:

Romans 3:23 – Every person has sinned. **Confess** to God that you are a sinner.

Romans 10:9 – Tell God that you believe Jesus died for you and ask Him to forgive you and come into your heart to live.

Romans 3:22 – Maybe you don't FEEL different, but rejoice and thank God for His wonderful gift. This is a step of faith.

2 Corinthians 3:18 – Let others see Jesus living in you. "Our faces, then, are not covered. We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like him. This change in us brings ever greater glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

#### Steven Nance

### **INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS**

**Who Wrote the Letter to the Hebrews?** The letter does not tell us who wrote it or who it was written to. Many things in the letter give the idea Paul wrote it. Some of the possible writers who have been suggested spent much time with Paul, like Priscilla, Barnabus, Luke, or Apollos. The author of the letter is unknown, but we know God inspired him, just as He inspired the authors of the other books in the Bible.

When Was the Letter to the Hebrews Written? The date is not clear, but because of a reference to the temple in Hebrews 10:11, it was probably written before the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70. However, some scholars think it may have been written about ten years after the destruction of the temple.

Why Was the Letter to the Hebrews Written? The Jewish Christians scattered around the Gentile world were persecuted and were tempted to return to Judaism. The writer compares his readers to the Israelites who rebelled against God and Moses in the desert. The writer tells how God's judgment came on them and will come on anyone who disobeys Him. He encouraged them to keep their **faith** strong. Christ alone deserved their devotion, even if following Him meant they would suffer.

**Who Received the Letter to the Hebrews?** Hebrews is another word for Jews. So, the letter to the Hebrews was written for Jewish people living in Gentile nations. They were probably Jewish people who had accepted Jesus as their Messiah (Savior). They were in danger of slipping back into the traditions of Judaism because they had not grown as Christians. They needed to increase their **faith** through understanding how God rewards **faith** and obedience but punishes sin and disobedience.

**Timportant Subjects in the Letter to the Hebrews.** The writer identifies Jesus Christ as the Messiah who is greater than the prophets, the angels, Moses, and the priesthood. Jesus brought a new **covenant** 

The last two chapters contain teachings about how we ought to live. We can persevere because we have free access to God in a new way. Session

# Who Is Jesus?

(Xor 100)

Jesus was God's Son. He revealed God to us.

### **HEBREWS 1:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> In the past, God spoke to our **ancestors** through the prophets many times and in many different ways, <sup>2</sup> But now, in these **last days**, God has spoken to us through His Son. God has chosen His Son to own all things, and through Him He made the world. <sup>3</sup> The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like. He holds everything together with His powerful word. When the Son made people clean from their sins, He sat down at the right side of God, the Great One in heaven. <sup>4</sup> The Son became much greater than the angels, and God gave Him a name that is much greater than theirs.

### FIRST THOUGHTS

The writer of Hebrews used several illustrations to show Jesus is better and greater than anyone or anything. Moses was a great leader, but Jesus is better than Moses. The priests did a good job with the sacrifices at the altar, but Jesus is greater than the priests. The prophets spoke for God, but Jesus showed us the Father more clearly than the prophets could. Angels were God's servants but Jesus is greater than the angels.

Have you watched a skilled person do something that you know a little bit about? Because he is skilled, he makes the job look easy. I have painted my house and did a good job. But I have seen professionals paint and never spill a drop of paint. The professional is a better painter than I am. All of us have people we think are "the best" in one way or another.

### List people you think are better than others in some way:

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

This letter was written many years after the resurrection. It was written for Jewish people living in Gentile nations. In these first verses, the writer wants them to remember who Jesus is.

In this letter, the writer of Hebrews draws our attention to this truth: Jesus Christ is God. In His nature, in His involvement in creating the universe, and in His death on the **cross** for our **salvation**, God's Son, Jesus, shows how God the Father and God the Son are the same. Only through Jesus Christ can we see God's marvelous character.

### Do these words help you to understand more about Jesus? YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

In Old Testament times, God often spoke to His people. Most of the time, it was through His prophets or other leaders. Sometimes, God spoke directly to someone or spoke through an angel or through a vision. The Jewish people who read this letter knew all about that.

### DID YOU KNOW: ... About Angels?

God sent angels with messages. What is the name of the person God spoke to through the angels in these verses? Genesis 16:7-11, Luke 1:11-19

The Old Testament tells how God chose people and showed them something about Himself so they could tell it to others. For four hundred years after the last book in the Old Testament (Malachi), nothing was written. God did not speak through prophets or angels or visions. Then Jesus came to earth! Jesus came to show us God more completely than any time in the past.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. Introduction to Hebrews

The word *better* is used often in the Letter to the Hebrews. The word *perfect* is used several times, also. Keep these words in mind as you study this great Bible book.

Look at Hebrews 1:1-4, our lesson for today, and find where it says Jesus is greater than A\_\_\_\_\_.

List two people you know who are very skilled at something – a teacher, an ASL story teller, a ball player, a person who has a good garden every year, etc.

I know \_\_\_\_\_\_ is skilled in \_\_\_\_\_\_.

I know \_\_\_\_\_\_ is skilled in \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Now, try to think of someone you have read about who is better than each of the names you have on your list.

I have read about \_\_\_\_\_\_. He/she is skilled in \_\_\_\_\_\_.

I have read about \_\_\_\_\_\_. He/she is skilled in \_\_\_\_\_\_.

#### 2. God Spoke (Hebrews 1:1-2a)

#### VERSE 1

In Old Testament times, God spoke to His people through the prophets. Who were the Jewish **ancestors**? (Some translations have the word *fathers.*) They were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua and other leaders identified in the first five books of the Bible.

### God spoke a few times in some unusual ways. Find Isaiah 6:1-8 in your Bible. What did Isaiah see?

Find Exodus 3:1-10. How did God speak to Moses?

### Find 1 Kings 19:1-13. How did Elijah the prophet hear God speak?

#### VERSE 2a

The messengers of the Old Testament time were the prophets. But the messenger of these **last days** (the New Testament time and our time) is God's Son, Jesus. The next few chapters explain more about God's Son. At Jesus' baptism, the people heard God say, "You are my Son" (Mark 1:11).

The Jews respected the prophets, but they often did not obey God's words when the prophets preached to them.

But now, Jesus shows us what God is really like. Jesus is just like God and so we can know God when we know Jesus.

Many years ago I heard about a Deaf man in Texas from some of his friends. I never met the man, but his friends told me about him. Later I met his son. He told me about his father. After meeting his son, I felt I truly knew him myself. This is what we learn from this letter to the Hebrews. The Old Testament prophets and religious leaders told a lot about God. Jesus helps us *know* God more perfectly.

### What do you know about Jesus that helps you know more about God the Father?

#### 3. God Showed Himself to His People (Hebrews 1:2b-4)

The writer of Hebrews described Jesus as the perfect revelation (or introduction) of God to man. Jesus is Creator, Son, and Savior (English), Messiah (Hebrew), or Christ (Greek).

#### VERSE 2b

Like a king in a royal court, God named His own Son to **inherit** everything He created, both in heaven and on earth. He also made everything through His Son. With that idea, the writer of Hebrews emphasized the eternal truth "Jesus Christ existed before the universe was created." Jesus' existed before creation. Compare Jesus with others who spoke for God in the past? Jesus is (check one)

Greater than the others? \_\_\_\_\_

Equal with the others? \_\_\_\_\_

Weaker than the others? \_\_\_\_\_

#### VERSE 3

The Son reflects the glory of God and when we see the Son we know what the Father is like. Jesus said, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Another fact in this verse is how Jesus "holds everything together with His Word." Genesis 1 helps us see how powerful is God;s Word.

Paul wrote that Jesus was there before anything was made, and all things continue because of Him (Colossians 1:17). The Son is still in control of everything. Jesus gave His life so we can be forgiven for our sin. All people are guilty of sin (Romans 3:23). After Jesus rose from the dead, He went back to heaven and sat down in the most honored seat in heaven, on the right side of God the Father.

#### VERSE 4

Angels, as God's servants, were very important to the Jewish people. The angels often spoke for God. Jesus came to earth to teach us many things about God. Jesus is greater than angels.

### IN MY CONTEXT

Can you answer this question if a friend asks you – "Who is Jesus?" Can you explain how Jesus is God's Son. He is greater than the angels. He is God.

Jesus is the full revelation of God to humanity. Through Him, we can understand God's character and the gospel message. As God reveals Himself to us, we can share that truth with others.

Did this study help you understand more about Jesus? Copy some of the words from the Bible verses that help you understand more about Jesus.

Study next week's lesson. Underline words in the Bible verses you want to understand better. Ask for help with these next week at your Bible class.

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"Now, in these last days, God has spoken to us through His Son."

—(Hebrews 1:2)

# PAY ATTENTION

Session

Believers must be careful not to drift away from Jesus.

### **HEBREWS 2:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> So we must be more careful to follow what we were taught. Then we will not **stray away** from the truth. <sup>2</sup> The teaching God spoke through angels was shown to be true, and anyone who did not follow it or obey it received the punishment that was earned. <sup>3</sup> So surely we also will be punished if we ignore this great **salvation**. The Lord Himself first told about this **salvation**, and those who heard Him testified it was true. <sup>4</sup> God also testified to the truth of the message

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by using wonders, great signs, many kinds of miracles, and by giving people gifts through the Holy Spirit, just as He wanted.

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

Do you remember a Deaf child in school turning his head away or closing his eyes when the teacher wanted to sign something to him? That is how people sometimes act when God speaks to them.

As you study today's lesson, think about how many hours a week you give God an opportunity to speak to you?

\_\_\_\_ Bible study and worship on Sunday (about two hours?).

\_\_\_\_ Wednesday night Bible study or other weekday time.

\_\_\_\_ Hours spent each day in private Bible study and prayer.

In those few hours each week, God has an opportunity to speak to you. A more important question is "Do you look for Him to contact you?" Or, "When you understand, do you obey?"

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

God spoke through angels and in other ways in the past. Today we have His Word, the Bible, to guide us. The lesson today emphasizes the need to spend time reading God's Word and praying so God can speak to our hearts.

Last week's lesson ended with Hebrews 1:4. In verses 5-14 we learn more about how Jesus is greater than any other power. Can you find what it says about Jesus?

# In verse 5, He is the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ . In verse 6, He is worthy of \_\_\_\_\_\_. In verses 7-9, He is the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of God. In verses 10-13, He is the \_\_\_\_\_\_ and ruler of the universe.

Verses 10-12 are from Psalm 102:25-27. The writer of Hebrews showed this Psalm speaks of the Son because He is God. Verse 14 reminds us that angels were created to serve, not to rule, but God's Son has power to rule.

All of these verses, in Hebrews and in Psalms, show how Jesus is equal to God because He is God, and how He is far above the angels or any other thing.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

### 1. Pay Attention! (Hebrews 2:1)

#### VERSE 1

People need to obey God's truth when someone tells them. A person who does not obey is like a person who does not pay attention to danger signs on the highway.

We are responsible for the truth we have heard. We cannot simply walk away from it when it does not please us at the moment. For that reason, we are responsible to the Lord if we drift away from our trust in Him.

In this verse, the writer shared a serious warning. His readers may have been thinking about walking away from being a Christian. If they returned to the Jewish religion they would lose the joy and peace they had in Jesus. They had no excuse for becoming disobedient. They needed to pay attention to His warning. Their decision to take another path for worship would bring God's punishment.

Like the believers in N.T. times, we face the same temptation. Even though we may not have the same problems they had, the warning is still important to us. We must pay attention to it. Our lesson today reminds us we must pay attention to spiritual truths. List some warning signs you need to pay attention to so you can keep your faith in Christ strong.

Think of some things that can lead you away from faithfulness to Christ. List them here. These may be "good" things like work, sports, or TV, or "bad" things like drugs, pornography or bad friends.

#### 2. The Danger of Not Paying Attention (Hebrews 2:2-3a)

#### VERSE 2

The Law explained what will happen if a person does not obey it. The writer reminded the Jews of times in the past when God spoke to them. The old message was given through angels (Acts 7:53).

### What did the angel say to Abraham's nephew Lot in Genesis 19:1-29?

What did the angel do on the night of the first Passover in Egypt? See Exodus 12:1-30.

#### VERSE 3a

The message Jesus brought is much more important than what the angels brought. Christ is the only way to enter heaven. He made it possible with His death and resurrection. If we do not accept Him, we have no hope. This is why He is so much better than the angels and what He says is better than what the angels said. The first people to follow Jesus told others, then they told more people, and so the gospel spread. This has continued until now. We have heard and we must share what we know about Jesus. This gospel is the good news that Jesus took our punishment onto Himself.

### **BIBLE SKILL**: What Did Jesus Say?

Read Matthew 5-7 and learn what Jesus taught about how to live. As you read, remember the title of this lesson, Pay Attention! List some of the things Jesus taught:

A group of Deaf people who were all members of the Deaf Baptist Church went to the annual meeting of the state Association of the Deaf. One evening, Allen missed the business meeting of the Association. The next day he shared with his church friends, "I met some young Deaf people yesterday afternoon and they began to ask questions about my church and the Bible. We spent three hours together and two of them accepted Jesus as Savior!" Sharing the gospel was much more important than the business meeting of the Association.

Witnessing is difficult for most Christians. But Christ has promised to bless us when we tell others how to be saved.

### Put an X beside the things you can do to prepare yourself to witness to others:

- \_\_\_ Pray for God to show you someone you need to witness to.
- \_\_\_\_ Ask your Bible class to pray for that person.
- \_\_\_\_ Ask your teacher or pastor for help in finding the verses to use in witnessing.

#### 3. Truth Proved (Hebrews 2:3b-4)

#### VERSE 3b

When we read God's Word and pray, the Holy Spirit will help us to know it is true. The message was precious because Jesus said it first. He showed the promise was true with His life, death, burial, and resurrection.

The writer and his readers shared the same experience with the message of **salvation**. They heard it from someone who told it to them. Neither the writer nor the readers heard it from Jesus. Someone shared the gospel with them and proved the truth of the message they preached. Therefore, it had the same authority as when Jesus first preached it.

### Who was the first person who share the Gospel with you?

Did you accept Christ as Savior at that time, or later? \_\_\_\_\_Write here the date or year you were saved. \_\_\_\_\_

#### VERSE 4

The gifts of the Holy Spirit show the truth of the message. The first believers spoke of what Jesus did and God proved it was true by special signs and miracles. No man could do these things without the Holy Spirit.

Do you see why this lesson has the title, Pay Attention? The memory verse below is one we need to think of often. "We must be more careful to follow what we were taught."

### **IN MY CONTEXT**

This lesson reminds us we need to be faithful to God in our Bible study, at church and at home.

Do you think about God's truths when you are at work and let God lead you in your conversation, actions, and how well you do your job? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do you think about what God's Word tells you about your family life? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do you try to teach these truths to your children and other family members? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

What will you do differently this week to be faithful to God?

Write this memory verse on a piece of paper and keep it where you can see it every day.

