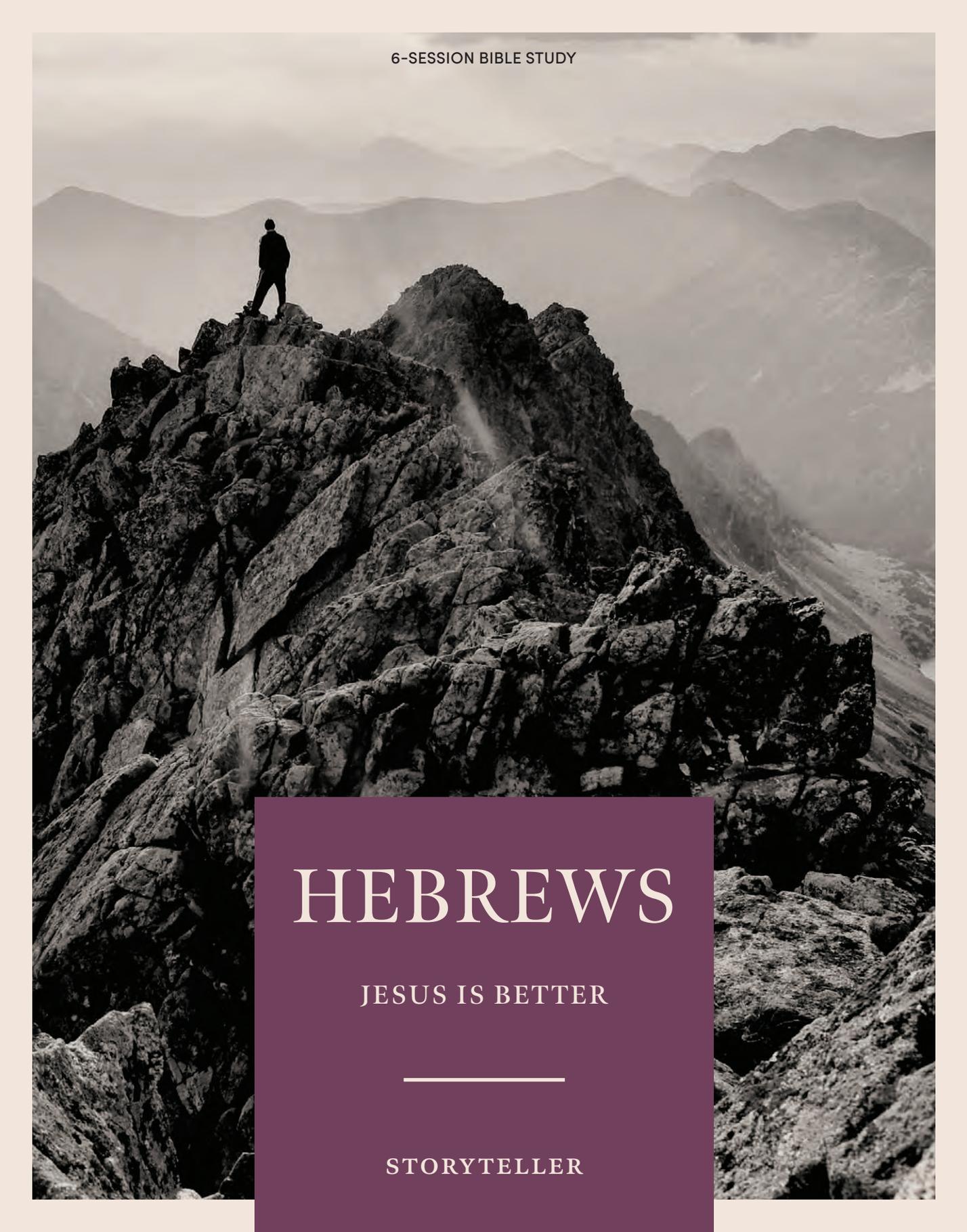


6-SESSION BIBLE STUDY



HEBREWS

JESUS IS BETTER

STORYTELLER

HEBREWS

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HEBREWS

JESUS IS BETTER

STORYTELLER

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ABOUT STORYTELLER

God could've chosen to reveal Himself in any way that He desired, yet in His wisdom, He chose to reveal Himself in the context of a story. We come to know and understand this reality as we immerse ourselves in the Scriptures and begin to see the entirety of Scripture as one interconnected story. By becoming familiar with the individual stories of Scripture, we train ourselves to see each as one part of God's big story.

Storyteller is a six week devotional and group Bible study experience designed to take people through Scripture in a way that is beautiful, intuitive, and interactive. Each volume uses a book of the Bible or a portion of Scripture from within a book to examine a key theme. This theme guides the Bible study experience and gives readers handles to help understand and digest what they're reading.

At the end of each study, you should have a deeper understanding of God, His Word, the big themes of Scripture, the connectedness of God's story, and His work in your life.

Let's enter the story together.

ABOUT HEBREWS

AUTHOR

Unique among New Testament books, the author of Hebrews is unknown. Even though the author's identity is lost to time, we know that early Christians received this letter as an inspired part of Scripture in the first century. We do know that the author was a second-generation Christian (2:3), that he knew Timothy (13:23), and that the recipients of the letter were known to him (3:12; 7:5; 13:22). Additionally, because of the author's familiarity with the Old Testament as well as the Jewish sacrificial system, we can conclude the author came from a Jewish background. Biblical scholars have proposed authors including Luke, Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Apollos, Peter, Silas, and Jude.

BACKGROUND

Hebrews was likely written to a group of Jewish Christians who were considering a return to Judaism because of the increasing persecution they were experiencing. This is perhaps why the author included the so-called "warning passages" about the spiritual danger of turning your back on Jesus (Hebrews frequently encourages the audience to endure and warns against leaving Christ (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:1-29)). The "letter" to the Hebrews includes no traditional greeting or stated purpose one finds in other New Testament letters. As such, it is best understood as a sermon meant to be shared and circulated within the church.

DATE

The book was likely written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 because if that had happened, it would have been mentioned. Clement of Rome quoted the book in AD 96, so we know that it was written before then. The author mentions public persecution in 10:32-34. Roman emperors Nero and Domitian both persecuted the church during their reigns. The most likely date for the later is during the persecution of Nero (AD 54–68).

