

Making much of Jesus

present-day lessons from the letter to the Hebrews

Although written to Jews who had trusted in Jesus, and although drawing regularly on Old Testament references, the letter to the Hebrews has a very pressing contemporary significance.

This series of studies is intended to stir in our hearts both a deepening delight and a growing confidence in all that Jesus is and has done, imparting to us the fortitude and strength we need to serve Him faithfully in today's world.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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1. God's final word (Hebrews 1.1-3)

[w/b Sunday 1st September 2019]

".. He has spoken to us by His Son .."

These opening verses of the letter are similar in some respects to the beginning of John's gospel, with the writer's *"In the past .."* mirroring John's *"In the beginning .."*. And like John's gospel, the writer ensures from the outset that our eyes are fixed firmly and clearly on Jesus, and that in a most expansive fashion.

Theology matters! A good, theological grasp of the gospel will issue in a vibrant, spiritual walk with the Lord, and a bold and enduring commitment to Christ.

The writer therefore starts his letter by giving his readers a clear understanding of who Jesus is, what He has done and why He matters.

[Although there are 7 questions, your Community Group may choose to concentrate on just some of them. Key questions in this study are probably 1, 5 and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read John 1.1-18** and then **Hebrews 1.1-3**. The great burden of both writers (and indeed of the Bible as a whole) is that we might *"believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing (we) may have life in His name"* (Jn.20.31).

What would you say are the points of similarity between these two passages?

What were the means God used to bring you to know and love and delight in Jesus as the very Son of God?

2. Read Hebrews 1.1-3. In 3 short verses the writer sets out his stall and effectively parades before his readers a summary of his whole 'systematic theology'!

How would you summarise in a sentence the substance of what the writer has to say?

If you were preaching this passage to your own soul, how would you apply these 3 verses to yourself?

3. Read Hebrews 1.1. The letter begins with a statement about God which roots his readers back in the Old Testament - he reminds his readers what God did and how He went about it.

What do you learn about God from this verse?

What do you think is meant by the "*various ways*" in which God spoke through the prophets?

Read **2 Pet.1.20f**: what, according to Peter, was the sort of 'process' whereby God spoke through His prophets?

4. Read Hebrews 1.2. The writer makes it clear that history has turned a corner with the coming of Jesus: we are now in 'the last days' and God's 'speaking' has become more personal still.

What is the writer pointing to by saying that God "*has spoken to us by His Son*"?

Does the 'speaking' God continue to speak with His people today, and if so how?

5. Read Hebrews 1.2. In this verse the writer highlights two particular truths about Jesus as the Son of God which have significance in relation to God's speaking.

What are the truths to which the writer points in this verse?

How do they relate to God's speaking?

6. Read Hebrews 1.3. Four further important and profound truths about Jesus as the Son of God are underlined for us in this

next verse, each of which merits careful reflection! Start with the first two!

Why does it make such a big difference that Jesus as the Son of God is "*the radiance of God's glory .. of His being*"?

How does that truth about Jesus help you?

Both the fact that, and the means by which, He 'sustains all things' are worth noting: what encouragement do you think the writer means to give by stressing this truth?

7. Read Hebrews 1.3. The final two truths to which the writer points relate not so much to the *Person* of Jesus as to His *work*; a large part of the rest of the letter will be taken up with just this.

Why is the provision of "*purification for sins*" so important for us all?

What does the writer want to impress on us by saying that "*He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven*"?