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"We must be more careful to follow what we were taught. Then we will not **stray away** from the truth." —(Hebrews 2:1)

Session

# Why One of Us?

God's Son took on human nature to free us from sin and death.

### **HEBREWS 2:14-18**

<sup>14</sup> Since these children are people with physical bodies, Jesus himself became like them. He did this so that, by dying, He could destroy the one who has the power of death — the devil — <sup>15</sup> And free those who were like slaves all their lives because of their fear of death. <sup>16</sup> Clearly, it is not angels that Jesus helps, but the people who are from Abraham. <sup>17</sup> For this reason, Jesus had to be made like his **brothers** and **sisters** in every way so He could be their merciful and faithful **high priest** in service to God. Then Jesus could die in their place to take away their sins. <sup>18</sup> And now He can help those who are tempted, because He Himself suffered and was tempted.

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

The title of today's lesson asks, "Why one of us?" Why did God send His Son to become like us? He could have sent an army of angels. But He sent His only Son. Have you memorized John 3:16? Find it in your Bible and mark it. Try to memorize it this week.

When you think of Jesus, how do you see Him? Is He like a real person you know here on earth? Or is He some shadow or invisible spirit somewhere far away?

This is difficult for us to understand because Jesus was both God and man while He was on earth. When we try to see Him as a man, we think of His resurrection. When we try to see Him as God, we think of how He walked on earth and talked with people.

By **faith** we can see Him as both God and man.

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

The verses between last week's lesson and this lesson (Hebrews 2:5-13) continue to show how Jesus is greater than the angels.

In this world, God has made people a little lower than angels. God gave Adam authority over the earth. Find Genesis 1:28.

Fill in the blanks in this sentence about what God said to Adam, "Rule over the F\_\_\_\_\_ in the sea and over the B\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the sky and over every L\_\_\_\_\_ thing that moves on the earth."

Did Adam do this? No, Adam failed to rule as God wanted. Adam

sinned and God punished him. Adam lost the right to rule the earth. But God will keep His promise and man, through Jesus, will rule in the future.

In order to make us clean from sin, God must have a sacrifice. Jesus came to earth and became one of us. Then He suffered on the **cross** for the sin of all of us. Jesus' death on the **cross** was not for His sins. He was perfect. When He died, He accepted all our sin.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. To Destroy the Devil (Hebrews 2:14-16)

#### VERSE 14

We have human bodies. For Jesus to help us, He took on a human body and blood and was a real human being. We are human and we sin. The punishment for our sin is death, of our body and our spirit. Jesus took all our sin upon Himself as a real human. Jesus did not sin. When He died, He took our punishment on the **cross**. The devil had the power of death, but Jesus defeated the devil. Death in these verses is spiritual death. This means a future without God, forever. When a Christian dies physically, it is not the end. It is the beginning of a new life, eternally with God. This is spiritual life.

Jesus came, lived, died, and lived again so He could deliver us from two enemies. First, Jesus delivered us from the grip of Satan (the devil). Jesus gave Himself for us so He could destroy the devil. The devil has always been the enemy of God and the enemy of God's work. When we receive Christ, we are saved from the devil's power over us.

### What difference does it make for you to know that Christ has destroyed Satan? I know

#### VERSE 15

Jesus saved us from a second enemy, the fear of death. With His death and resurrection, He set us free from fear. We understand that physical death leads to eternal life in heaven with Him. At the time of death, this truth gives us **faith** and peace.

Have you thanked the Lord for taking away your fear of death? YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If you are afraid of death, what can you do? Talk with your p \_\_\_\_\_ or another strong Christian. Ask him / her to suggest Bible verses to help you.

### **DID YOU KNOW: ... We Are Children of Abraham?**

Read Galatians 3:6-9. Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation. God made a special promise to Abraham. God promised Abraham many children. Answer the questions to see how we, as Christians, are children of Abraham.

How did Abraham become right with God?

Abraham's true children are people who have

God makes non-Jewish people right with Him through their

We are children of Abraham because of our



#### VERSE 16

Jesus did not come to earth to die for angels, but to die for people. He did not become an angel. He became a man. The writer told the Jewish people how Jesus came to bring **salvation** to them, the children of Abraham. When we accept Jesus as Savior, we become the spiritual children of Abraham. The reason God chose Abraham is because of his faith. When we show **faith** in God, we are like Abraham.

Christ became human because He knew we needed His help. If He had not become a person, Satan would still control us, and we would still live in fear of death.

### Do you have a family member, or a friend who needs to know and believe that Christ came to help them? Write their names.

Pray for them every day and ask God to show you how to share the assurance of salvation with them.

#### 2. To Pay for Our Sin (Hebrews 2:17-18)

#### VERSE 17

When you buy something in a store you get a receipt that says, "Paid in Full." Jesus made "payment in full" for our sins. He became a man, like other men, and then God made Him our "merciful and faithful **high priest**." The idea of Jesus as our **high priest** is one of the key teachings in the letter to the Hebrews. He did not come in the form of an angel. He came in the form of a man. He was a **high priest** and He became the sacrifice. God accepted the sacrifice as payment in full for all our sin. Because of the death of Jesus, God will forgive all people who accept Jesus as their Savior.

Draw a square on a piece of paper. On one side of the square, put a "J" for Jesus. Inside the square, put another "J." Now, imagine the square is a Jewish altar. Your simple drawing shows Jesus as the priest and also as

the sacrifice. Does the idea of Jesus as **high priest** and sacrifice help you to understand **salvation** a little bit better?

#### VERSE 18

Jesus knows how strong temptation can become. He was tempted, but He did not sin. He was without sin. When we fail, and **confess** our sin, and **repent**, He is ready to forgive us.

Christ is ready to help us when we are tested. Jesus Christ is truly our merciful and faithful **high priest**!

If you are a Christian, find these verses and mark them in your Bible. Put an X beside the ones you know can help you be sure you are saved.

\_\_\_ John 3:16

- \_\_\_\_ Romans 3:23; \_\_\_\_ 6:23; \_\_\_\_ 10:9-10
- \_\_\_\_ Matthew 28:19-20
- \_\_\_\_ Acts 1:8

If you are not a Christian, ask your Bible teacher or another mature Christian to explain these verses to you.

Because Jesus came to earth and lived as a man, He understands the temptations and difficulties we have. Because He died for us, we can have eternal life by accepting Him as our Savior. Now, Jesus is in heaven, waiting for us to join Him for eternity.

### **IN MY CONTEXT**

What can you do with what you have learned from this lesson? It has a lot of spiritual truth in it. Check the statements that show what you can do.

- I can use this information to tell someone how to become saved.
- \_\_\_\_ I can use this to help me to be more sure of my own salvation.
- I can use this to help another Christian who has some doubt about his salvation.
- \_\_\_\_ I can use this to respond when I feel Satan is tempting me.
- \_\_\_\_ I can use this to help me say, "Thank you, Lord, for saving me."

### **MEMORY VERSE**

*"He can help those who are tempted, because He Himself suffered and was tempted."* —(Hebrews 2:18)

## Watch Out!

Believers need to encourage each other to hold strong to Jesus.

Session

### **HEBREWS 3:7-15**

<sup>7</sup> So it is as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, listen to what He says. <sup>8</sup> Do not be stubborn as in the past when you turned against God, when you tested God in the desert. <sup>9</sup> There your **ancestors** tried me and tested me and saw the things I did for forty years. <sup>10</sup> I was angry with them. I said, 'They are not loyal to me and have not understood my ways.'<sup>11</sup> I was angry and made a promise, 'They will never enter my rest.'" <sup>12</sup> So **brothers** and **sisters**, be careful that none of you has

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an evil, unbelieving heart that will turn you away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage each other every day while it is "today." Help each other so none of you will become hardened because sin has tricked you. <sup>14</sup> We all share in Christ if we keep till the end the sure **faith** we had in the beginning. <sup>15</sup> This is what the Scripture says: "Today listen to what he says. Do not be stubborn as in the past when you turned against God."

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

One day I watched a little boy walking with his father. The sidewalk had a short stone wall beside it. The child wanted to walk on the stones. The father told him to go ahead. The boy started out and then reached for his father's hand. He was afraid and wanted his father's hand. When he had a strong hold on his father's hand, the little boy walked easily on the stones. He was not afraid of falling when he had his father's hand to hold him.

This is the way we are as Christians. We need the security of His hand in ours. Sometimes Jesus helps us by showing us how we can help each other spiritually. Sometimes we can encourage another person. Sometimes that person encourages us. We encourage each other when we meet together to study the Bible. We help each other when we pray for each other. Pray for others in your class. Tell them you pray for them.

### Last week, I encouraged my Christian brother or sister by

### UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The writer reminded the Jewish Christians to look back at their history. The books of Exodus and Numbers tell the story of the escape from slavery in Egypt and the forty years of wandering in the desert. After God delivered them from Egypt, they still turned away from obeying God and God punished them.

The people disobeyed, so God let them wander in the desert until all the men who disobeyed had died. Then God let them go on into the promised land. Our lesson today does not include Hebrews 3:1-6. In 3:1 the people are identified as **brothers** and **sisters**, called by God. Spiritual **brothers** and **sisters**, called by God to **salvation** as individuals and called by God to work together as a church.

### **DID YOU KNOW: ... Disobedience Caused the Delay?**

The word delay means to do something later. When you plan a trip but forget to make your airplane reservation, there may not be any seats left. You have to delay your trip and go on a later plane. The Jewish people disobeyed God. They were not ready to enter the promised land. Read the following verses and write down how the Jewish people disobeyed God.

Exodus 16:8	Exodus 17:2
Exodus 32:8	Numbers 11:1
Numbers 14:1	Numbers 14:20-23

Verses 2-6 continue the discussion of how Jesus is better or greater. In these verses, He is greater than Moses. Moses was like a servant in God's house, but Jesus was the Son.



### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. Know Your History (Hebrews 3:7-11)

#### VERSE 7

In these verses, the writer of Hebrews quoted Psalm 95, comparing Israel with the church. Like the Israelites in the Old Testament, the people who read this letter were in danger of turning their backs on God and refusing to obey Him. In your quiet time with God, do you ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to understand the truths of His Word?

### What verse have you read this week that God used to speak to you? Write that verse here: \_\_\_\_\_

#### VERSES 8-9

The desert is a place where life is difficult. They were used to the big cities of Egypt. Because they disobeyed, they spent forty years in the desert. During that time, God protected them, provided for them, and guided them. But they continued to rebel against Him.

### Can you remember a time in your Christian walk when the Lord tested you to see if you were willing to obey Him? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ How did you act during that hard time?

#### **VERSES 10-11**

The Israelites did not trust God. They refused to go into the promised land because they were afraid. They did not listen to God.

This is one of the few places where the Bible tells us God was angry. God's anger is His response to sin and it leads to punishment. His anger is toward people who will not **turn away** from sin.

For the Israelites at that time, the place of rest was the promised land with all the blessings of good food and an easier life. In these verses in the Letter to the Hebrews, God promises rest. This rest is the joy and peace we have as a Christian here on earth, and the rest we will have one day in heaven.

How can you keep your heart turned to the Lord so you can walk in His ways?

#### 2. Pay Attention to the Warning (Hebrews 3:12)

The writer turns back to the "**brothers** and **sisters**." He reminds them how they need to be careful and not **turn away** from God's will and face God's anger. *Unbelief* (turning from God) in these verses does not mean a Christian can become an *unbeliever* (lost person) again. It means he will lose that close relationship he has enjoyed with Christ and the peace and joy he has with Him. Perhaps the words **brothers** and **sisters** were used to remind the readers they are sharing peace and joy together in the church. The Christians who read this letter faced the same choice as the Israelites in the desert. They could keep on trusting the Lord to be with them, or they could give up on their faith.

### **BIBLE SKILL**

Warning for Old Testament Israelites: Psalm 106:24-25 "Then they r\_\_\_\_\_ to go into the beautiful land of Canaan; they did not b\_\_\_\_ what G\_\_\_\_ promised. They g\_\_\_\_\_ in their tents and did not o\_\_\_ the Lord."

Message to New Testament Christians: Hebrews 3:12 "be c\_\_\_\_\_ that none of you has an evil, u\_\_\_\_\_ heart that will turn you a\_\_\_\_\_ from the living G\_\_\_\_."

Unbelief in our hearts leads to disobedience. When we disobey the Lord, we make room for evil thoughts and actions.

The lesson for us in these verses is to be careful and not let anything lead us to go back to our life before we began to obey Christ.

#### 3. Encourage Each Other (Hebrews 3:13-15)

#### VERSE 13

How often should we encourage our spiritual **brothers** and **sisters**? Every day! During the day, if you think of one of your **brothers** and **sisters** from church, send them a text, or VP them, just to say, "I'm thinking about you and praying for you today."

This verse reminds us how Satan is trying to trick us. When we **turn away** from sin, our hearts become soft to the Lord.

#### VERSE 14

In this verse, the message is if we continue to have strong **faith** to the end (our death or when Christ comes), then we will share in Christ. What does it mean to share in Christ? It means to have all the blessings Christ has for the one who is faithful to Him and who keeps a strong faith. It is not clear in this verse if our *sharing in Christ* is now or later. It probably means both. We get blessings from serving Christ now and after we die.

When people first receive Jesus as Savior, they have a strong **faith** in what He has done and what He will do. The Bible teaches us we must continue to have that kind of **faith** and grow into more faith.

#### VERSE 15

This verse is another reference to the Jews who escaped from Egypt but did not have enough **faith** to enter the promised land. Today, when we know what God wants us to do, we need to obey.

### IN MY CONTEXT

As Christians, we can support and encourage each other to grow in **faith** and become stronger believers. We can warn our brothers and sisters so that they do not turn away from God and lose His blessings.

Do you face tests or temptations that make it difficult for you to remain strong in your faith? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Write down one test or temptation.

Ask a trusted Christian brother or sister to pray with you so you can grow stronger. Write the name of this person:

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"Encourage each other every day while it is today."

—(Hebrews 3:13)

Session

## Hold Fast and Draw Near

Jesus made our **salvation** permanent through His sacrifice on the **cross**.

### HEBREWS 4:14-5:6

<sup>14</sup> Since we have a great **high priest**, Jesus the **Son of God** who has gone into heaven, let us hold on to the **faith** we have. <sup>15</sup> For our **high priest** is able to understand our weaknesses. He was tempted
in every way that we are, but He did not sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us, then, feel very sure that we can come before God's throne where there is grace. There we can receive mercy and **grace** to help us when we need it. <sup>5:1</sup> Every **high priest** is chosen from among other people. He is given the work of going before God for them to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup> Since he himself is weak, he is able to be gentle with those who do not understand and who are doing wrong things. <sup>3</sup> Because he is weak, the **high priest** must offer sacrifices for his own sins and also for the sins of the people. <sup>4</sup> To be a **high priest** is an honor, but no one chooses himself for this work. He must be called by God as Aaron was. <sup>5</sup> So also Christ did not choose himself to have the honor of being a high priest, but God chose him. God said to him, "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." <sup>6</sup> And in another Scripture God says, "You are a priest forever, a priest like Melchizedek."