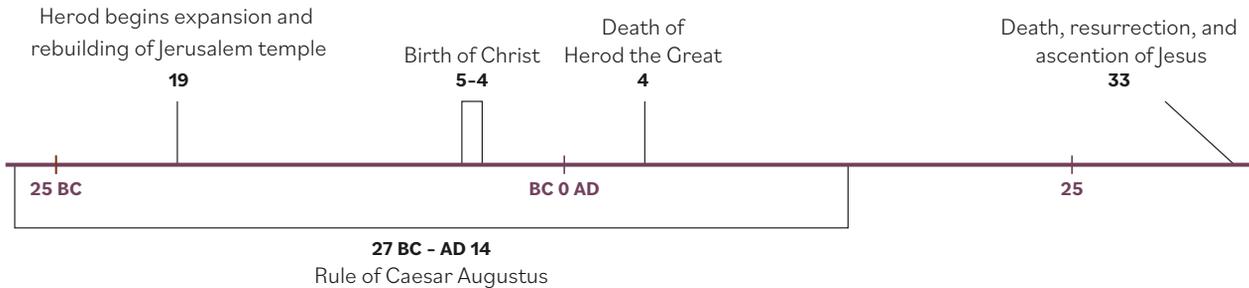
PURPOSE

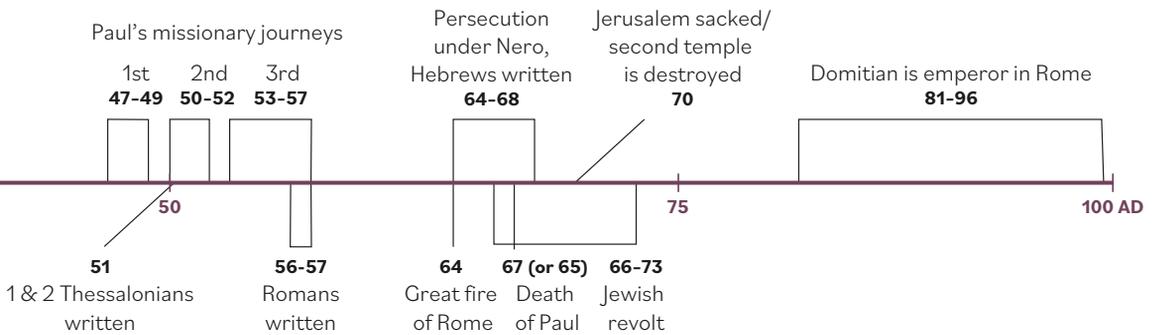
The letter to the Hebrews is a tribute to Jesus and an encouragement to persecuted Christians. The author had two goals: 1. demonstrate that Jesus is incomparable—He is better than anything or anyone we could place our faith in. 2. Urge wavering followers of Jesus to pursue growth and maturity in Jesus Christ.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE¹

- The Superiority of Jesus (1:1–2:18)
- The Superiority of Jesus’s Faithfulness (3:1–4:16)
- The Superiority of Jesus’s Work (5:1–6:20)
- The Superiority of Jesus’s Priesthood (7:1–10:39)
- The Superiority of Faith in Jesus (11:1–12:2)
- The Superiority of God’s Plan (12:3–29)
- The Superiority of Life Following Jesus (13:1–25)

TIMELINE OF SELECT NEW TESTAMENT EVENTS





WHY STUDY HEBREWS?

The letter to the Hebrews was written to a group of Jewish converts to Christianity who were considering abandoning Jesus and returning to Judaism. They were enduring persecution. Life was difficult, and they wondered if following Jesus was really worth it.

You may not be in their situation, but you know the feeling. You've likely been tempted to ask the same question—is Jesus worth it?

The author of Hebrews answers that question with an invitation—consider Jesus.

Take the time to know Him and see what He offers. Throughout Hebrews, the author systematically works through key themes and characters in the Bible and points out how Jesus is better than all of those things.

Let's walk together as we look at the One Hebrews describes as “the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of [God's] nature, [Who sustains] all things by his powerful word” (1:3). You will not be disappointed.

1. Malcolm B. Yarnell III, “Hebrews,” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1945–1946.



HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week follows a repeated rhythm to guide you in your study of Hebrews and was crafted with lots of white space and photographic imagery to facilitate a time of reflection on Scripture.

The week begins with an introduction to the themes of the week. Throughout each week you'll find Scripture readings, devotions, and beautiful imagery to guide your time.



WEEK 3 BETTER HOPE

HEBREWS 1:1-4
THE NATURE OF THE SON

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways.² He spoke to them by his angels to the holy men God had appointed. He has spoken to us in these last days by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things and made the universe through him.³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for himself, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.⁴ He has become superior to the angels, just as the name he inherited is more excellent than theirs.

30 HEBREWS

DAY 1 THE GREATEST REVELATION

Think about the most magnificent part of creation you've ever seen. People want great pictures to see firsthand the scenery of the Grand Canyon and the power of Niagara Falls. We'll learn how to marvel to see and explore the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef. We'll drive up narrow paths and make altitude sickness to experience the most extreme mountain views. We do this because we want to experience something greater. We want to see glimpses of God.

The book of Hebrews begins with a reality that is beyond the wonder of the most wonderful sights on earth. It is the greatest reality of all.

God wants to reveal Himself to us even more than we want to see Him. And He has revealed Himself to us, through far more than His creation. A long time ago, He raised up prophets to reveal Himself to people. These men and women were great teachers and powerful speakers, but at the end of the day, they were just men and women. Now, He has spoken to us in the most superior way of all—through His Son.

To see and hear Jesus was to see and hear God in the flesh. Jesus was active in the creation of all things. Like the Grand Canyon, ocean waves, and all those other places we'll go out of our way to see, and as we create with God, He is a better revelation of God than any created thing. Jesus is superior to the prophets, too. He is the appointed heir of all things. It is through Jesus that God presents us and all other created, lost people.

Jesus is the absolute fullest revelation of who God is and what He is like. God will never speak to us more clearly than He does through Jesus. We are right to marvel with awe to God's creation, but there is nothing more awe-inspiring than God Himself, revealed to us by Jesus Christ. If we want to see God, then we must look to Jesus. He is the greatest reality of all. Nothing and no one can bring us closer to God than He can.

Better Study 31

Each week includes five days of Scripture reading along with a short devotional thought and three questions to process what you've read.

The Scripture reading is printed out for you with plenty of space for you to take notes, circle, underline, and interact with the passage.



DAY 20 PAUSE & LISTEN
Consider God's love by reflecting over the week's Scripture.

For the law perfected nothing, but a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.
HEBREWS 7-15

34 HEBREWS

Author: Stephen 34

The sixth day contains no reading beyond a couple of verses to give you time to pause and listen to what God has said through the Scriptures this week. You may be tempted to skip this day all together, but resist this temptation. Sit and be quiet with God—even if it's only for a few minutes.

