

Consider Jesus

Hebrews

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Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, mums and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That's why we've designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the 'big picture' of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let's take a look at what is included:

- 🗨️ **Talkabout:** most groups need to 'break the ice' at the beginning of a session, and here's the question that will do that. It's designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ⬇️ **Investigate:** the Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. **The Leader's Guide** contains **guidance on questions**, and sometimes 📄 additional 'follow-up' questions.
- 🔍 **Explore more (optional):** these questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw.
- 📖 **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you'll keep coming across **apply** sections. Some of these have questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. Sometimes a 📄 **getting personal** section is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- 🙏 **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God's Word—in line with His concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader's Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God's word.



Why study Hebrews?

Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12 v 3

Jesus Christ—it's a name that still has unique pulling power, even in today's secular society. Jesus is used as a comforting idea in times of trouble, an inspiration for those seeking spirituality, and even as a figurehead for counter-cultural enthusiasts. But the real Jesus is so much greater than this.

Jesus Christ is at the centre of the Bible's message and God's plan for the universe—and at the centre of human history. But is He at the centre of our existence—our hopes, priorities and day-to-day lives? We need to move on from simply knowing the details of His birth, life and death to a deeper understanding of their meaning.

The letter to the Hebrews helps us leave behind our limited views of Jesus by explaining to us the supreme greatness of Christ Himself.

Hebrews is packed with rich, rewarding teaching about Jesus Christ, focusing on how He totally eclipses everything that the Jews venerated and trusted in for centuries. The writer even skips preliminaries such as greetings, to get straight into what he is so eager to talk about—the utter supremacy of Jesus Christ. He writes to show his persecuted Jewish readers the utter folly of going back to the rules, rituals and shadows of their former faith.

Through the studies in *Consider Jesus*, you will be encouraged to fix your eyes on God's Son—our perfect Brother, faithful and merciful High Priest, atoning Sacrifice and great Shepherd. Use these studies to discover the whole picture of Jesus Christ, and equip yourself to know, trust and follow Him, come what may.





Hebrews 1 v 1 – 2 v 4

GOD'S GREATEST REVELATION



talkabout

1. Imagine that early this morning the government issued orders to begin persecuting Christians in your local community. Before the day is over, you have witnessed a group of Christians beaten up by a mob in a nearby town centre; you've been spat upon by a colleague; you've been told about a close friend, evicted from her flat because of her Christian faith; the building where your church meets has been vandalised; on TV news you have watched angry citizens make vicious threats towards Christians and curse the name of Jesus; and you have heard rumours that anyone caught attending a church service on Sunday will be arrested.

What would you do? How would you respond? Who would you look to for help?

Many years ago, a community of Christians in the Roman Empire didn't have to imagine such persecution—they experienced it. These believers didn't pretend to answer questions about how to respond—they were forced to. And forced to think about who they could turn to for help. The author of Hebrews gave them the answer: Jesus, God's supreme Son.



investigate

▶ Read Hebrews 1 v 1-4

2. Look at verses 1-2. How did God speak in the past, and how has He spoken now? Who has He spoken to?

3. What do you think the phrase 'last days' means (v 2)?



explore more

optional

It has been said that verse 2 holds 'the interpretative key' that unlocks the meaning of the Old Testament. **Read Luke 24 v 25-27 and 44-47.**

- What is Jesus saying in these verses?
- How will this help us when we read the Old Testament?
- When we hear Bible teaching, how will it help us to judge between right and wrong interpretations?

4. Look at verses 2-4. List all that is said in these verses about who Jesus and what he has done.



apply

5. Why would it be important for a troubled, persecuted church to be presented with this rich portrait of who Jesus is?



- Which of these statements would comfort you in times of persecution?

- Which of these statements are most easily forgotten when life is easy?



investigate

▶ Read Hebrews 1 v 5-14

'Angel' means messenger. Most commonly it refers to angelic beings, although it can also refer to a human servant of God. In chapter 2 we are told that Old Testament law was spoken by angels (2 v 2).

6. Identify five ways in which Jesus is greater than angels.

- v 5:

- v 6:

- v 7-9:

- v 10-12:

- v 13-14:





explore more

optional

Read 1 Peter 1 v 10-12. This verse says that angels long to look into the things of the gospel. Pause and think about that for a moment. God has ordered the world so that redeemed men and women have full exposure to the gospel message about Jesus, but angels don't have this understanding. Amazing!

- What is your reaction to this privilege we have?
- What difference should it make in our lives?



investigate

▶ Read Hebrews 2 v 1-4

7. Compare 1 v 2 and 2 v 1. Why must we 'pay more careful attention to what we have heard'?

- Why do you think the writer has waited for 15 verses before giving this first command?

8. The writer warns us against *drifting* away (2 v 1). What do you think might have been the source of distraction for these believers?



- What does the writer say is the answer to drifting away (2 v 1)?

9. Look at v 2-3a.
What is ‘the message spoken by angels’—see Galatians 3 v 19?

- How does ‘the message spoken by angels’ compare with the supreme message that God has now spoken in Jesus? (Think about content, messenger, and consequences.)

	The law	The gospel
Content		
Messenger		
Consequences of disobedience		

➔ **apply**

10. What distracts you from paying careful attention to the gospel message?

- How can we help one another stay focused on the message of Jesus Christ?

getting personal

If some Christians from my church were to spend the day with me, what would they see me paying most attention to? What would I like them to see?

11. What have you learned in this session...

- about Jesus Christ?
- to help you understand what the Bible is about?
- about the temptation we all have to drift away?

pray

Let your answers to question 4 shape a time of prayer and thanksgiving.