# **FIRST THOUGHTS**

Years ago, Bernie worked as a summer missionary in the state of Washington. He went into a community and invited people to a new church. One day, Bernie stopped at a playground and talked with some young people. One of the boys asked him, "Are you a priest?" Bernie wanted to say, "Yes. The New Testament teaches us how every Christian is a priest." Of course, the young boy would not understand that. Bernie just said, "No, I just help at that church I told you about."

Jesus is our **high priest**. We do not need to go to a priest or anyone else. We can go straight to Christ in prayer and the Holy Spirit will help us tell Him what we need! (Romans 8:26). Maybe you have tried to pray about something and you ran out of words or signs. But as you continued to pray, you felt God heard and understood you. That was the Holy Spirit helping you.

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Because the Jewish people were the children of Abraham by birth, they believed they would go to heaven. They were wrong. To enter heaven, people must believe and obey God.

When we know and accept Jesus Christ, we become the spiritual children of Abraham. God said the people who did not have **faith** in Him would never **enter His rest** (Psalm 95:11).

Last week's lesson ended with Hebrews 3:15. From Hebrews 3:16 to the beginning of our lesson today, we read more about the experience of the Jewish people in the desert.

God promised them rest, but they disobeyed. In these verses rest means peace and safety in the promised land.

# God's promise of rest is for all His children. Write about a time that you or someone you know experienced God's rest.

## **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. Confidence (Hebrews 4:14-16)

#### VERSE 14

Because Jesus died on the **cross**, we can ask for mercy from God. As a result of Christ's sacrifice, Christians can pray to God with confidence.

Christ was not a priest on earth. He became a priest when He went back to heaven. The chief priest of the Jews was only a man. He stood before God in the temple on earth. Jesus, as our chief priest, is more than a man. He is the **Son of God**. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews pointed to Jesus as the believer's **high priest**. (See Hebrews 3:1.) In this verse, Jesus is the great **high priest**. We can see His greatness in the way He was so much more than the Old Testament **high priests**. Old Testament **high priests** went into the holy of holies once a year. Jesus went up into heaven once, forever.

#### VERSE 15

Jesus is a **high priest** who can **sympathize** with us. We know we are spiritually limited in many ways. We know Jesus understands our **struggles**. For that reason, we want to follow His example and trust His leadership.

### **DID YOU KNOW: ... about Priests?**

Read Numbers 17. God proved to all of Israel that Aaron, Moses' **brother**, and his sons were chosen to be the priests. How did God prove this?

Read Numbers 18:7. God spoke these words to Aaron and his sons. Serving God as a priest was a \_\_\_\_\_\_ from God.

### VERSE 16

Because of Jesus, we do not need a chief priest on earth to go to God for us. We can have **faith** to approach God, because of what Jesus did. We can always look to him for help when we need it. Although we do not deserve His grace, He gives it freely to us.

### 2. Found in Christ (Hebrews 5:1-6)

### VERSE 1

In the Old Testament the **high priest** had to be from the family of Aaron. He was just a man like us, but he had a special place in the Jewish religion. Once a year he went into the most holy part of the temple to

meet with God for the people. He offered and sacrifices to God. Then God forgave the people for what they had done wrong in the past year. **High priests** took these offerings seriously because they believed God took sin seriously.

Jesus stands alone as the only great **high priest**. That is the message the writer of Hebrews wants to share with the believers because other teachers questioned their faith. Jesus was serious about sin. He is the great **high priest** because of sin.

#### VERSES 2-3

In Leviticus 16:3-17, God explained how the **high priests** could make atonement for their own sins. The **high priest** first made a sin offering before the Lord for his own sin. Then, he prepared himself to lead the people as they approached the Lord with their need for salvation.

#### VERSE 4

To be the chief priest was both a great honor and a great responsibility. God chose and appointed Moses' brother, Aaron, as the first chief priest (Exodus 40:12). From then on, the chief priest for the Jews had to be from the family of Aaron.

God called them to be **high priests**. They had no reason to seek honor for themselves.

# Write the name of one Deaf Christian you know that God has called to be a preacher or missionary.

#### VERSES 5-6

Jesus is both the chief priest and the **Son of God**. God appointed Jesus to be the new chief priest. Jesus, in His birth as a man, came from God

His Father. Then God said to Him, "You are a priest forever." Jesus is not a priest from the family of Aaron. One special priest of God lived before the time of Aaron. This priest blessed Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20). This man was Melchizedek. He was a greater priest than Aaron. Christ's priesthood is like Melchizedek's, not like Aaron's. Melchizedek was the king of Salem and also a priest of Almighty God.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** *Melchizedek*

Read about Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20 and answer the questions:

Melchizedek was the king of which city? \_\_\_\_\_\_ Melchizedek was a king, but he was also a \_\_\_\_\_\_ of God Most High.

When Abram won the battle, Melchizedek brought him \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Abram gave Melchizedek a \_\_\_\_\_\_of everything he brought back from the battle.

# IN MY CONTEXT

Jesus is the sacrifice and the priest. Because Jesus died on the **cross**, our sins are forgiven. And because Jesus is our great **high priest**, we can approach the throne of God.

As you approach the throne of God, write your prayer:

Study next week's lesson. Look for words in the Bible verses you want to understand better. Ask for help with these next week at your Bible class

# **MEMORY VERSE**

"Let us, then, feel very sure that we can come before God's throne where there is grace. There we can receive mercy and grace to help us when we need it." —(Hebrews 4:16)



If Christians reject Christ, they will feel hopeless about the future.

Session

# **HEBREWS 6:1-8**

<sup>1</sup> So let us go on to grown-up teaching. Let us not go back over the beginning lessons we learned about Christ. We should not again start teaching about **faith** in God and about turning away from those acts that lead to death. <sup>2</sup> We should not return to the teaching about

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baptisms, about laying on of hands, about the raising of the dead, and eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> And we will go on to grown-up teaching if God allows. <sup>4</sup> Some people cannot be brought back again to a changed life. They were once in God's light, and enjoyed heaven's gift, and shared in the Holy Spirit. <sup>5</sup> They found out how good God's Word is, and they received the powers of His new world. <sup>6</sup> But they fell away from Christ. It is impossible to bring them back to a changed life again, because they are nailing the **Son of God** to a **cross** again and are shaming Him in front of others. <sup>7</sup> Some people are like land that gets plenty of rain. The land produces a good crop for those who work it, and it receives God's blessings. <sup>8</sup> Other people are like land that grows thorns and weeds and is worthless. It is about to be cursed by God and will be destroyed by fire.

# FIRST THOUGHTS

Mike asked his pastor to explain about hope in the New Testament. He said he knew Christians must have hope, but sometimes he felt very discouraged in his spiritual life.

The pastor explained how our *hope* as a Christian is based on our faith. It is the kind of hope that is more like the word *know*. Our hope in Christ grows as our **faith** in Him matures. And growing in Him involves obeying Him. The lesson today is about true hope and moving ahead toward spiritual maturity in Christ. If we press on toward maturity in Christ, we will rejoice in the way He strengthens us. However, if we decide to walk away from Him in deliberate disobedience, we will be filled with hopelessness.

Some people stop going to church and stop following Christ. Sometimes they try to explain why they walk away from Christ.

- 1. The Bible class is boring.
- 2. I need to sleep on Sunday mornings.

3. John said something and hurt my feelings.

4. The church people are not friendly.

#### Write your answer to these excuses.

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

The Christians who received this letter seemed to be eating only spiritual baby food (Hebrews 5:11-14). They should be growing in their **faith** in Christ, but they acted like they were about to give up their faith.

If they fell back to another religion, they would make a foolish choice. Their rebellion against God would be an insult to Jesus, His Son. For that reason, they would be left with nothing but hopelessness (6:1-8) when they looked to their future.

The lesson last week ended with Hebrews 5:6. In the rest of chapter 5 the writer said more about Jesus as a priest. Jesus is greater than any Jewish priest and is similar to the priest Melchizedek.

# **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

### 1. Grow in Faith (Hebrews 6:1-3)

The writer of Hebrews called for believers to mature in their **faith** and trust Christ for their righteousness.

#### VERSE 1

This verse begins with the word so. It means, "because of what was written in the verses before." The words used in this verse give the idea of building on a foundation. The writer encouraged the readers to grow up

and to continue growing toward spiritual maturity. The writer discussed the difference between a baby Christian and a mature Christian.

We received Jesus in childlike **faith** and rejoiced when we became new believers. Now we must keep on growing so we become strong in our relationship with Him.

The writer said "let us go on." He included himself in the group of believers who needed to move on toward spiritual maturity.

#### VERSE 2

The readers knew the basic truths about the Christian life, but they needed to grow. They knew about baptism, ordination (laying on hands), resurrection, and judgment. These are some basic teachings in the New Testament.

Baptism was not new to these people. When a Gentile became a Jew he was baptized.

Ordination is sometimes called laying hands on someone when the Holy Spirit has called that person to a special ministry.

People who trust in Jesus will live again after death. This is the meaning of the word resurrection. Those who do not trust God will also live again (John 5:28-29). They, must come before the true judge - God. The writer said we must go on beyond these basic truths of baptism, ordination, the resurrection, and judgment.

# What signs can you use to explain these teachings? Write some words to explain what sign to use.

Baptism	
Ordination	
Resurrection -	
Judament -	

#### VERSE 3

The Lord plans for us to grow so we will become strong, mature believers.

However, this growth comes only from obedience. God would not let His disobedient people go into the promised land. In the same way, as we obey Him, He will lead us to grow spiritually.

#### What do you need to do to become stronger in Christ?

#### How can your church help you?

#### 2. Don't Turn Away (Hebrews 6:4-8)

Verses 4-5. Some Bible translations use the word **apostasy**. This word means to **turn away** from God. We can understand the idea of turning away in two ways. A Christian falls down or sins, but he is still a Christian. Peter fell down spiritually when he denied Jesus, but he was not lost again. God will not disown His people when they **turn away** from Him, but He will hold them responsible for their disobedience. These verses are about true believers, not lost persons. These Christians are weak, but not spiritually dead.

To understand the Bible, we need to look at everything it teaches. A true believer is a changed person. He has a new life in Jesus. That life can never die or be destroyed. A true believer will be with Jesus forever. The true Christian is safe in Jesus. It is not possible for him to go back to what he was before.

Do you remember when you became a new Christian? You were very happy. Then, perhaps, you let some sin cause you to stumble. Did you feel like Jesus turned His back on you? Did you wonder if you were not saved because you sinned? That may be how you felt. These verses tell about the truth, not feelings. The truth is, Jesus will not drop you!

#### VERSE 6

So, the first way to understand these verses is to see how a Christian can **turn away** from Christ, but still be a Christian.

The second way to understand this idea of **apostasy** (falling away from Christ) is to understand some people never truly became a Christian. They had *head* knowledge of Jesus but not **heart knowledge**. They were willing to turn back to Judaism or another religion. Because they were never saved, they fell away from their closeness to Jesus and continued to be lost.

If they returned to Judaism again, "they are nailing the **Son of God** to a **cross** again." Other translations have the words "crucifying Christ again." A believer's public confession of Christ must include a life of continued **faith** and service to Him.

#### VERSES 7-8

The writer compared people with the land. Good land, with rain, will grow good crops. That land is a picture of people who are growing spiritually. Their reward is a wonderful relationship with Him.

The land that only grows thorns and weeds is like people who rebel against God and **turn away** from Christ. They would be useless to Christ and not receive blessings.

Do you know a devoted Christian who has experienced God's spiritual blessings? Let that person become a **role model** for your spiritual life.

#### What have you learned from this study?

We must be FA \_\_\_\_\_ F U L to show we are saved.

We must grow toward MA\_\_\_\_\_ TY.

We must W\_\_\_\_\_ others about the dangers of turning away from Christ.

We must H\_\_\_\_\_ each other understand how Christianity is a lifelong commitment to faith and obedience.

(Choose the right word: warn, faithful, help, maturity)

# IN MY CONTEXT

Can you use this lesson to help you become the kind of Christian Jesus wants you to become? Look at it as if Jesus is telling us, "Do this or do this."

- 1. Obey or face God's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. If you **turn away** from Christ you need to \_\_\_\_\_\_.
- 3. Continue to grow spiritually or you will be a spiritual \_\_\_\_\_

4. Be faithful and help other Christians to \_\_\_\_\_\_ (Choose the right word: baby, judgment, grow, **repent**)

## **MEMORY VERSE**

"God is fair; He will not forget the work you did and the love you showed for Him by helping His people. And He will remember that you are still helping them." —(Hebrews 6:10) Session

# Only Jesus Saves

Only Jesus has the power to save us.

# **HEBREWS 7:23-28**

<sup>23</sup>When one of the other priests died, he could not continue being a priest. So there were many priests. <sup>24</sup> But because Jesus lives forever, He will never stop serving as priest. <sup>25</sup> So He is able always to save those who come to God through Him because He always lives, asking

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God to help them. <sup>26</sup> Jesus is the kind of **high priest** we need. He is holy, sinless, pure, not influenced by sinners, and He is raised above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He is not like the other priests who had to offer sacrifices every day, first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people. Christ offered His sacrifice only once and for all time when He offered Himself. <sup>28</sup> The law chooses **high priests** who are people with weaknesses, but the word of God's oath came later than the Law. It made God's Son to be the **high priest**, and that Son has been made perfect forever.

# **FIRST THOUGHTS**

What is the best news you ever received? If you were not thinking about spiritual things, you might think of the time you received your driver's license. Or maybe the time you received a big raise at work. But if we think of spiritual things, we would all agree the best news is "Jesus saves!"

Do you remember the first time someone told you about Jesus? Maybe you were a small child. Maybe you were in school. It is the best news anytime, anywhere.

The writer of Hebrews helps us know the truth: Jesus alone can save because He is our Great **High Priest**. Jesus offered Himself as the sacrifice for sin once and for all time.

Think about these questions as you study today's lesson:

### 1. How is your world different because Jesus saved you?

2. Can you think of other Deaf people you talked with and helped them find Jesus as their Savior? Write their names

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

The writer wrote much about Melchizedek to help his readers understand about Jesus as the **high priest**. Melchizedek acted as a special priest to Abraham, a long time before the beginning of the priests from the family of Levi. The priests were appointed because the Law required it. But God called Melchizedek to be a priest because of His promise to Abraham.

Between the verses in last week's lesson and this week's lesson (Hebrews 6:10-7:22), the writer said more about the priest, Melchizedek. Melchizedek was the king of Salem (Jerusalem) and a priest for God Most High (Genesis 14:17-20). The Bible tells about the Messiah, who would be both a king and a priest.

Melchizedek is a picture of the Messiah (Christ) for whom the Jews were waiting.

# **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. An Eternal Priest (Hebrews 7:23-24)

#### VERSE 23

Unlike the priests from the tribe of Levi, Jesus is an eternal priest. Under the old Law of Moses there were many priests. They all died because they were only men like us. After they died, a new priest was chosen to take their place. With Jesus, all this changed. Jesus is alive and will never die again. He is our one and only priest. We have no need for other priests. God made Him to be the one priest for all time and for all people.