The seventh day each week offers a list of open-ended questions that apply to any passage of Scripture. Use this day to reflect on your own or meet with a group to discuss what you've learned. Take intentional time to remember and reflect on what the story of Hebrews is teaching you.

DAY
7

REFLECTION

Use these questions for personal reflection or group discussion on Hebrews 1-2.

What stuck out to you most in the week's reading? What surprised you? Confused you?

How does this week's Scripture teach you about God and His character?

What does this week's Scripture teach you about humanity and our need for grace?

How does this week's Scripture point you to Jesus?

What steps of faith and obedience is God asking you to take through these Scriptures?

PRAY

Take a moment and thank Jesus for being our savior—of life, truth, wisdom, and grace. Pray Him for making Himself like us so that we could become like Him.

44 HEBREWS

Author: Steven 45

Jesus is better than ...

The writer of Hebrews consistently uses the Greek word *huperochō*, which means "more excellent," "superior," or "better." There are many biblical figures mentioned in Scripture, but all of these figures were meant to point us to the superiority of Jesus. We can certainly learn moral lessons from them, but beyond moral lessons we need to see how each of these characters points to Jesus and teach us about who He is.

- ... Abraham.
John 8:35-58
- ... David.
Matthew 9:27
2 Samuel 7:16
Psalms 16:1
Matthew 22:45
- ... John the Baptist.
Luke 2:26-28
Psalms 18
Luke 1:17
Mark 13:6
- ... Jacob.
Genesis 32:28
John 4:10-14
- ... Solomon.
1 Kings 10:23-24
Matthew 12:42
- ... the church.
Ephesians 5:27
Colossians 1:18
John 15:16
- ... Moses.
Exodus 32:11
Deuteronomy 18:15
Matthew 17:1
Romans 8:2
Hebrews 3:2
- ... Jonah.
Jonah 3
Matthew 12:41
- ... all other names.
Philippians 2:9
Acts 4:12

54 HEBREWS

Author: Lander 55

Throughout each week of study, you will notice callout boxes or supplemental pages provided to give greater context and clarity to the Scripture you're reading. These features will help you connect Hebrews to the bigger story of Scripture.

LEADING A GROUP

Each week of study contains a set of questions that can be used for small group meetings. These open-ended questions are meant to guide discussion of the week's Scripture passage. No matter the size of your group, here are some helpful tips for guiding discussion.

PREPARE

REVIEW the Scripture and your answers to the week's questions ahead of time.

PRAY over your group as well as the Scriptures you've been studying. Ask God's Spirit for help to lead the group deeper into God's truth and deeper in relationship with one another.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

We live in a time when our attention is increasingly divided. Try to see your group time as a space and respite from the digital clutter—from scrolling, notifications, likes, and newsfeeds. Commit to one another to give focused time and attention to the discussion at hand and minimize outside distractions. Help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with one another.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small group experience has the following characteristics.

EVERYONE IS INCLUDED. Your goal is to foster a community where people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually.

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES. Encourage everyone to ask questions, share, or read aloud.

NO ONE DOMINATES. Even though you may be "leading" the group, try to see yourself as a participant steering the conversation rather than a teacher imparting information.

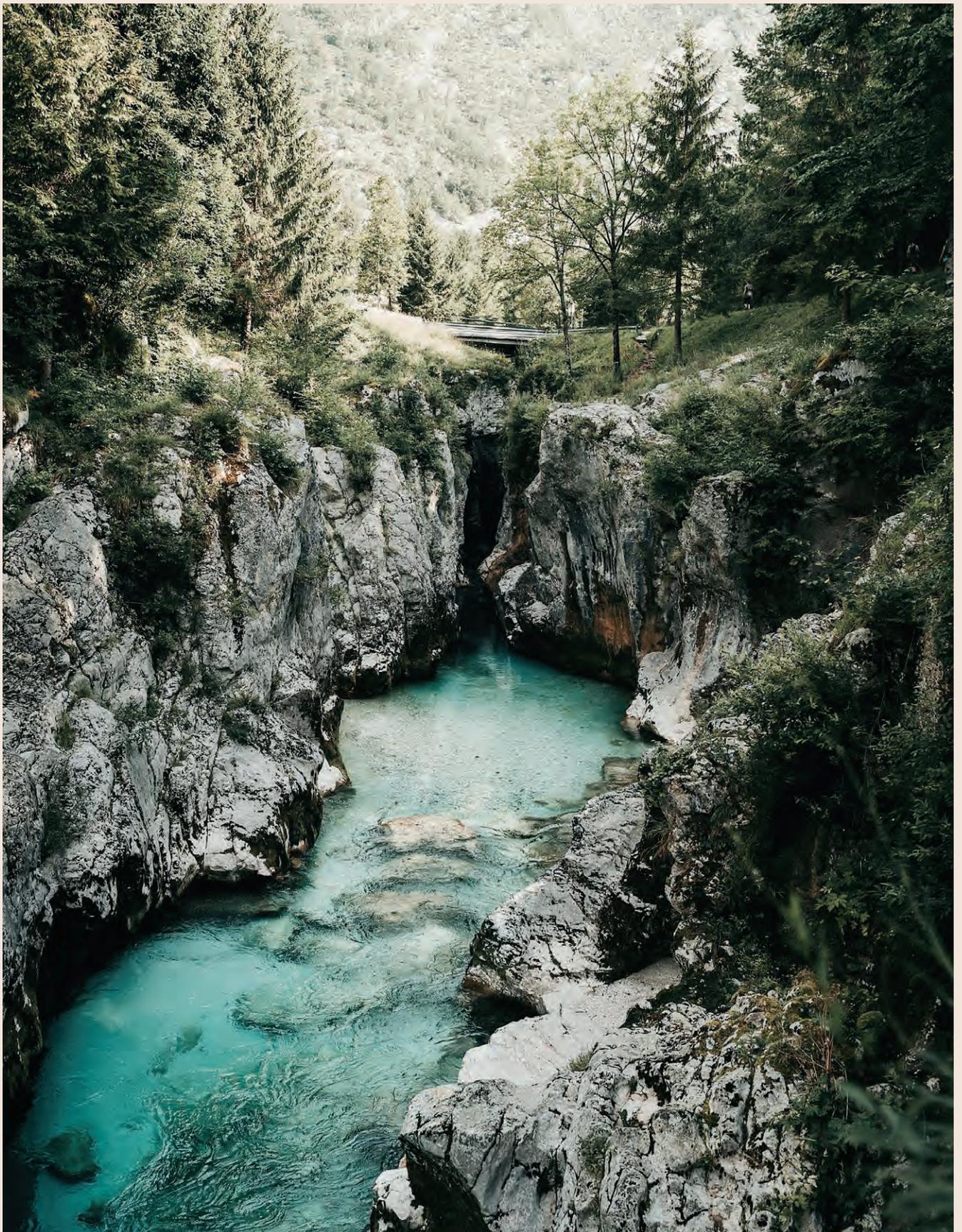
DON'T RUSH. Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People may need time, and we should be glad to give it to them. Don't feel like you have to ask all the questions or stay away from questions that aren't included. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and to one another. Take your time.

INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP. Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build community with follow-up questions, asking other people to share when they have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. Conversation stalls when people feel that you don't want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer. Engagement and affirmation keeps the conversation going.

GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL. The questions in this study are meant to steer the conversation back to God, His Word, and the work of the gospel in our lives. Opinions and experiences are valuable and can be helpful, but God is the center of the Bible, the center of our story, and should be the center of our discussion. Trust Him to lead the discussion. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.

KEEP CONNECTING

Spiritual growth occurs in the context of community. Think of ways to connect with group members during the week. Your group will be more enjoyable the more you get to know one another through time spent outside of an official group meeting. The more people are comfortable with and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When people move beyond being friendly to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending. Reserve time each week to touch base with individual group members.



WEEK 1

BETTER SOURCE

Go to the Source.

Hebrews is a sermon that was given to people who didn't fit in. Being a Christian meant living in a way that was very different from the norm, most notably in practices of faith and morality. In the first-century Roman world, when Hebrews was written, people worshiped anything and everything, including their Roman emperors. Christians stood out against that backdrop. On their best days, they were hated; on their worst days, they were publicly abused and executed.

Life was hard.

It was so hard, in fact, that some Christians started considering going back to Judaism. Judaism was an officially recognized religion to Romans, therefore a growing number of Christians believed that returning to their old ways would make things easier. It was a compromise they thought made sense.

So a Christian leader who loved them gave them the message we now read in Hebrews. He wanted them to know that there is only one Source of life and fulfillment, and there can be no compromise. No matter what solutions they might try to adopt—past, present, or future—Jesus is better.

He's better than all the answers our culture comes up with today, too. We try to be good enough. We make sacrifices of great cost. We trust in family, friends, jobs, ideas, and even politicians. None of those allegiances can sustain us. They always come up short.

There's only one starting point for any hope of knowing God and experiencing life in Him. His name is Jesus.

HEBREWS 1:1-4

THE NATURE OF THE SON

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways. ²In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. ³The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. ⁴So he became superior to the angels, just as the name he inherited is more excellent than theirs.

DAY

1

THE GREATEST REVELATION

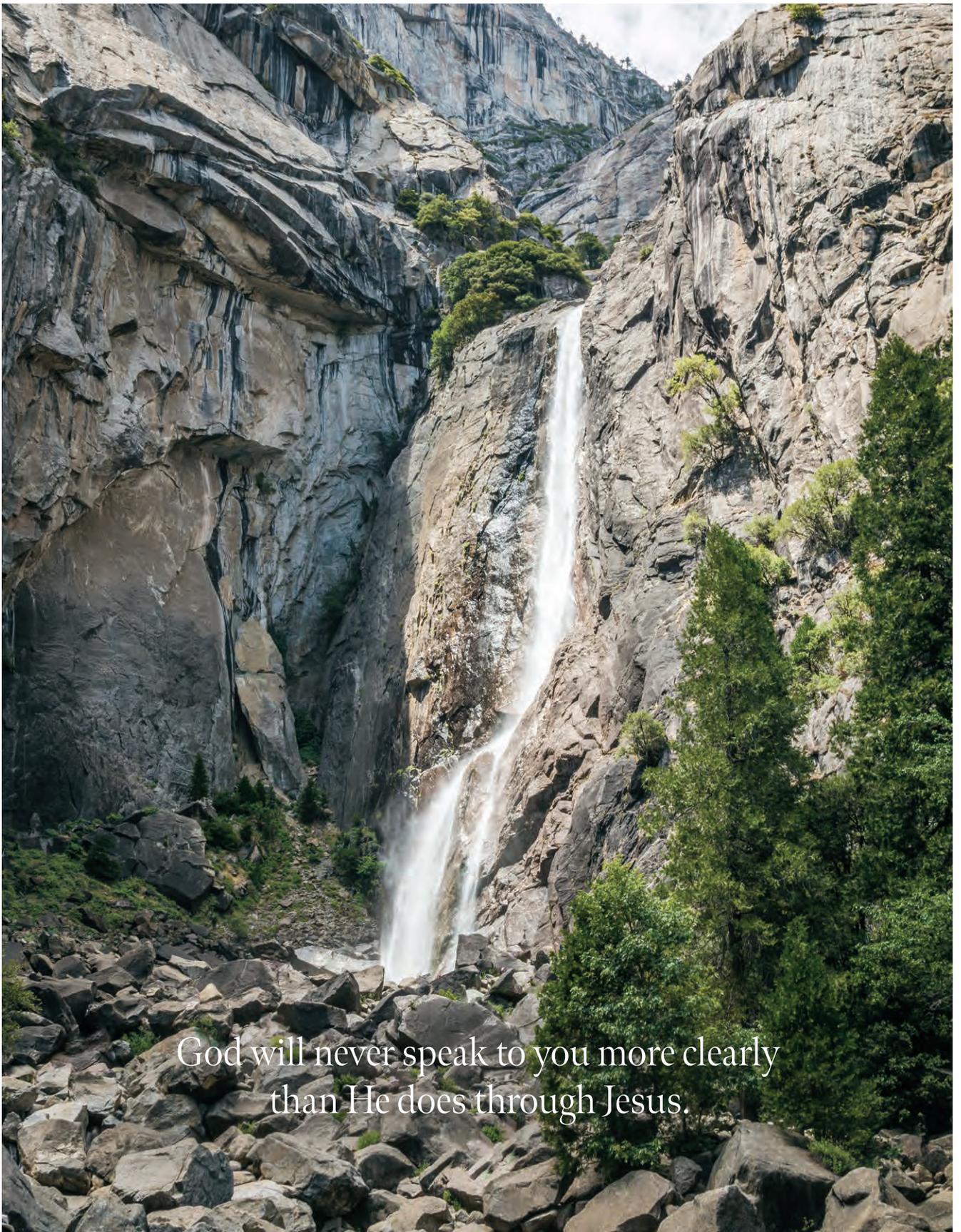
Think about the most magnificent part of creation you've ever seen. People travel great distances to see firsthand the enormity of the Grand Canyon and the power of Niagara Falls. We'll learn how to snorkel so we can explore the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef. We'll drive up narrow passes and endure altitude sickness to experience the most scenic mountain views. We do this because we want to experience something greater. We want to see glimpses of God.

The book of Hebrews begins with a reality that is beyond the wonder of the most wonderful sights on earth. It is the greatest reality of all.

God wants to reveal Himself to us even more than we want to see Him. And He has revealed Himself to us, through far more than His creation. A long time ago, He raised up prophets to reveal Himself to people. These men and women were passionate and powerful speakers, but at the end of the day, they were just men and women. Now, He has spoken to us in the most superior way of all—through Jesus His Son.

To see and hear Jesus was to see and hear God in the flesh. Jesus was active in the creation of all things, like the Grand Canyon, ocean reefs, and all those other places we'll go out of our way to see. And as co-Creator with God, He is a better revelation of God than any created thing. Jesus is superior to the prophets, too. He is the appointed Heir of all beings. It is through Jesus that God pursues us and all other sinful, lost people.

Jesus is the absolute fullest revelation of who God is and what He is like. God will never speak to us more clearly than He does through Jesus. We are right to respond with awe to God's creation, but there is nothing more awe-inspiring than God Himself, revealed to us in Jesus Christ. If we want to see God, then we must look to Jesus. He is the greatest reality of all. Nothing and no one can bring us closer to God than He can.



God will never speak to you more clearly
than He does through Jesus.

REFLECTIONS

How is Jesus described in verse 3? What does that teach us about His identity?

Name a few relationships, pursuits, objects, or hopes that you have sometimes treated as the greatest reality of your life. Why is Jesus better than those things?

God speaks to us most clearly through Jesus. What is your responsibility in hearing and receiving that message?

TRACING THE STORY

The original audience of Hebrews were men and women who had heard the gospel through the earliest followers of Jesus (2:3). Public persecution was a very real part of their lives (10:32-34). It is likely that this persecution was taking place under the Roman emperor Nero (AD 64–68), just before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Hardship and suffering provide a backdrop for this letter.

HEBREWS 1:5-14

THE SON SUPERIOR TO ANGELS

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

**You are my Son;
today I have become your Father,**

or again,

**I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son?**

⁶ Again, when he brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

And let all God's angels worship him.

⁷ And about the angels he says:

**He makes his angels winds,
and his servants a fiery flame,**

⁸ but to the Son:

**Your throne, God,
is forever and ever,
and the scepter of your kingdom
is a scepter of justice.**

⁹ **You have loved righteousness
and hated lawlessness;
this is why God, your God,
has anointed you
with the oil of joy
beyond your companions.**

¹⁰ And:

**In the beginning, Lord,
you established the earth,
and the heavens are the works
of your hands;**

¹¹ **they will perish, but you remain.
They will all wear out like clothing;**

¹² **you will roll them up like a cloak,
and they will be changed like clothing.**

**But you are the same,
and your years will never end.**

¹³ Now to which of the angels has he ever said:

**Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool?**

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation?

DAY

2

UNIQUELY SUPERIOR

The sermon we now know as the book of Hebrews would have caught people's attention right from the start. To hear that someone was superior to the angels would have left Jewish Christians experiencing some measure of internal conflict.

This tension might seem odd to modern readers, but most first-century Jews exalted angels because of their involvement in giving the Law to Moses at Mt. Sinai (Deuteronomy 33:2). They considered the Law to be God's supreme revelation. So the call to adjust their long held beliefs was jarring.

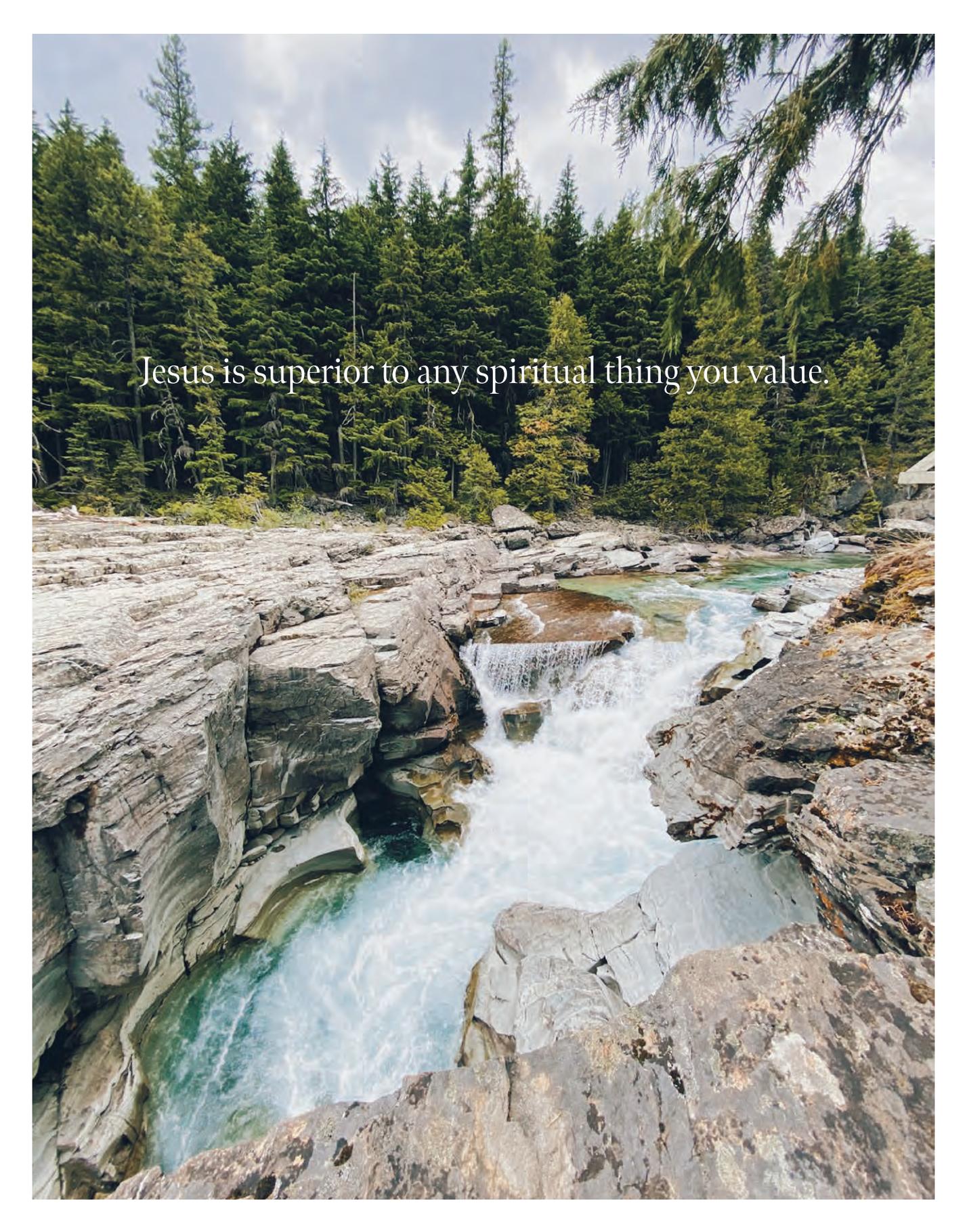
But the author of Hebrews argued Jesus is better than angels (and everything else). He makes his argument starting in verse five with a series of Old Testament quotations about Jesus from God. Each fact emphasizes Jesus's superiority to angels.