The Old Testament priests began with Aaron, the brother of Moses. God appointed Aaron to be the first **high priest** (Exodus. 28:1). After Aaron died, his son, Eleazar, replaced him and became the next **high priest** over Israel (Deuteronomy 10:6). All of the priests died. None of them lived forever. Only Jesus is our **high priest** forever.

Do you feel we are blessed to have Jesus for our priest instead of depending on someone who is just a man like we are?

#### VERSE 24

Jesus' relationship with believers as our great **high priest** will last forever because His priesthood will never end. In other words, Jesus' priesthood will never pass to someone else. This makes a big difference to us. It means He will always be involved in our lives. When we study God's Word, we can meet Jesus. We know about Jesus from the Bible. When we face difficulties, we can see Him near to help. We can turn to Him to help us through hard times or when temptations seem to too big. When we think about the future, we do not need to worry because we know He will be there.

Now, think again about your relationship with God. When you pray, do you feel you are not only talking to your loving Father, but you have Jesus sitting beside Him to help you? Jesus will help you find the words to pray. Write your prayer using the guide:

Dear Father in Heaven, I praise You for

I thank You for

I know I sinned against You when I

And I am sorry (**repent**). I ask You for

In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### 2. Able to Save (Hebrews 7:25)

### VERSE 25

This is the key verse of this section and the center of the gospel. Christ is not dead. He lives! He died here on earth to save us. He lives in heaven to keep us saved (Romans 5:10).

Jesus is the one priest who will be with God forever. He has made the one sacrifice that is perfect and God accepts that sacrifice for all time. He alone has the power to make us whole. Jesus makes us clean and takes away all our sins. Jesus can make us right with God. God accepts everyone who trusts in Jesus, because of what Jesus did for us.

# Imagine Jesus sitting beside God. What words did Jesus say to God for you today?

3. Because of His Character (Hebrews 7:26-28)

#### VERSE 26

This verse has five words to describe why Christ is our perfect **high priest**. 1) He is holy as God is holy because He IS God. 2) He is sinless. He was tempted like we are, but did not sin. 3) He is pure. He has no moral weakness or impurity. 4) He is not influenced by sinners. None of the sinful things of the world caused Him to change His mind. 5) He is raised above the heavens. He is now **at the right hand** of God.

# From your experience, and from your Bible study, list some words to describe what Jesus means to you:

#### VERSE 27

Under the old law, the priests had to make sacrifices every day for the sins of the people (Leviticus 4:2-3; 6:19-23). The chief priest went into the **most holy place** to offer sacrifices one time each year. First, the chief priest made a sacrifice for his own sins. Then he offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people. Jesus had no sin, so he did not need to offer a sacrifice

for Himself. When Jesus died on the **cross** for our sins, He offered Himself as the final and complete sacrifice for us once and for all.

Have you thanked Christ for sacrificing Himself so you could be saved? Go back to the list you made at the end of verse 26. If you did not list the word perfect, write it now. Jesus is the perfect priest and the perfect Savior.

#### VERSE 28

The Law came from God, but for priests and other leaders, God used weak men and women who could never be perfect. God made Jesus the chief priest. Jesus is not weak as we are. He did no wrong and He came back from the dead. He continues to live in heaven and He will never die. He can make us clean from all sin, so we can be with God forever.

Instead of being like priests who had to do something about their own sin, Jesus lived in sinless perfection. He is the only **high priest** who can offer eternal **salvation** to sinful people. For that reason, He stands alone as our great **high priest** now and forever.

Only Jesus can save. Only Jesus can heal a broken heart. Only Jesus can give people a new life. Only Jesus.

Look back at verse 26 and see why Jesus is the perfect High Priest. "Jesus is the kind of high priest we need. He is h\_\_\_\_\_, s \_\_\_\_\_\_, p\_\_\_\_\_, not i \_\_\_\_\_\_ by sinners, and He is r \_\_\_\_\_ above the heavens."

# IN MY CONTEXT

You have studied how Jesus is the perfect **High Priest**. Have you learned to trust Jesus as your **High Priest**? When you sin, He is ready to forgive. When you are troubled, He is ready to help.

Do you know someone who comes to you often with their problems? Only Jesus can forgive their sin and save them.

Write the name of people you know who have a serious problem.

Pray for them. Plan to tell them about Jesus, the perfect Savior and High Priest.

# **MEMORY VERSE**

"He is able always to save those who come to God through Him because He always lives, asking God to help them."

—(Hebrews 7:25)



Session

Jesus established a new **covenant** based upon God's promises.

# **HEBREWS 8:1-13**

<sup>1</sup>*Here is the point of what we are saying: We have a* **high priest** *who sits on the right side of God's throne in heaven.* <sup>2</sup>*Our* **high** 

**priest** serves in the **Most Holy Place**, the true place of worship that was made by God, not by humans. <sup>3</sup> Every **high priest** has the work of offering gifts and sacrifices to God. So our **high priest** must also offer something to God. <sup>4</sup> If our **high priest** were now living on earth, he would not be a priest, because there are already priests here who follow the Law by offering gifts to God. <sup>5</sup> The work they do as priests is only a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven. This is why God warned Moses when he was ready to build the Holy Tent: "Be very careful to make everything by the plan I showed you on the mountain." <sup>6</sup> But the priestly work that has been given to Jesus is much greater than the work that was given to the other priests. In the same way, the new agreement that Jesus brought from God to His people is much greater than the old one. And the new agreement is based on promises of better things. <sup>7</sup> If there had been nothing wrong with the first agreement, there would have been no need for a second agreement. <sup>8</sup> But God found something wrong with His people. He says: "Look, the time is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new agreement with the people of Israel and the people of Judah.<sup>9</sup> "It will not be like the agreement I made with their **ancestors** when I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt. But they broke that agreement, and I turned away from them," says the Lord. <sup>10</sup> "This is the agreement I will make with the people of Israel at that time," says the Lord. "I will put my teachings in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. <sup>11</sup> "People will no longer have to teach their neighbors and relatives to know the Lord, because all people will know me, from the least to the most important. <sup>12</sup> "I will forgive them for the wicked things they did, and I will not remember their sins

anymore." <sup>13</sup> God called this a new agreement, so He has made the first agreement old. And anything that is old and worn out is ready to disappear.

# **FIRST THOUGHTS**

Have you seen the television program, "The Biggest Loser?" In that program we can see how people changed when they lost some weight. Some of them lost more than one hundred pounds. Often, a photograph of the person is shown as before and after. In the after photograph, they look different. They say they feel different. When Jesus takes away the weight of sin from us, we are different. We are transformed. We are changed in a big way.

### What are some ways Jesus has transformed your life?

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Last week, we studied chapter 7, and learned about Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a good example to show how Jesus is a greater **high priest**. As a king, Christ went up to heaven and sat on the right side of God on the heavenly throne. As a priest, Jesus went into the **tabernacle** God established in heaven. Jesus was greater than all other **high priests** because of the offering He made once and for all.

If someone offered you a new car or house that would never become old, would you take it? \_\_\_\_\_ The new covenant God promised is like the new car or house that never becomes old.



# **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. The New Covenant Needed (Hebrews 8:1-6)

In Hebrews 8, the writer points us to Jesus and God's new **covenant** with His people. In the new covenant, anyone, anywhere can have a personal relationship with God that will last forever.

#### VERSES 1-2

We have a chief priest who is so great that He now sits at God's right hand, the place of highest honor in heaven. He died on the **cross** for us and made it possible for us to be with God forever.

In the time of Moses, the Israelites had a special tent (**tabernacle**) in the desert. That special tent was a model of the true holy place in heaven, which God has made. Jesus, as our chief priest, now serves there. He can speak to the Father for us and, with the Father, hear our prayers.

Can you picture this scene in your mind? Can you see Jesus on the throne? The picture words about the **tabernacle**, temple and the altar were very common for the Jewish people.

#### VERSES 3-4

The **high priest** took the gifts and sacrifices of God's people and offered them to God every day. When Jesus gave Himself, He did it only once and for all time. Jesus was not a priest on earth. He did not belong to the tribe of Levi, which served in the earthly **tabernacle**. Jesus did not offer gifts and sacrifices on earth. He was the sacrifice (the Lamb of God).

# Does this help you understand the idea of Jesus as the Lamb of God?

#### VERSES 5-6

The **tabernacle** on earth was a picture of the **tabernacle** in heaven. Now, we have a better sacrifice, a better priest, and a better **tabernacle**. He died to save us. He lives in heaven to bless us. Moses made the **tabernacle** and all the things in it, as God told him (Exodus 25:8-26:36). This special tent was to teach the people about the true place of worship in heaven.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** The Lamb of God

In John 1:29, John called Jesus the Lamb of God. Learn more about the background of this by reading Old Testament verses about the lamb used for sacrifice on the altar.

Genesis 22:1-18. Who are the people in this story?

Exodus 12:1-20. What special day was used to remember this?

Exodus 29:38. How often did the priest offer a lamb on the altar?

Leviticus 4:32. What kind of lamb was offered on the altar?

In the Letter to the Hebrews we have many illustrations of the greatness of Jesus. In these verses, Jesus is greater than the high P \_\_\_\_\_, the T\_\_\_\_\_made by Moses, and the sheep used in the S\_\_\_\_\_\_. (tabernacle, priest, sacrifice)

### 2. The New Covenant Promised (Hebrews 8:7-9)

### VERSE 7

The old **covenant** God gave to Moses on **Mount Sinai** (Exodus 34:1-18) included the rules by which the people should live. The agreement was good, because it came from God. But the people could not follow the rules perfectly. The **covenant** did not create the relationship God wanted with His people.

In Christ, God established a new covenant. The new **covenant** provided a way for men and women to become right with God. Do you see your relationship with God as a covenant?

### When you became saved you accepted God's promise of salvation. Do you remember what you promised God?

#### VERSES 8-9

God promised a new covenant. Most covenants have two people or groups who agree to do something. God's new **covenant** was different. God himself made the new agreement *for* (not *with*) the people, including us.

God's people broke the first covenant. They kept turning away from God. Finally, God turned away from them. He left them alone because they would not continue to honor their **covenant** with Him.

#### 3. The New Covenant Described (Hebrews 8:10-13)

#### **VERSES 10-11**

The new **covenant** makes a close relationship between God and His people. The people will live as His people because of their gratitude, not because of duty. The new **covenant** will be written upon their hearts, not upon stone, so they will be able to obey it.

In the new covenant, God's people know Him personally. There will be no need for anyone to teach them to know the Lord. Everyone will know Him.

#### Do you think that is God reminding you of His covenant? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **VERSES 12-13**

The key to the new agreement is the fact that God will forgive sin. God will not just forget our sins. He will put them out of his mind forever. This is because Jesus paid the cost of all our sins.

The Messiah (Jesus) brought the new covenant. The old **covenant** is not in use any more.

# **IN MY CONTEXT**

Only you and God know about your relationship with Him. This lesson has explained how God provided for your **salvation**. Now, it is your time to do your part because you love God. Be sure you ask God to forgive you every day. Then thank Him for forgiving you. Obey Him because you want to show your thankfulness, not because it is a rule.

# God promised a new covenant. What does that tell you about His love for you?

What do you need to do today to respond to His love?

## **MEMORY VERSE**

"I will forgive them for the wicked things they did, and I will not remember their sins anymore." —(Hebrews 8:12)



# The Perfect Offering

Christ's sacrifice on the **cross** established a new **covenant** of eternal **salvation**.

# **HEBREWS 9:11-15**

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as the **high priest** of the good things we now have, He entered the greater and more perfect tent. It is not made by humans and does not belong to this world.

<sup>12</sup> Christ entered the **Most Holy Place** only once — and for all time. He did not take with Him the blood of goats and calves. His sacrifice was His own blood, and by it He set us free from sin forever. <sup>13</sup> The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a cow are sprinkled on the people who are **unclean**, and this makes their bodies clean again. <sup>14</sup> How much more is done by the blood of Christ. He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit as a perfect sacrifice to God. His blood will make our consciences pure from **useless acts** so we may serve the living God. <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ brings a new agreement from God to His people. Those who are called by God can now receive the blessings He has promised, blessings that will last forever. They can have those things because Christ died so that the people who lived under the first agreement could be set free from sin.

# **FIRST THOUGHTS**

Everyone likes to receive gifts! We are saved only because of God's gift! Some Deaf people think they can win God's blessings and get into heaven if they give their money and time.

Going through certain religious activities or giving money or time will not get rid of the sin that separates us from God. Christ alone has the power to forgive our sin. With His death on the **cross**, He made the perfect offering to God to forgive our sin.

Do you know how to explain to someone how to become saved? List three verses that show how to be saved. If you need help, look at the inside front cover

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

In last week's lesson, we learned that the Jewish readers knew all about the **tabernacle** and sacrifices. This helped them understand the new covenant.

Hebrews 9:1-12 has the story between last week's lesson and this week's lesson. These verses continue the discussion of the old agreement and the old **tabernacle**.

Both the temple and the **tabernacle** had two special rooms, the *holy place*, and the **Most holy place**. The people could not go directly to God. Only the priests could go into the *holy place*. Only the chief priest could go to God in the **Most holy place** on just one special day of the year (Leviticus 16).

The new **covenant** put an end to the old laws and replaced them with a better way.

# **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

#### 1. Christ Goes into the Holy Place (Hebrews 9:11-12)

#### VERSE 11

Jesus is the **high priest** in the eternal **tabernacle**. He is the **high priest** of "the good things we now have." We now have a close relationship with God. We can feel His presence when we face difficult times. We can look forward to being in heaven with Him when we die.

Jesus is now our chief priest of the new agreement. The writer painted a picture the believers who read his letter could understand. The **tabernacle** was the place where the nation of Israel gathered to meet with God. The picture of the **tabernacle** helped them understand everything Jesus did for them.

### If you wanted to explain salvation to someone who knew nothing

about it, what illustration would you use? If the person knew about being sick and then getting well, how could you use that to explain salvation?

#### VERSE 12

The priests went into the **most holy place** in the **tabernacle** to make a blood offering. Jesus did not need the blood of animals. The priests offered a sacrifice for their own sins. Jesus was perfect. He did not need a sacrifice. Jesus died once for the sins of all people and His blood is all we need for **salvation**. Now, we can be right with God and can live forever with Him.

The **most holy place** was separated from the rest of the **tabernacle** by a **veil**. When we read the story in the Gospels of Jesus' death on the **cross**, we learn how this **veil** was torn in half when Jesus died (Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45). This shows we are not separated from God if we trust Jesus as our Savior.

# Deaf art and poetry shows that windows are better than doors. Why?

The veil in the tabernacle was the same as a closed door. Jesus removed the door between you and God.

### 2. Christ Makes a Better Sacrifice (Hebrews 9:13-14)

#### **VERSES 13-14**

The blood and ashes of goats and young cows could not make a person right with God forever. The **salvation** Christ gives includes a clean conscience. This pure **conscience** leads to service and commitment to God.