God never designated any angel as His Son. That title belongs to Jesus alone. Instead, the angels exist to serve and worship Jesus. He is the eternal Son and righteous heir of the great King David, sitting forever at God's right hand—the place of supreme honor.

It boils down to this—angels are messengers but Jesus is the message. Angels communicated God's message, but Jesus communicates God's being. Jesus is worthy of our worship, angels are not.

We might not worship angels or exalt them above Jesus, but there are other religious things we prioritize in this way. Maybe we think that a certain style of music is required for us to truly worship. Maybe we uphold some religious experience in this same way. Or maybe we hang our spiritual growth on the backs of gifted Christian leaders, longing for some message that will give us the knowledge we seek. But true knowledge of God only comes to us through Jesus.

He is superior to any spiritual thing or any spiritual person we value. Everything and everyone else must take a back seat. Jesus reveals God finally and without equivocation. He is the only way we can understand God's character and the central message of the Scriptures—the gospel.

A scenic view of a river flowing through a rocky canyon. The river is surrounded by a dense forest of evergreen trees. The water is clear and blue, and the rocks are grey and jagged. A small waterfall is visible in the middle of the river. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The text "Jesus is superior to any spiritual thing you value." is overlaid on the image in a white, serif font.

Jesus is superior to any spiritual thing you value.

REFLECTIONS

Reread the verses on the previous page. According to these verses, why is Jesus superior to angels? List the ways you find below.

How can you tell if you're elevating a secondary or tertiary belief or preference to be more important than Jesus?

What is something (or someone) associated with your spiritual beliefs or faith practices that you might wrongly prioritize as more important than Jesus Himself?

INSIGHTS

In the Bible, the terms *angel* or *angels* occur nearly 300 times, with approximately one-third of those occurrences in the Old Testament. They serve in numerous ways—ministering to followers of God (Hebrews 1:14), obeying God to carry out His purposes (Psalm 103:20-21), calling attention to God's greatness (Daniel 7:10), and acknowledging the worth of every follower of Jesus (Matthew 18:10). Angels are a vital God-appointed reality, yet Jesus is better.

HEBREWS 2:5-13

JESUS AND HUMANITY

⁵ For he has not subjected to angels the world to come that we are talking about.

⁶ But someone somewhere has testified:

**What is man that you remember him,
or the son of man that you care for him?**

⁷ **You made him lower than the angels
for a short time;**

you crowned him with glory and honor

⁸ **and subjected everything under his feet.**

For in **subjecting everything** to him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. As it is, we do not yet see **everything subjected** to him. ⁹ But we do see Jesus — **made lower than the angels for a short time** so that by God's grace he might taste death for everyone — **crowned with glory and honor** because he suffered death.

¹⁰ For in bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was entirely appropriate that God — for whom and through whom all things exist — should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying:

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;

I will sing hymns to you in the congregation.

¹³ Again, **I will trust in him.** And again, **Here I am with the children God gave me.**

DAY

3

GLORY AND HONOR RESTORED

Questions about God are natural and common, even among people who follow Him. We wonder things like, “If God loves us, then why do bad things happen?” and “If God is so good, why would He send anyone to hell?” There are myriad answers we might receive to those questions. But Hebrews 2 shows us that Jesus is always the better answer to every question about God that plagues us.

When God made the world, He gave human beings a culture mandate (Genesis 1:28). He wanted us to take responsibility for the world He created—to subdue it and fill it with more people who also bear His image. Humans were created to perpetuate His glory, but we chose to perpetuate sin instead.

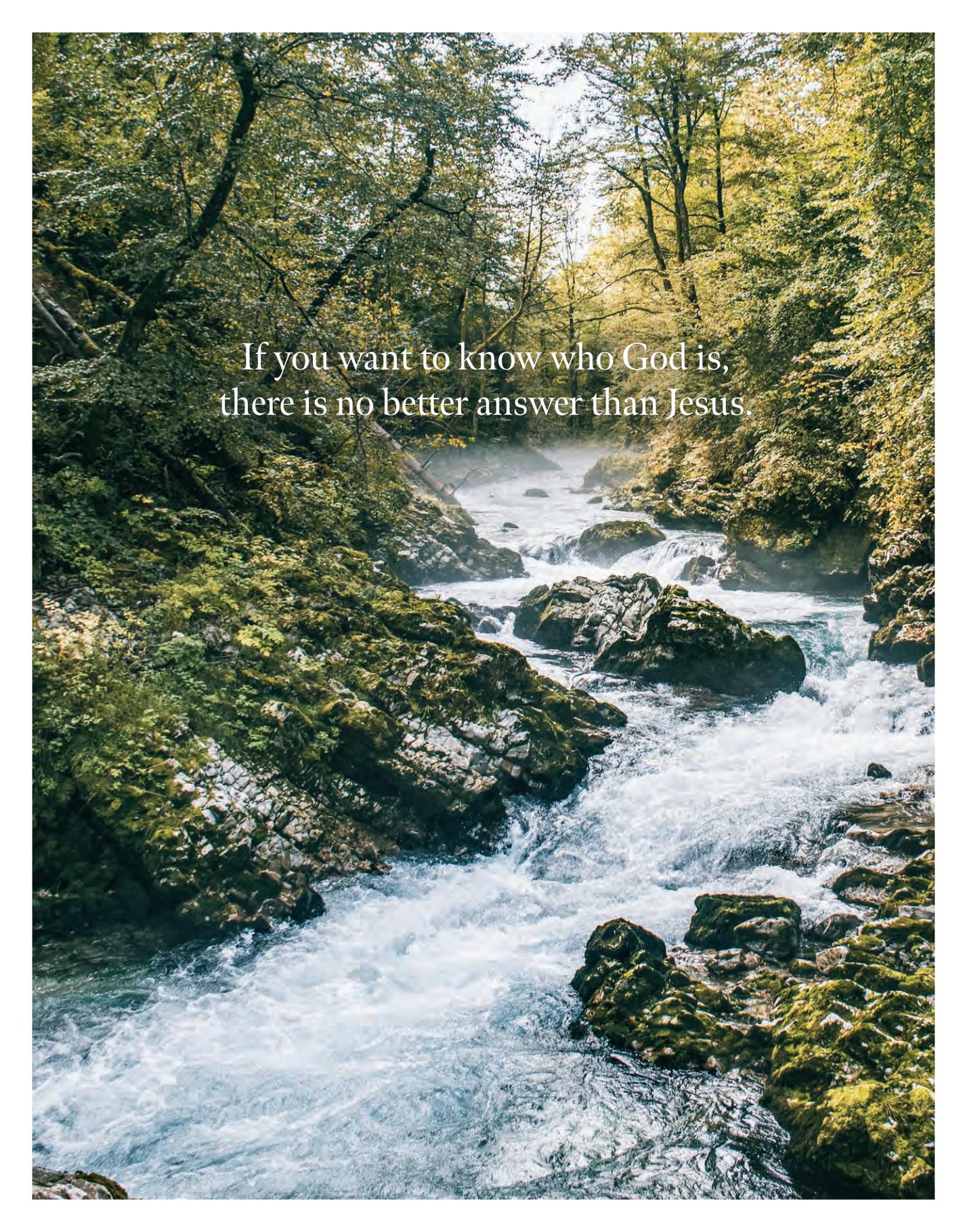
But God wasn’t finished; His glory will always win out in the end. Jesus became a man to do what we previously could not; He came to show what God is like. And, unlike every other person, Jesus never fails. He succeeded in the mission God gave Him.

Jesus shows us God’s undistracted plan to redeem us. Because of sin’s effects, that’s hard for many people to understand. Even though the world was created by Jesus and for Jesus, we do not yet see the world in submission to Him. For that we have to wait for the ultimate fulfillment of our redemption. But the world will not always be as it is.

By God’s design, all of history is headed toward its fulfillment in Jesus. His rule and reign was inaugurated at the cross, where Jesus stood in our place to bear the full weight of the penalty for our sins. God sent Jesus as a pioneer—a forerunner—to win the battle we could not win ourselves. And He accomplished this salvation through His suffering.

All of our suffering and hardship will be redeemed in the coming kingdom. Jesus is not ashamed to unite with us as brothers and sisters, because through His death He destroyed the power and source of our shame. He has made those who trust in Him perfectly clean and holy before God, and we will reign with Him forever.

If you want to know who God is, there is no better answer than Jesus.

A scenic view of a river flowing through a lush forest. The river is surrounded by dense green trees and mossy rocks, creating a peaceful and natural setting. The water is clear and flows over several small cascades and rapids. The overall atmosphere is serene and beautiful.

If you want to know who God is,
there is no better answer than Jesus.

REFLECTIONS

What does it mean to be a pioneer? What does the author of Hebrews mean when he refers to Jesus as the “pioneer” of our salvation (v. 10)?

Think of a question about God’s character that you have had at some point, or that someone has wondered aloud to you. How might looking to Jesus help you answer that question?

If you have placed your faith in Jesus, then He has made you His brother or sister. You are family. What is something you need Him to teach you? What is your responsibility in learning that lesson?

HEBREWS 2:14-16

¹⁴ Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through his death he might destroy the one holding the power of death — that is, the devil — ¹⁵ and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham's offspring.

DAY

4

OVERTURNING FATE

In times of war or global pandemic, we become increasingly aware of our own mortality, no matter how young or old we might be. It might seem strange, but an awareness of death is actually a good thing. In easier days, we can slide through life without a thought about our mortality. But death is among the most central facts of every life.

It wasn't always.

God didn't create the first people to experience death. But when they chose to mistrust and reject God's loving instruction, death entered the picture as a byproduct of sin and corrupted all of our lives. All of the hardship in this life is inextricably linked to sin. And in a sinful world, death is actually a gift. Otherwise, we'd live forever in an imperfect, disintegrating place with unending struggle.

But death isn't the final word. Jesus came to make life, and death, better.

He became a man to help us overcome the reality of death that sin established. There was no other way to change the outcome for flesh-and-blood people than to become a flesh-and-blood person and make the sacrifice none of us were able to make. By God's grace-driven plan, Jesus's life, death, and resurrection flipped the script our sinful hearts had written.

Hebrews 2:15 contains a beautiful truth about what Jesus came to do for us. He came to "free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death." Jesus's death and resurrection have established a new reality for every person who trusts in Him—mortality no longer has the power to enslave us, because with death comes new and eternal life.



Jesus's life, death, and resurrection flipped
the script your sinful heart had written.

REFLECTIONS

These verses continue the author of Hebrews' discussion about angels. How are human beings different than angels? In the context of these verses, why does that matter?

What does it look like to live in fear of death?

What would it look like for you to live each day as someone who has been freed from the fear of death?

The Exaltation of JESUS

The themes of Hebrews are echoed throughout Scripture. Seeing these connecting points help us connect to the big story of Scripture. Consider reading the following parallel passages that align with this week's reading.

HEBREWS 1:1-2

God made the universe
through Jesus

GENESIS 1:26
COLOSSIANS 1:15-17
JOHN 1:1

HEBREWS 1:13-14

Angels communicated
God's message, but Jesus
communicates God's being

COLOSSIANS 1:16
JUDE 1:6
REVELATION 19:10
ISAIAH 6:3

HEBREWS 2:9

Jesus became a man to show
us God's glory and honor

JOHN 1:14
PHILIPPIANS 2:7-11

HEBREWS 2:14-15

Jesus became a man to free us
from the power of death

2 TIMOTHY 1:10
ROMANS 8:3
REVELATION 1:18

HEBREWS 2:18

Jesus suffered when He was
tempted, so He is able to help
those who are tempted

JUDE 1:24
1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

HEBREWS 2:17-18

¹⁷ Therefore, he had to be like his brothers and sisters in every way, so that he could become a merciful and faithful high priest in matters pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For since he himself has suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

SHARING EXPERIENCE

Affinity is one of the strongest foundations for friendship. We form deep relationships with those familiar with our experiences and interests because those things shape who we are. Sometimes when we walk through suffering and difficulty, though, we start to think our struggle is unique and no one can truly relate.