The writer named two ceremonies used to worship God in the **tabernacle** and later in the temple. Both ceremonies required animal sacrifice to clean the people from their sin.

God's people who did these ceremonies in worship were clean for only a short time. They needed something more to be made permanently pure in their relationship with God. Only the blood of Christ can remove the sin forever.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** There Is Power in the Blood

Read the following verses and write how there is power in the blood.

Genesis 9:4
Leviticus 4:5
Mark 14:24
1 John 1:7

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because He had nothing wrong with Him. Some translations have the words, "**without blemish**," or "without spot."

Jesus has made our consciences pure. In what ways can you serve God with your new, clean conscience? List some things you are doing now, and things you can do in the future to serve God – in your church, your home, and your community.

### 3. Christ Speaks for Us (Hebrews 9:15)

#### VERSE 15

This is a very important verse. Jesus can make us clean from sin. He brings us into the new **covenant** with God. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were symbols to show the death of the Messiah. Jesus gave His life for those who lived under the old agreement. It is there also for us who live under the new agreement. The way to heaven is the same for all people. We do not need a priest to speak to the Father for us. Jesus is the one who speaks for us.

God has established the new **covenant** with us. He places His Word in our hearts and changes us spiritually so we can serve Him.

With God's new covenant, we **inherit** all the blessings as a member of His family. What are these blessings? We live in His presence, walk with Him in a close relationship, experience His forgiveness, and know that He cares for us. We also have the knowledge we will go to heaven when we die. And these blessings will continue forever!

Jesus made it possible for us to trade our old sinful life for new life in Him.

Jesus has saved you and given you an eternal inheritance. Think about your inheritance from God since you accepted Christ. What blessings have you inherited?



# IN MY CONTEXT

Are you confused about all of the references to Old Testament Jewish religion? It has been a good study, but if you are not familiar with the Old Testament it may be difficult to follow all the ideas in these lessons.

Do you have a feeling you do know more about Jesus than you did a few weeks ago? Even when the words are new and the ideas are hard to understand, God's Holy Spirit will help you learn!

### Write down any questions or words you do not understand.

Some ideas that might help you are:

1. Spend more time reading the lessons.

2. Pray before you read and ask God to help you understand.

3. Try reading each lesson early in the week, then again about

Wednesday, and again on Saturday.

4. Try to see the Bible verses in the ASL Bible\*.

More time in this study will give the Holy Spirit more opportunities to help you know more about Jesus.

# **MEMORY VERSE**

"Christ brings a new agreement from God to His people. Those who are called by God can now receive the blessings He has promised, blessings that will last forever. They can have those things because Christ died so that the people who lived under the first agreement could be set free from sin." —(Hebrews 9:15)

# What Is Faith?

Session

A right relationship with God begins with **faith** in Jesus.

## **HEBREWS 11:1-7**

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<sup>1</sup> Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it. <sup>2</sup> Faith is the reason we remember great people who lived in the past. <sup>3</sup> It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God's command, so what we see was made by something that cannot be seen. <sup>4</sup> It was by faith that Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. God said He was pleased with the gifts Abel offered and called Abel a good man because of his faith. Abel died, but through his **faith** he is still speaking. <sup>5</sup> It was by **faith** that Enoch was taken to heaven so he would not die. He could not be found, because God had taken him away. Before he was taken, the Scripture says that he was a man who truly pleased God. <sup>6</sup> Without faith, no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that He is real and that He rewards those who truly want to find Him. <sup>7</sup> It was by **faith** that Noah heard God's warnings about things he could not yet see. He obeyed God and built a large boat to save his family. By his faith, Noah showed that the world was wrong, and he became one of those who are made right with God through faith.

# **FIRST THOUGHTS**

The word **faith** in these verses means to put our complete trust in the Lord, to depend on Him alone, and to obey Him.

Many of our signs represent a concept. We can understand the meaning better from the sign than we can the word. Think about the sign for *trust*. We often explain the sign *trust* as taking hold of a rope to be rescued from deep water. **Faith** is the same basic sign with the "F" handshape.

Think about your life. Write about a time that you had to have faith in God. \_\_\_\_\_

# **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Chapters 1-10 in the letter to the Hebrews explain how **faith** keeps a believer close to Jesus and keeps him from turning away. In chapter 11, the writer gives examples of people of faith.
Last week's lesson ended with Hebrews 9:15. In the rest of chapter 9 we read more about the idea of the last will and testament and how our **inheritance** could not begin until Jesus died.

In chapter 10, the writer points to the **tabernacle** and the sacrifices by the priests. All the sacrifices and activities under the Law were important because they showed what will happen when Jesus returns.

The last verse in chapter 10 comes back to the theme of turning away from following Christ. People who really trust Jesus do not turn back. People who turn back from Jesus must face the judgment of God. People who faithfully trust Jesus will be safe from that judgment. They will receive God's promised life.

The word *blood* is used several times in chapters 9 and 10. This shows the power and importance of the blood sacrifice in the Old Testament and Jesus' blood on the **cross** in the New Testament.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

Someone often tells us to "have faith" When they want to encourage others to let God help them through some difficult time. **Faith** is especially important when we face difficult times in our life.

### 1. Faith Explained (Hebrews 11:1-3)

### VERSE 1

**Faith** means to trust God and know the blessings He promised are real and the events He has announced will truly happen.

There are many things in life that cause us to worry. Check any of the following that you might worry about:

Money	Health	Family
Job	Future	Dying



Even though we cannot see God, His word has promises for all of these concerns. This gives you an opportunity to exercise your **faith** in God. When we fully trust God, we will not be worried.

### VERSE 2

**Faith** in the Lord made a big difference when mature followers of Christ faced **persecution** and in New Testament times. The Christians who received this letter respected the spiritual leaders of the Old Testament. The writer gave examples about how these leaders trusted God. They were right with God by their faith, not because they did a list of things. Their **faith** was strong and it showed they truly belonged to Him.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** Role Models of Faith

Choose one Old Testament **role model** of faith. Read the passages and write how he or she showed their **faith** in God:

Abraham (Genesis 12:4; 8:11-12; 11:30; 22:1-19) Isaac (Genesis 27:27-40) Jacob (Genesis 47:29-31; 48:8-20) Joseph (Genesis 50:24-25) Moses (Exodus 2:10-11) Israelites (Exodus 14:21-31; Joshua 6:12-20)

Rahab (Joshua 2:8-11; 6:22-25)

Do you know someone who is a good example of living a life of faith? Write the name here. \_\_\_\_\_

Try to find some time to visit with that person and ask questions about his/her faith.

### VERSE 3

Our **faith** tells us God made the world and everything in it. "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). Before that, there was nothing.

Though you cannot see God, what do you see in creation that proves God is true?\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Examples of Faith (Hebrews 11:4-7)

### VERSE 4

Abel is an example of **faith** in worship. Read his story in Genesis 4:1-4. He was the first person to die because of his faith. Cain and Abel were sons of Adam (Genesis 4:1-2). Each one brought a sacrifice to God. God accepted Abel's sacrifice, because God saw Abel had faith. Cain's sacrifice did not please God because Cain's heart was not right with God. Cain was angry and jealous and he killed his brother, Abel.

# Do you know one place you can measure your faith? Open your checkbook! Did you give your tithe first? \_\_\_\_ Did you pay all your bills first? \_\_\_\_

### VERSE 5

Enoch is an example of a person who walked by faith. His story is in Genesis 5:21-24. From these few verses we learn Enoch was a very good man. His **faith** was so strong the Bible says he walked with God. He lived close to God and pleased God. Because of his faith, God took him straight to heaven and he did not die. By saying Enoch "walked with God" the Bible suggests they were very close spiritually.

## How do you think God would describe your walk with Him? Circle the number.

POOR 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 GOOD

### VERSE 6

We must trust God if we want to please Him. We need to know (through faith) He truly is God, and He blesses people who seek Him. We can please God only when we trust Him completely. When we trust Him, He comes closer to us and blesses us.

What are some of the blessings you have received because you trusted God? Complete these words and draw a circle around the blessings you received:

```
C H __R __H
C H R ___ I A N F R I ___ D S
P_A C E
J_Y
(joy, church, peace, Christian friends)
```

### VERSE 7

The next person is Noah. Read his story in Genesis 5:28-9:28. His life proved his **faith** was real.

When Noah lived, the people turned from God. God decided to destroy all the wicked people by a great flood. He warned Noah about His plans and told him to build a big boat - an **ark** (Genesis 6:14-16). While he was building the **ark**, Noah warned the people. "God will send a flood." They laughed at him. No one believed him.

Noah walked faithfully with the Lord and followed His directions for 120 years! By faith, Noah showed his righteousness in God's eyes.

He and his family were safe in the **ark** when the flood came.

## IN MY CONTEXT

Do you sometimes feel like you stand alone as a Christian? We may have to wait for quite a while before we see with our eyes where God leads us. While we wait, we must place our lives in His hands and trust Him completely. Walking by faith is one day at a time.

### Take a mental picture of your faith-walk with God this past week. Make a note beside each day when you practiced faith in God:

Sunday:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Real faith is trusting God all of our life. Real faith leads to actions that show trust in God and His promises. God is pleased when we act on our faith in Him.

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"Without faith, no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that He is real and that He rewards those who truly want to find Him." —(Hebrews 11:6)





# Why Do Christians Suffer?

Because of Christ's perfect sacrifice, His followers need to remain faithful no matter what happens.

### **HEBREWS 12:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>We are surrounded by a great cloud of people whose lives tell us

what **faith** means. So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. <sup>2</sup> Let us look only to Jesus, the One who began our **faith** and who makes it perfect. He suffered death on the **cross**. But He accepted the shame as if it were nothing because of the joy that God put before Him. And now He is sitting at the right side of God's throne.<sup>3</sup> Think about Jesus' example. He held on while wicked people were doing evil things to Him. So do not get tired and stop trying. <sup>4</sup> You are struggling against sin, but your **struggles** have not yet caused you to be killed. <sup>5</sup> You have forgotten the encouraging words that call you His children: "My child, don't think the Lord's **discipline** is worth nothing, and don't stop trying when He corrects you. <sup>6</sup> The Lord disciplines those He loves, and he punishes everyone He accepts as his child." <sup>7</sup>So hold on through your sufferings, because they are like a father's **discipline**. God is treating you as children. All children are disciplined by their fathers.

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

Life is like a race. Some people want to touch the finish line ahead of everyone and get a prize. Others do not even want to start the race. They do not want to **struggle** with life's problems.

What does the Bible teach us about Christians and the race of life? We finish when we trust the Lord to the end, no matter what happens. When we join the race, our faithfulness to Christ may bring difficulty to us. Suffering helps us grow in our faith. We need to follow the example of the heroes of **faith** listed in chapter 11.

Imagine you are standing at the starting line, ready for a race. You are there because Jesus sent you a text message and asked you to run

for Him. Jesus looks at you and tells you He wants you to do something before you run.

- 1. Get rid of the cell phone (the busy things in your life) in your hands.
- 2. Take off the heavy winter coat (the sin that fits you so well).
- 3. Look at all the people watching you. Some are Christians who have finished the race with their faith. Others are looking to see how well you represent Christ.
- Look at Jesus. Where is He? He is at the finish line. He signs to you, "Come to me, through faith."
- 5. Keep that picture in your mind as you study this lesson.

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Our lesson last week ended with Hebrews 11:10. The chapter ends with a list of other people whose **faith** in the Lord helped them experience spiritual victory. **Faith** in Jesus gave them strength to stand strong when they suffered great hardships because they belonged to Him.

God gave honor to all these people because they trusted Him. He did not forget the people who served Him.

# When you think about Abraham or Sarah, what do you see in their life that you want to copy?

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

### 1. Continue When It Is Difficult (Hebrews 12:1-3)

The Christian life requires continuing to be faithful like an athlete trying to finish a race, even through difficulties. A race involves training and **discipline**. The greatest example of **discipline** and continuing to be faithful is Jesus' suffering and dying on the **cross**.

### VERSE 1

With all the people named in chapter 11 watching us, we need to be faithful. In these verses, the Christian is pictured as a man running in a race. The runner must get rid of anything that will make him go slower. Jesus said a person must give up everything to become His follower (Luke 14:33). The Christian must give up the sin in his life because that will keep him from serving Christ faithfully.

# As you look back at the heroes of faith in chapter 11, which one inspires you the most? \_\_\_\_\_\_. Why?

#### VERSE 2

We need to keep looking toward Jesus. Our **faith** comes from Him. He will lead us along the way God has planned for us. The Jewish people thought death on a **cross** was a shameful experience. But Jesus looked past the **cross** to the joy He would have when He went back to His Father.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** Running the Race

The apostle Paul wrote about running the race in several of his letters to Christians. Read the following verses and write the same ideas that are written about in the lesson today:

1 Corinthians 9:24:	
Galatians 5:7:	
2 Timothy 4:6-8:	



It is easy to let our minds wander instead of looking ahead in this Christian race. We need to keep our eyes on Jesus and run toward Him. Then we will stay on track and finish the race.

Jesus had many difficult experiences, but He completed the race to make **salvation** available for everyone.

## Think about a time when you (or someone you know) stopped looking to Jesus? What happened?

VERSE 3

We need to look to Jesus as our example. He finished the work He came to earth to do. He suffered much because He had many enemies. We may need to suffer, too. We must be strong and brave and continue to run until we honor Him with our life.

### Think about Jesus' life.

What was His goal?

What things could have caused Him to take His eyes off the goal?

Did He finish the race? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. God's Discipline (Hebrews 12:4-7)

Athletes **discipline** themselves. It leads to obedience and faithfulness. Spiritual athletes (strong Christians) spend many hours each week in Bible study and prayer. They study how to be a better witness for the Lord.

Also, God disciplines believers, just as a good father disciplines his children. God's **discipline** develops true **faith** and should be welcomed by the believer.

#### VERSE 4

Today, in many parts of the world, Christians are persecuted for their faith. Deaf Christians have told our missionaries about being rejected by their family or losing their job because they became a believer.

These Hebrew believers needed to hold onto their **faith** in Christ. With their eyes on Jesus, they could suffer **persecution** because they belonged to Him. As His children, they could expect Him to **discipline** them so they would grow stronger in their faith.

Have you been able to encourage another Christian who may have felt like giving up? Write that person's name here:

Did that difficulty help your faith grow stronger?

#### VERSES 5-7

These verses describe God as a loving father who disciplines His children because He loves them. God's **discipline** was painful, but it would develop their **faith** in Him. God does not let us suffer because He is angry with us. God's **discipline** will make us strong so we will love and trust Him more.

When we remember how the Lord is working through our difficulties to help us to grow in Him, we will be ready to face suffering with faith. Are we God's enemies? No! Are we strangers to God? No! When God saved us, we became His children. He loves us like a perfect father.

### What has the Lord done in your life to help you grow in your faith in Him? Think of something you can share in your Bible class.