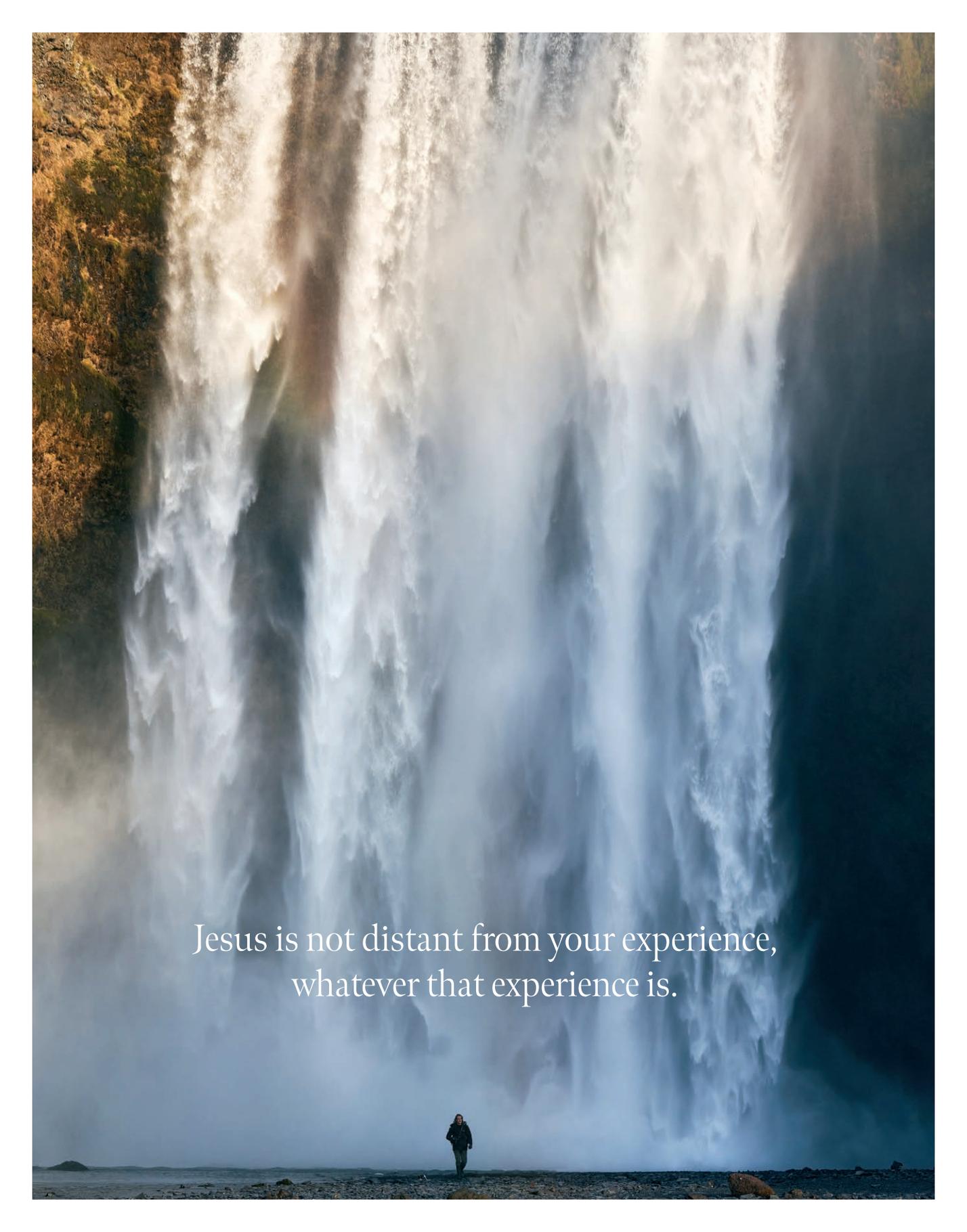
We extend this line of thinking to Jesus, minimizing His humanity for all sorts of reasons. We think, “Even though He came to earth as man, He is also God.” Or we might think, “Jesus didn’t have my parents.” “He didn’t have to deal with the temptations that come with the Internet.” “He wasn’t married.” And on and on the diminishing of His humanity goes.

But the truth is that Jesus is not distant from our experience, whatever that particular experience is. Being made like us doesn’t mean that Jesus lived through every situation we encounter, but it does mean He has experienced what it is like to live in a broken world where things are not as they should be.

And it wasn’t easy.

Jesus didn’t just face a few temptations and easily overcome them, as if to say, “See? I’m perfect and you’re not.” No, Jesus suffered when He was tempted. So He empathizes with you when you face temptation, whatever that temptation happens to be. Not only that, but because He came as a man who suffered, He knows what it’s like to suffer. He knows the strength needed to overcome temptation. He has been where you are, experiencing the pain and frustration of living in a world tainted by sin.

When you walk through dark days, know that you can turn to Jesus because He understands. He loves you enough to share in your experience. Whatever you’re feeling He lived it, and because of this He is able to speak to it with intimate knowledge and the greatest measure of relational affinity.

A large, powerful waterfall cascades down a rocky cliff. The water is white and frothy, creating a misty spray at the bottom. A person stands at the base of the waterfall, providing a sense of scale. The background is a dark, overcast sky.

Jesus is not distant from your experience,
whatever that experience is.

REFLECTIONS

Based on what you know or have read about Jesus, what are some ways He shared in human experiences (both good and bad)?

What does it tell you about Jesus that He “had to be like (you) in every way”? How should that truth impact your relationship with Him?

Jesus did not stop helping you when He finished His work on the cross or when He ascended to heaven. How has Jesus helped you recently?

DAY

6

PAUSE & LISTEN

Spend some time reflecting over the week's reading.





The Son is the radiance of God's glory
and the exact expression of his nature,
sustaining all things by his powerful word.
After making purification for sins, he sat
down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

HEBREWS 1:3

DAY
7

REFLECTION

Use these questions for personal reflection or group discussion on Hebrews 1-2.

What stuck out to you most in this week's reading? What surprised you? Confused you?

What does this week's Scripture teach you about God and His character?

What does this week's Scripture teach you about humanity and our need for grace?

How does this week's Scripture point you to Jesus?

What steps of faith and obedience is God asking you to take through these Scriptures?

PRAY

Take a moment and thank Jesus for being our source—of life, truth, wisdom, and grace. Praise Him for making Himself like us so that we could become like Him.