## IN MY CONTEXT

After your Bible study and worship with your spiritual **brothers** and sisters, you will go home and get ready to start a new week. Think of this like you are going to the track to start the race. Have you learned something from this study about how Jesus uses **discipline** to train you for His work? As you answer these questions, pray and ask God to help you run the race successfully:

- 1. What can you do differently this week to help others (the people in the stadium watching you) see Jesus?
- 2. What do you need to stop doing?
- 3. What do you need to start doing if you want to do well in the race?

### **MEMORY VERSE**

*"The Lord disciplines those He loves and He punishes everyone He accepts as His child."* —(Hebrews 12:6)

# New Covenant People

Session

God's new **covenant** includes a new kind of relationship – the church.

### HEBREWS 12:18-24

<sup>18</sup>You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire. You have not come to darkness, sadness, and storms.
<sup>19</sup>You have not come to the noise of a trumpet or to the sound of a voice like the one the people of Israel heard and begged not to hear another

word. <sup>20</sup> They did not want to hear the command: "If anything, even an animal, touches the mountain, it must be put to death with stones." <sup>21</sup> What they saw was so terrible that Moses said, "I am shaking with fear." <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**. You have come to thousands of angels gathered together with joy. <sup>23</sup> You have come to the meeting of God's **firstborn children** whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all people, and to the spirits of good people who have been made perfect. <sup>24</sup> You have come to Jesus, the One who brought the new agreement from God to His people, and you have come to the **sprinkled blood** that has a better message than the **blood of Abel**.

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

A Deaf church began to plan for a new building. They wanted to buy a small church building. It was big enough, but it needed a lot of repair. Some members felt it would require too much work and cost too much money. The pastor began by asking the Deaf people, "What do you think a church building should look like? Have you seen some church buildings you do not think look like a church?"

Almost everyone had a different idea about how the church building should look. Then the pastor said it is more important to think about how the church members should act and what they should do.

The pastor asked the people to find Hebrews 12 in their Bibles. He said, "This is what God thinks about the church. God has a plan for the church as a community of believers."

Do you have a photograph of your church? You may have two photographs. One is the church building and the other is the church people. When God looks at your church, what does He see? List two or three good things God sees in your church members.

Now, list two or three things that God is not pleased with.

What can you do to help correct the things that are not pleasing to God?

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Last week's lesson ended with verse 7 and today's lesson begins with verse 18. The verses between continue the idea of God's **discipline**. If we let God train us, we will grow spiritually.

The readers of the book of Hebrews knew about the two mountains in the lesson today. At Mount Sinai, God's people received the Law and they worshiped God with fear. At Mount Zion, however, the foundation of a believer's relationship with God was the good news of Jesus Christ.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

### 1. A Mountain of Fear (Hebrews 12:18-21)

Do you enjoy the mountains? Many of us have enjoyed going to Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina or Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico for meetings of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf. Both conference centers are in the mountains, but they are very different from each other. If you have been to both places, you have seen the differences. The Jewish people lived in a country with several mountains. Two mountains had very special meaning to them. One was Mount Sinai and the other was Mount Zion. We can see the difference between the old covenant, through the Law, and the new covenant, through Jesus, and the importance of the two mountains.

#### **VERSES 18-19**

God's people met Him at Mount Sinai after He delivered them from Egyptian slavery. They were full of fear when they felt He was with them. Why were they afraid? You can read about their experience and about what they saw in Exodus 19-20 and Deuteronomy 4-5. They saw and heard fire, darkness, storms, trumpets, and a voice - all representing God's power.

The Jewish people wanted Moses to do all the talking with God in the future. They did not want God to speak another word directly to them. They were filled with fear when the sound of His voice thundered from the mountain.

### How did God speak to the Israelites at Mount Sinai?

### How does God speak to you today?

#### VERSES 20-21

God would not let the Jewish people go near Mount Sinai. The sound of God's voice made them more afraid. If an animal or a person came near the mountain and tried to go up to God, that animal or person must die. God told Moses to come up into the mountain alone.

Moses experienced that same fear when God spoke to him through the burning bush years earlier (Exodus 3:1-10). Moses heard God's voice on the mountain when He gave the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 9:15-21). These events happened at Mount Sinai where God established His **covenant** with the people of Israel. What caused their fear? They knew God would punish them for their sin. But there were other times when they obeyed and felt peace.

# What sin is causing you to be afraid? Confess that sin to God right now.

### 2. A Spiritual Mountain of Joy (Hebrews 12:22-24)

### VERSE 22

People can now be in God's presence without fear. The writer pictured this meeting with God on Mount Zion, the city of God. Mount Zion is the hill where the city of Jerusalem was built. The earthly Mount Zion (Jerusalem and the temple) was important in the hearts of God's people. In Psalm 110:1-2, David prophesied about the coming Messiah who would reign from Mount Zion.

### **BIBLE SKILL**: The Church in the New Testament

Find these verses and list some of the things you learn about the church.

Matthew 16:17-19
Acts 8:1
Acts 9:31
Acts 11:21-24
Acts 13:1-3
Acts 14:23-28
Acts 15:1-3
Romans 16:23
1 Corinthians 12:27-29

But these verses are not about the real city of Jerusalem and the real temple. These verses are about a spiritual Mount Zion. These are picture words with two meanings. In one way this is a picture of heaven where we will meet with the living God in the future. We can do that because of what Jesus did for us. In that city of God, in heaven, we will worship God with the large crowd of angels and saved people.

### VERSE 23

These verses describe the Christians as "God's **firstborn children**." God has a list in heaven of the names of all the people who have faith in Jesus as Savior. When we accept Jesus, we come into fellowship with God and all the Christians who have died.

### VERSE 24

How can we come to God and live with Him in heaven? Because of Jesus. He took away our sin by His death on the **cross**. God has accepted Jesus' blood for our sins. The **blood of Abel** cannot do what the blood of Jesus did. Abel's blood could only cry out for God to punish Cain who murdered him. Jesus' blood brings forgiveness (Luke 23:34).

## IN MY CONTEXT

When other people look at your church, do they see a community of redeemed sinners or a group of people living in fear of God's anger? Do visitors at your church feel the warm fellowship of the spiritual Mount Zion? What can you do to help your church be the right kind of witness for Christ. Write some words to help you remember. You may want to write things like, "visit the sick," "take food to people who need it," or "bring people to church in your car."

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"You have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands of angels gathered together with joy." —(Hebrews 12:22)



# Live Your Faith

Believers need to live their **faith** so others can see God in them.

### **HEBREWS 13:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>Keep on loving each other as **brothers** and **sisters**. <sup>2</sup>Remember to welcome strangers, because some who have done this have welcomed angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup>Remember those who are in prison as if you were in prison with them. Remember those who are suffering as if you were suffering with them. <sup>4</sup>Marriage should be honored by everyone, and husband and wife should keep their marriage pure. God will judge as guilty those who take part in sexual sins. <sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. God has said, "I will never leave you; I will never abandon you." <sup>6</sup> So we can be sure when we say, "I will not be afraid, because the Lord is my helper. People can't do anything to me." <sup>7</sup> Remember your leaders who taught God's message to you. Remember how they lived and died, and copy their faith. <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

### **FIRST THOUGHTS**

One Sunday the pastor of the Deaf church wrote two words on the board: BELIEVE and BEHAVE. He began his sermon by talking about how to sign those words. The people agreed the word believe was the same as faith, so they used the sign FAITH. After some discussion they decided the best signs for behave would be ACT RIGHT.

The pastor then explained how our behavior follows what we believe. He said, "When people see how we behave, they will know what we believe."

### What we believe influences how we behave.

### **UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

Last week we stopped with Hebrews 12:24. In the rest of that chapter, we learn more about how to live as a Christian and as a part of the church, the family of God. One thing we must do is listen and obey when God speaks to

us. The Bible is full of examples of people who refused to listen and obey and they suffered God's punishment. God speaks to us today, not by Moses but by his Son Jesus.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT**

### 1. Show Hospitality (Hebrews 13:1-3)

### VERSE 1

After encouraging believers to hold strong to their **faith** in Christ, the writer urged them to put it to work by strengthening their fellowship with each other. If we love God, we will love His children. The church is a like a family. When one member suffers, all suffer.

### **BIBLE SKILL:** Examples of Hospitality

There are many examples of **hospitality** in the Bible. Read these verses and write the name of the person who showed **hospitality**, the person who was helped and how:

• 1 Kings 17:1, 7-15: \_\_\_\_\_\_showed **hospitality** to \_\_\_\_\_ by giving him \_\_\_\_\_.

• 2 Kings 4:8: \_\_\_\_\_\_ showed **hospitality** to \_\_\_\_\_by giving him \_\_\_\_\_.

Genesis 19:1-2: \_\_\_\_\_\_ showed hospitality to

\_\_\_\_\_ by giving them \_\_\_\_\_\_.

• Exodus 2:16-20: \_\_\_\_\_\_ showed hospitality to

\_\_\_\_\_ by giving him \_\_\_\_\_\_.

# How do you and your Deaf Bible class show God's love for each other?

### VERSE 2

Because we are Christians, our love should reach past our **brothers** and **sisters** to people we do not know. When strangers come to us, we should receive them into our homes and our church. Some people have had angels come to them and they did not know it.

# Do you show God's love through hospitality to other Deaf (and hearing) people in your community?

### VERSE 3

The Great Commandment taught true love for each other because of our love for God (Matthew 22:34-40). We need to let God's love continue to flow through us so we can minister to strangers at their doorsteps and prisoners in the jails.

Woodhaven Baptist Church (Deaf) in Houston, Texas, has developed a ministry called the Deaf Prison Ministry. More than twenty prisoners have become saved through this ministry. If you want more information about the Deaf Prison Ministry, go to http://www.woodhavendeaf.org/ missions/prison-ministry/ and http://deafprison.org. [URLs identified December 4, 2013]

### Does your church have a jail ministry in your community?

Do you have a ministry to other people who are hungry or have other needs? \_\_\_\_\_ How can you help with these ministries? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Respect Marriage (Hebrews 13:4)

VERSE 4

Marriage is a contract for life between a man and a woman. Sex in



marriage is pure and good. It is wrong for either the husband or wife to have sex with someone else. Husbands and wives who follow Christ make a commitment to be faithful to each other sexually.

Do you believe your marriage sets an example for other Deaf people about God's plan for marriage? \_\_\_\_\_ If you said yes, how do you do that? \_\_\_\_\_\_ If you said no, what do you need to do to change your influence?

#### 3. Security in God (Hebrews 13:5-6)

#### VERSE 5

God promises to be present with every believer. Believers need to trust God in all situations. We cannot love money and love God. The love of money is the cause of much other sin. God knows what is good for us. He loves us and we can depend on Him to take care of us. If we love God first, money will not control us.

## Read 1 Timothy 6:10. Why do you think the Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil?

### VERSE 6

The quotation in this verse is from Psalm 118:6. The Lord is our helper. He has done so much for us and He has promised to be with us. With such a helper we cannot fail, Love for God takes away all fear of other things.

The writer of the book of Hebrews was very confident when he wrote this verse. His words, "so we can be sure" show he really believed this Psalm. Don't let fear shake your **faith** in God who has promised to take care of you!

## Think of a time that was difficult for you. What was your confidence level? (Circle one number.)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Signing to yourself the words of this verse can help you move your number (confidence level) higher.

### 4. Copy Your Spiritual Leaders (Hebrews 13:7-8)

#### VERSE 7

The apostles taught new believers in Jerusalem. Then these believers taught others. The people reading this letter were taught by someone. They taught by their words and by living the faith. Some of those teachers were dead, possibly because of their faith in Jesus.

Who are your Christian **role models**? Write the names of a few people who have taught you how to live for Christ.

Thank God for their dedication to teach you and others. If possible send them a letter or email or text message thanking them for being your **role model**.

#### VERSE 8

Jesus Christ is the same in His character. *Yesterday* means as early as the creation through His time on earth and on into heaven. *Today* means He is with us, in our time. He will be the same forever.

The two names for the Lord in this verse give it special meaning. *Jesus* was His earthly name. Mary and Joseph gave Him that name because the angel told them to use that name (Matthew 1:21, Luke 1:31). The name *Christ* means the same as the Hebrew word, Messiah, or our English word, Savior. The name Christ reminds us He is God. Jesus was God with us, the Messiah the Jewish people waited for. Together, Jesus Christ reminds us He was both man and God, and He is our God forever.

## IN MY CONTEXT

In this lesson today, we have learned how believers need to treat others. This will show how well we understand the gospel. Believers need to show respect for marriage and for people who are hurting. God's presence in our life will influence how we treat others. Faithful Christians serve as examples to the next generation of believers and nonbelievers.

### "How do you live your faith"

Showing love to other Christians? \_\_\_\_\_

Welcoming strangers? \_\_\_\_\_

Ministering to prisoners? \_\_\_\_\_

Keeping your promise to your husband or wife? \_\_\_\_\_

Being satisfied with what you have? \_\_\_\_\_

### **MEMORY VERSE**

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

—(Hebrews 13:8)

# WORD LIST

**Ancestors**—People in the family going back many generations. Jewish people who lived in Old Testament times.

Apostasy—Turning (or falling) away from following Christ.

Appointed—Chosen by God.

**Ark**—A big ship built by Noah during the flood. Or, a special box in the holy of holies to remind the Israelites of the presence of God.

Assurance—To know and believe.

**At the right hand**—The right side was the place of honor, next to a king or any important person.

**Blood of Abel**—The writer of Hebrews pictured Abel as the first person to die because of his faith in God.

Brother / sister—Fellow Christians. Spiritual family.

Confess—Tell God or someone else you know you have done wrong (sinned).

**Confidence**—Trusting that someone or something is true.

**Conscience**—The sense of right or wrong.

**Covenant**—An agreement between God and His people.

**Cross (shame of)**—Death by hanging that caused physical pain and embarrassment because the person was naked.

Discipline—Discipline involves both training and punishment.

Enter His rest—Go to heaven or to have God's blessings here on earth.

Faith—Accepting something as true, even if we cannot see or prove it.

Firstborn children—All saved people.

Grace—The love and mercy of God that we do not deserve.

Harden your hearts—Not listen to the Lord, or not obey Him.

**Heart knowledge**—More than just knowing facts (head knowledge), it is truly believing those facts are true.

Heavenly Jerusalem—The New Jerusalem that will come down from heaven.

**High priest**—A descendant of Aaron, the first high priest. The only one allowed to enter the holy of holies once each year.

**Hospitality**—To welcome and serve others.

Humanity of Jesus, His incarnation—Jesus, though God, became a man. Inherit / Inheritance—The things a family member leaves to friends and family



when they die.

Last days—The days before Jesus comes again.

**Make pure**—To Sanctify or to make spiritually clean.

**Most holy place**—The small room inside the tabernacle or temple with the ark and other items.

**Ordain**—Set aside by the church for a special ministry such as pastor, deacon, or missionary. Sometimes called laying on of hands.

**People of Abraham**—All of the Jewish people were descendants of Abraham. They called him "Father Abraham."

**Persecution**—Experiencing troubles because of your beliefs.

**Propitiation**—To satisfy God's anger and judgment for our sin. Pay the price for sin.

**Redemption**—To become free from sin because of a trade.

**Repent**—Tell God you are sorry for your sins and want to change.

**Role model**—A person who is a good example.

**Salvation**—Eternal life when we receive Jesus as our Savior.

**Secure / Secured**—Anchored, made safe, cannot be removed or destroyed.

Signs and wonders—Miracles Jesus did.

**Sin nature**—The character we inherited from Adam that causes us to want to sin.

**Sinless nature of Jesus**—Jesus was tempted, but He never sinned.

**Son of God**—The letter to the Hebrews emphasizes how Jesus is the Son of God. This is called "the divinity of Christ."

**Sprinkled blood**—The blood of Jesus is greater than the blood sprinkled on the altar in the temple.

**Stray away**—To carelessly wander away from following Christ. To backslide.

**Struggle**—To fight against something, to defend against something.

**Sympathize**—To try to understand how someone else feels.

**Tabernacle**—The tent made for worship while the Jewish people were in the desert.

**Turn away**—Turn back to sin, or away from Christ.

**Unclean**—Defiled. Spiritually not clean. Full of sin. Not acceptable to God.

**Useless acts**—Dead works. The things people try to do to become saved.

**Veil**—The Curtain in the temple or tabernacle that separated the holy of holies.

Without blemish—Perfect.

# **Explore** the Bible.

### LEADER GUIDE

to come that we are talking about. <sup>c</sup> somewhere testified:

> What is man, that You r or the son of man, that You care for the You made him is the for a short the You crown of the week

# Hebrews

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# The Tabernacle





## Session \_

# Who Is Jesus?

Jesus was God's Son. He revealed God to us.

### EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 1:1-4)

#### 1. Introduction to Hebrews

The Gospel writers identified Jesus in words similar to those in Hebrews 1:1-4. Compare Matthew 23:41-45, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 5:17-26, and John 1:1-18.

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#### 2. God Spoke (Hebrews 1:1-2a)

God spoke often throughout the Bible. God created the universe by speaking it into existence out of nothing (Genesis 1:1-31). The Son was present when God spoke and the universe was created. God spoke to Moses, giving the Israelites the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17). God's voice calls to the ends of the earth (Psalm 19:4, Isaiah 62:11).

### THE LAST DAYS

The **last days** refers to the time between the coming of the Messiah (Jesus) and His return. The New Testament teaches this will be a time of godlessness and **persecution** of God's people. The New Testament leaders thought Jesus would return to earth very soon. Paul wrote about the evils of the last days: godlessness (2 Timothy 3:1-5), and deception (1 Timothy 4:1). Peter spoke of people making fun of Christians during this time (2 Peter 3:3-4). In these "last days" Jesus the Son, continues to show us more about God the Father.

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God spoke in the past (Old Testament time) and in the time from Jesus' birth until the end of the world. The coming of Jesus marked the dividing line between the two periods. The Old Testament times pointed to what would come with the birth of Jesus (1 Peter 1:10-12).

God spoke in different ways (Hebrews 1:2a). He spoke with direct revelation (Genesis 12:1), angels (Zechariah 1:14), dreams (Genesis 28:12-15), and nature (Psalm 19:1-4).

### Ask: How does Jesus continue to speak to us in these "last days?

### 3. God Showed Himself to His People (Hebrews 1:2b-4)

Verse 2b. Jesus was and is the Divine **Son of God**. This truth about Jesus really matters!

The writer of Hebrews knew that if his readers understood who Jesus is and what Jesus did for them, they would stand strong in their faith.

### SCRIPTURE SEARCH: Jesus: The Word

The New Testament declares that Jesus is the Word made flesh who reveals the Father (John 1:1,14,18). Jesus gave His disciples authority to teach the gospel message of God's kingdom (Acts 1–2). God's Word pierces into the human heart, discerning our thoughts and motives (Hebrews 4:12). See also John 14:9 and Colossians 1:17.

### VERSE 4

Jesus is greater than the angels. This is the first of several contrasts in the letter to the Hebrews, showing Jesus is greater, more powerful, and has greater honor than angels, prophets, priests, and others.

### Ask: Why is it important that we clearly understand who Jesus is and what He did for us on the cross?

# Session 2

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# Pay Attention

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Believers must be careful not to drift away from Jesus.

### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested teaching method: Group Study Assign leaders for three groups: Suggested Hymn: "Jesus Is All the World to Me."

### Attention!

Ask someone to flash the room lights. Ask: "What does that mean to a Deaf person? (Attention please.) That is the theme of today's lesson. God wants your attention today."

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 2:1-4)**

### 1. Pay Attention! (Hebrews 2:1)

Let the three groups meet separately to decide how to sign their Scripture and what it means. After ten to fifteen minutes, call them back together.

### Ask the first group to sign and discuss Hebrews 2:1.

**Verse 1.** Review the first paragraph in First Thoughts with this verse in the pupil material. Most Deaf adults will remember this experience while they were a child in school and at home. They may have had the same experience with their own children.

### Ask: What situations today can cause a person to drift?

### **STRAY AWAY**

Some other translations use the words drift away or slip away. The idea is the importance of paying attention so we do not forget what we learn from the Bible. The meaning in Hebrews 2:1 is to learn and to obey what we have learned.

### 2. The Danger of Not Paying Attention (Hebrews 2:2-3a) Ask Group 2 to sign and discuss this text.

**Verse 2**. Ask: "What do you know about angels?" The angels were God's messengers. Jesus is a much more important messenger than the angels. This is the major theme in Hebrews – Jesus is greater.

**Verse 3a.** The message Jesus brought is much more important than the message of the angels. As a loving Heavenly Father, God will **discipline** His children so they will grow in their **faith** (Hebrews 12:7,11).

# Ask: Are you aware of times when God disciplines you because you disobeyed Him?

### 3. Truth Proved (Hebrews 2:3b-4) Ask group 3 to sign this Scripture text.

**Verse 3b-4.** We have the Holy Spirit to remind us of that message. God showed the truth of the gospel when Jesus announced it, and again when the first followers of Christ preached it. The phrase *God also testified* gives the idea of His support of the gospel. He gave signs, wonders, and miracles.

Read Acts 2:22-24, 14:3, and Romans 15:17-20. How did each miracle show the truth of the gospel message.

The Holy Spirit continues to work in the hearts of believers.

Ask: When does the Holy Spirit come into a Christian's heart? (At the time of **salvation**.)

# Session 3

# Why One of Us?

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God's Son took on human nature to free us from sin and death.

### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested Teaching Method: Pupil Teachers. Select one to teach each section. Suggested Hymn: "Yield Not to Temptation."

#### Attention!

Ask: "Do you have a problem understanding how Jesus was both God and man?" (Most people do! We accept this truth through faith.)

### WHY ONE OF US?

It was necessary for the **Son of God** to become like us so He could provide the **salvation** we need. God took on flesh without ceasing to be God. That's an amazing thought! It is a fact that makes Jesus Christ different from any other human being. He did not give up being God when He took on human nature. He is both God and man. This section of Hebrews emphasizes how Jesus understand our human experience. He experienced the full force of temptation, but He did not sin. He took on human nature so that as the God-Man, He could redeem all who **repent** and believe in Him.

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### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 2:14-18)**

#### 1. To Destroy the Devil (Hebrews 2:14-16)

This is the first answer to the question in the title of this lesson. **Verses 14-15**. Ask: "How was Jesus different from other people?" (He did not sin. In every other way, He was like us.)

## Ask: What does this verse tell us about how Jesus destroyed the power of the devil? (With His death, to pay the price for our sin.)

**Verse 16.** This verse tells us Jesus does not help the angels. Why? (They are God's servants. Jesus came to earth to die for people, not angels.)

Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_ to sign Galatians 3:6-9.

#### PEOPLE OF ABRAHAM

The people (or children, or seed) of Abraham simply means the Jewish people. All Jews were descendants of one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Jacob was the son of Isaac. Isaac was the son of Abraham. Jesus was a direct descendant of Abraham, through David.

There is another meaning to Abraham's children for those who have the kind of **faith** Abraham had. Jesus said a true child of Abraham is one who obeys God (Matthew 3:9, Luke 3:8). Jesus became a child of Abraham because God promised this to Abraham (Genesis 12:2-3).

#### 2. To Pay for Our Sin (Hebrews 2:17-18)

This is the second answer to the question in the title of this lesson. **Verse 17**. Ask: "From this verse, can you explain why Jesus must be born as a man?" (He must be able to make atonement, like a **high priest**. He became the full sacrifice for all people because He was both man and God.)



# Watch Out!

Believers need to encourage each other to hold strong to Jesus.

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#### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested Teaching Method: Assignments. Plan for everyone in the class to have one or more assignments.

Suggested Hymn: "Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus."

#### Attention!

Ask: "What is the title of today's lesson?" "How many of you remember when you were small how your parents often said, Be careful?" As Christian Deaf adults, we need to help each other to be careful about spiritual things.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 3:7-15)**

#### **BELIEVERS AND SIN**

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation. When believers do, they grieve the Holy Spirit and criticizes Christ's cause. They may also bring God's punishment on themselves. But they are kept by God's power. Ask class members to sign Numbers 20:12; 2 Samuel 12:13-14; John 10:27-29; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3,14-15; and 2 Timothy 1:12.

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Recall that this letter to the Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians living in Gentile areas and sometimes facing **persecution**.

Ask: If you are a Deaf person in a church with an interpreted ministry or a Deaf church meeting in the same building as the hearing church, do you sometimes feel you are in someone else's church (not your own church)? How do you deal with this?

#### 1. Know Your History (Hebrews 3:7-11)

**Verses 7-11.** How does the writer of Hebrews compare the story of the Jewish people were in the desert for forty years to the Jewish people in Gentile countries? (The danger of being led by other people to **turn away** from Christ.).

Discuss the idea of God's anger in verse 11. Ask: How can God be angry and still be without sin? (It is righteous anger because of their sin and can lead to punishment.)

#### 2. Pay Attention to the Warning (Hebrews 3:12)

**Verse 12**. Ask: "Do you like the idea of calling other Christians **brother** or **sister**?" (The words remind us we are a spiritual family.)

#### 3. Encourage Each Other (Hebrews 3:13-15)

**Verses 13-15.** Ask: "How can we encourage each other in our church?" Encourage discussion of the need to pray together and to praise others for their Christian walk.

#### TURN AWAY

Some translations use the words, fall away in verse 12. Verse 13 has the words, harden your heart.

These verses mean a person's heart becomes so filled with non-spiritual things the person loses his interest in Christ and His church. What is the answer? Turn back to Christ in **faith** (verse 14). Listen to Him through the Bible (verse 15). Listen to the encouragement of your Christian **brothers** and **sisters** (verse 12).



# Hold Fast and Draw Near

Jesus made our **salvation** permanent through His sacrifice on the **cross**.

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#### PLAN AHEAD

Prepare two posters: one, ONCE SAVED - ALWAYS SAVED; the other, ETERNAL SECURITY.

Suggested Teaching Method: Guest speaker Invite the pastor, or another Bible teacher, to talk briefly about the eternal security of the believer. Give this person a copy of the pupil material for this lesson so he/she will be familiar with it. Suggested Hymn: "Saved, Saved."

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 4:14–5:6)**

#### 1. Confidence (Hebrews 4:14-16)

**Verses 14-15.** Ask: "Can you explain how Christ was greater than the priests?" (He became the sacrifice.)

These verses identify two actions we can take to remain confident in our faith: holding fast to what we profess and boldly approaching the throne of grace.

**Verse 16.** Have your guest speak now. Then ask: "Do you understand clearly about eternal security?"

If you did not have a guest speaker, display the posters and discuss what these terms mean.

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#### 2. Found in Christ (Hebrews 5:1-6)

**Verse 1.** Ask: "Do you believe God is serious about our sin?" (Serious enough to send His Son as our Savior!)

**Verses 2-3.** Ask, "Can you name some believers who have wandered away from the Lord? What can our class do for them?"

**Verse 4.** If someone knows one of the Deaf pastors or missionaries, ask him to tell briefly about that person.

#### MELCHIZEDEK

Melchizedek was not a priest according to the Mosaic Law because he met Abraham long before Moses and Aaron lived. In Genesis 14:18-20, Abraham was returning from a battle and met the priest and king of Salem (Jerusalem) named Melchizedek. The priest greeted Abraham in the name of God Most High. He blessed Abraham and Abraham gave a tithe of all he had taken in the battle.

Today's lesson has a quotation of Psalm 110:4. This is a prophetic reference to Jesus as the great **high priest**, greater than Melchizedek.

#### Ask: How does this lesson help us understand the theme of Jesus as greater than the priests? (We can go directly to God through Jesus. Jesus Christ will always be there for us.)

As the unique **High Priest**, Jesus fulfilled the role of both sacrifice and priest. As God's Son, His death provided the perfect and final sacrifice for man's sin. As the eternal priest, Jesus was similar to Melchizedek, who served the Lord as a king as well as a priest.

### Ask: How confident are you when you approach the Lord in prayer or in Bible study?

One man said he did not think he had a right to pray because he did not give any money to the church. How would you answer him?

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If Christians reject Christ, they will feel hopeless about the future.

#### PLAN AHEAD

Prepare a poster with the word HOPE in large letters.

Suggested Teaching Method: Skit

For the discussion of 6:2, ask three or four persons to do a skit showing what ordination is like. Fold sheets of paper in fourths, longwise. Tape the ends together making a "crown." On these crowns, print DEACON, PASTOR, LAYMAN, and MISSIONARY. Use the "crowns" to identify who they represent.

Suggested Hymn: "Faith Is the Victory."

#### Attention!

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Hold up the poster with the word HOPE. Ask: "What is the sign for this word." Encourage discussion of the difference between the sign with crossed fingers and the sign related to expect. In the New Testament, hope has the meaning of believing it will happen. It includes **faith** that God will do what He promised.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 6:1-8)**

#### 1. Grow in Faith (Hebrews 6:1-3)

Verse 1. Christians throughout church history may have different

understandings of this passage, especially verses 4-8. We know: God inspired these words for His people to study, learn, and obey. We need to dig into them and ask the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and understanding.

#### LAYING ON OF HANDS

Laying on of hands is also called ordination. New Testament churches did this when someone was sent out as a missionary or pastor.

Today we **ordain** ministers, deacons, and missionaries. Ordination is not required but it is our way of saying we agree with their call to special service and our promise to pray for them and support them. Other denominations may have a different definition of ordination.

Ask your skit team to wear their "crown". Ask the missionary to kneel, facing the class. Ask the others to place both hands on the missionary's head. Explain how each one says a few words (or signs) to the one being ordained.

**Verses 2-3.** Discuss the four doctrines named in this verse. These verses suggest these people were having disagreements about some of these doctrines or they spent their time teaching the same things again and again.

#### 2. Don't Turn Away (Hebrews 6:4-8)

Verses 7-8. These verses are a parable to explain the concept in verse 6.

#### SECURITY IN JESUS HEBREWS

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.



## Session /

Only Jesus Saves

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Only Jesus has the power to save us.

#### PLAN AHEAD

Ask two persons to give a testimony of their **salvation** experience.

For the Attention activity, take the front page of a newspaper and a sheet containing the TV guide.

Suggested Teaching Method: Pupil Teachers (4).

Suggested Hymn: "Jesus Saves."

#### Attention!

Hold up the front page of the newspaper and the TV Guide. Discuss how it seems there is more news about bad things people do than about good things. Television has much violence. Why is this?

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Ask: What kinds of things do people try to use to become saved? (Church membership, parents' Christian life, doing good works.)

Ask two class members to tell their experience of finding Jesus as Savior.

Share the plan of **salvation** clearly and pray the Holy Spirit will work in students' hearts

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 7:23-28)**

#### 1. An Eternal Priest (Hebrews 7:23-24)

#### **OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTS**

The priests were the spiritual leaders of Israel. They were in charge of the sacrifices and offerings in the temple. On Mount Sinai, after the Israelites left Egypt, God told Moses to appoint Aaron and his four sons to serve as priests (Exodus 28:1,41). The priests were supported by special offerings (Numbers 18:20-24). They were also the scribes, or teachers of the Law (Deuteronomy 31:9-12). The **high priest** was in charge of worship in the temple or synagogue. A special sin offering was made for the **high priest** (Leviticus 4:3-12).

### Ask: Why do you think God has done so much to have a relationship with sinful people?

#### 2. Able to Save (Hebrews 7:25)

**Verse 25.** Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_ to sign Romans 5:6-11. This is a good summary of the gospel story.

#### 3. Because of His Character (Hebrews 7:26-28)

**Verse 27-28.** Jesus made the perfect sacrifice. Ask class members to copy you as you sign a prayer of thanksgiving to Christ for sacrificing Himself so we can become saved.

#### Ask: How does knowing that Jesus is interceding for you right now encourage you to endure in your faith, love, and worship of Him?

# Spiritual Change, Only From Jesus

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Jesus established a new covenant based upon God's promises.

#### PLAN AHEAD

For the Attention activity, prepare a poster with the word CONTRACT in large letters.

Suggested Teaching Method: Group Study – three groups.

Suggested Hymn: "Onward Christian Soldiers."

#### Attention!

Hold up your poster with the word CONTRACT. Ask: What does this mean? (An agreement between two people. Promises between two people.)

Ask: What contracts do you have now? (Credit cards, deed to house, loan, marriage license.)

In the Bible verses today, the word is **covenant** or *agreement*. These words mean the same as contract.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 8:1-13)**

Divide the class into three groups, one for each section. Let them study together for ten to fifteen minutes, then come and report to the whole class. Add your own comments as needed.

#### 1. The New Covenant Needed (Hebrews 8:1-6) Ask group 1 to sign verses 1-6 and report on this section.

**Verses 1-8.** The new **covenant** was prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-34, 600 years before Christ came to the earth.

Ask: "Does it strengthen your **faith** to know that even after more than 600 years, God kept His promise to give the new **covenant** to His people?"

#### 2. The New Covenant Promised (Hebrews 8:7-9) Ask group 2 to sign verses 7-9 and report on this section.

**Verse 7.** Ask class members to tell what they understand about God's covenants with man. Ask: "Who made up the covenants in the Bible, God or man?" (God.)

#### **MY PEOPLE**

Old Testament: Read God's words after the Jews came out of Egypt (Leviticus 26:11-13) and while captives in Babylon (Ezekiel 37:26-27).

New Testament: the term my people includes those who are children of Abraham through faith, as prophesied in Zechariah 2:11. Paul wrote, "As God said: 'I will live with them and walk with them. And I will be their God, and they will be my people'" (2 Corinthians 6:16, quoting from Ezekiel 37:27).

#### Ask: Do you feel you are included in the group God calls "my people?"

#### 3. The New Covenant Described (Hebrews 8:10-13)

**Verses 10-13**. This is the **covenant** under which we live. This is different from the other covenants because nothing is required from the people.

Ask: How has God's forgiving mercy influenced your walk with Christ?



# THE PERFECT OFFERING

Christ's sacrifice on the **cross** established a new **covenant** of eternal **salvation**.

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PLAN AHEAD

For the Attention activity, make two posters: PERFECT and PERFEC (misspelled!).

Suggested Teaching Method: Field Trip. Visiting the library to look at materials showing diagrams of the **tabernacle** and the temple. Identify the holy place and holy of holies.

Suggested Hymn: "Jesus Paid It All."

#### Attention!

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Hold up the poster with the letters PERFEC. Ask how to sign that "word." If someone does not think of it, show the fun sign, as if signing perfect, but with the right hand coming down and missing the left hand! Then hold up the poster with the word PERFECT. Ask: Can you think of anything on earth we know is truly perfect? Today we will see how Jesus became the perfect offering for our sin.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 9:11-15)**

Christ Goes into the Holy Place (Hebrews 9:11-12)
Verses 11-12. Discuss the concept of Jesus as the greatest high priest.
Discuss the veil in the temple. Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_ to sign Matthew

27:47-51; Mark 15:37-39; and Luke 23:44-47.

#### Ask: Have you thanked the Lord today for saving you with His own blood?

#### 2. Christ Makes a Better Sacrifice (Hebrews 9:13-14) Ask: What was different in the offering Jesus made in the holv of holies compared with the offerings made by the high priest on the Day of Atonement? (Jesus' offering was once for all time.)

#### DAY OF ATONEMENT

These words are not used in these verses, but the discussion of the **high** priest going into the holy of holies refers to the Jewish celebration of the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. This celebration happens one time each year, on the tenth day of the seventh month in the Jewish calendar. This is the latter part of September or early October in our calendar. Today Yom Kippur is observed by Jewish people around the world.

#### 3. Christ Speaks for Us (Hebrews 9:15)

**Verse 15.** Covenants in Old Testament times were enacted in some interesting ways. The rainbow sealed a **covenant** between God and Noah (Genesis 9:12-13). Male circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 17:10-14). Jacob and his uncle, Laban, ratified a peace agreement by setting up a mound of stones (Genesis 31:44-48).

Ask: "Do you know someone who needs you to tell them about Jesus this week?" Write names on the board and ask each one to list them in their quarterly, and then pray for them and ask God to show them how and when to witness to those persons.

## Session 1()

# What Is Faith?

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A right relationship with God begins with **faith** in Jesus.

#### **PLAN AHEAD**

Suggested Teaching Method: Drama. Organize a drama group to tell the story of Noah from Genesis 5:3-10:32. Make "crowns" for the characters: God, Noah, people, Noah's sons (3 of these), and others.

Suggested Hymn: "Trusting Jesus."

#### Attention!

Ask: "How often do you practice faith?" Include **faith** in people or things, not just spiritual things.

Ask: "How do we learn to trust these things?" (Experience.) With experience we learn to trust Jesus more.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 11:1-7)**

#### 1. Faith Explained (Hebrews 11:1-3)

**Verse 1.** There is a difference between being concerned (such as for the safety of our family) and worry.

Verse 2. Ask: "In what way is **faith** in Jesus different from having **faith** in another person or in money?"

#### FAITH

**Faith** is **confidence** that God will do what He says He will do. **Faith** endures even when a particular promise of God does not happen on our timetable.

#### 2. Examples of Faith (Hebrews 11:4-7)

**Verse 4.** Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to sign Genesis 4:2-7 and review the information about Abel from the pupil material and other sources. Ask: What are some difficulties Christians face today that require them to display faith in God?

**Verse 5.** Hebrews 11 contains a strong connection between **faith** and godly living. Ask: "Why does that connection often get lost when people talk about faith?"

**Verse 6.** Biblical **faith** is because of the very nature and person of God, and what He has done.

#### ENOCH

Enoch is a descendant of Seth and the son of Jared (Genesis 5:3-18). He was the father of Methuselah and the great-grandfather of Noah. Enoch did not die.

**Verse 7.** Ask your drama group to present the story of Noah. The lesson includes only a small part of that story.

Ask: How do the examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah encourage you to endure in faith?

Ask each class member to choose one of the characters in verses 8-32 and tell the class about that person next week.

# Why do Christians Suffer?

Because of Christ's perfect sacrifice, His followers need to remain faithful no matter what happens.

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#### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested Teaching Method: Guest Speaker

Invite an athlete, (Deaf if possible) in the church or community, to discuss his/her training for an athletic event. Let your class members ask questions after the speaker is finished. (For "plan B" interview this person and share the information with your class.)

Suggested Hymn: "Living for Jesus."

#### Attention!

Our lesson today discusses the question: Why do Christians suffer? A book title asks: Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People? Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_ to tell the story of Steven from Acts 6:1-8:4.

### Ask class members to tell the story of the person they chose from Hebrews 11 last week.

We do not have that kind of **persecution** in America, but sometimes Christians are harassed or criticized for their faith.

#### Ask: Have you faced any problem like that?

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 12:1-7)**

#### 1. Continue When It Is Difficult (Hebrews 12:1-3)

Verse 3. Discuss well-known Christians from the past or now.

#### OUR AUDIENCE

Who is watching us? First, we have the testimony of those in the past to encourage us (11:4-40). Second, we have the encouragement of other believers to pick us up when we are weak. We must not isolate ourselves from other believers by failing to meet together (10:25). Third, we have been given access to the throne of heaven. There we will always find **grace** and mercy to help when we are weak or in need (4:14-16). Fourth, we have Jesus Christ, our Great **High Priest**, who lives eternally to intercede for us (7:25).

#### Ask: How have you been encouraged by the examples of faith set by Christians in the past or now?

#### 2. God's Discipline (Hebrews 12:4-7)

**Verse 4.** We are more likely to stumble spiritually than to be beaten or killed for our faith.

#### **DISCIPLINE / PERSECUTION**

The word discipline can mean both punishment and training.

Men persecute Christians because they are religious. God punishes Christians because they are not more faithful.

Ask: How does your own experience in spiritual growth help you to understand about God's discipline and training of you now?





# New Covenant People

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God's new **covenant** includes a new kind of relationship

#### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested Teaching Method: Small Groups Find a Bible map to locate Mount Sinai and Mount Zion (Jerusalem).

Suggested Hymn: "Standing on the Promises."

#### Attention!

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Ask: "What does the word church mean to you?" One definition: a group of baptized believers, joined together to carry out the Great Commission. Ask: "How does a person become a member of our church?" After discussion, ask: "Does the Bible tell us how to become a member of a church?" (See Acts 2:41). In those days people who were believers made up the church. The believers in Jerusalem were called the church in Jerusalem. Now, we have more organization. Other denominations have different types of organization.

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 12:18-24)**

Divide the class into two groups, each with a leader. Have one group study this topic and the other group the second topic. After 10-15 minutes, call them back together to report what they learned.

#### 1. A Mountain of Fear (Hebrews 12:18-21)

**Verse 18-19.** Soon after the Israelites left Egypt, God met with them at Mount Sinai. (Locate this on an Old Testament map.) God's presence brought fear to the people.

**Verse 20-21.** God established His **covenant** with His people at Mount Sinai.

Ask: Have you gotten "off course" at times? How did the Lord bring you back?

#### 2. A Spiritual Mountain of Joy (Hebrews 12:22-24)

In the lesson today, Mount Sinai (the mountain of fear) is contrasted with the **heavenly Jerusalem** (the mountain of joy) and the spiritual Mount Zion.

#### **MOUNT ZION**

Mount Zion is the hill upon which Jerusalem was established (2 Samuel 5:6-10, 1 Chronicles 11:4-9). Isaiah used the word Zion to refer to the whole nation of Israel (Isaiah 1:27). In the prophets, the word Zion sometimes refers to the spiritual Jerusalem, or heaven (Isaiah 28:16, 33:5).

Mount Zion in the New Testament usually refers to the city, the temple, or the people who worshiped there.

#### Ask: Why are these two spiritual mountains so different?

Encourage the class to think of a time of worship where they felt God was near them. Invite them to share how God moved in their lives and what role their relationship with Jesus had in helping them have the **confidence** to enter God's presence.

Ask: What are two or three things that can distract our spiritual eyes away from the true goal of our faith?

# Live Your Faith

Believers need to live their **faith** so others can see God in them.

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#### PLAN AHEAD

Suggested Teaching Method: Assignments. Find an assignment for each person in the class today.

Suggested Hymn: "Trust and Obey."

Ask: "Do you agree that "Trust and Obey is a good definition of true biblical faith?"

### **EXPLORE THE TEXT (HEBREWS 13:1-8)**

#### **GROWING IN GRACE**

Sanctification is the experience, beginning in the new birth, by which the believer is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

#### 1. Show Hospitality (Hebrews 13:1-3)

**Verse 1.** This verse is about love for our Christian **brothers** and **sisters**, and our church family.

Ask: Have you see a church hurt or destroyed because the members did not love each other?

# **Verse 3.** Ask \_\_\_\_\_\_ to find the web site for the Deaf Prison Ministry1 and report to the class about this ministry. http://www.woodhavendeaf.org/missions/prison-ministry/.

#### 2. Respect Marriage (Hebrews 13:4)

**Verse 4.** Sexual immorality is an epidemic in our culture and has influenced our churches. In contrast, a godly marriage reflects a different standard. It shows something grand and beautiful to our community. **Ask: Do you feel our nation is going the wrong way in the attitude of people and the government toward biblical marriage?** 

#### 3. Security in God (Hebrews 13:5-6)

#### THE LOVE OF MONEY

Greed suggests a person does not trust God to provide (Matthew 6:24). The biblical teaching is to keep our lives free from the love of money and to be content with the things we have. Our satisfaction with what we have comes from God's promise of His help (verse 5).

#### 4. Copy Your Spiritual Leaders (Hebrews 13:7-8)

Encourage your class to list some of the people that are watching their witness (children, grandchildren, spouses, or close friends).

\*See the information about these items on the lesson plan sheet. http://www.woodhavendeaf.org/missions/prison-ministry/

#### YOUR HELP NEEDED

How do you like this new format? We would like to hear from you and your class members. Send an email to Stephanie Johnson or George Joslin to tell us what you think of it. Our email address is **ETBDeaf@lifeway. com.** For additional teaching helps visit: **www.lifeway.com/ETBDeaf** 

## **PRAYER JOURNAL**

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# Hebrews

The Christian life is a marathon, not a sprint. Believers who make a good start in faith can sometimes hit the wall. Maybe personal struggles or the cares of the world weigh them down. Maybe they get distracted or thrown off track by temptations. Or maybe they fail to count the cost of following Christ in a world that's hostile to Him. Suddenly they don't think they can keep going. They take their eyes off of Jesus and are in danger of not completing the course. The Book of Hebrews offers spiritual refreshment to every Bible reader running life's most important race. The writer paints a compelling perspective on Jesus, with the goal of giving believers a fresh burst of courage to endure to the finish.



Let the Word dwell in you.