Study Guide

Session 1: Jesus's Identity	
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SESSION GOALS	
Every session has specific goals—things you want your group to walk away knowing, feeling, and committing to do.	
do.	
Main Idea There is no one better to put our faith in than Jesus, our prophet, priest, and king.	
propriet, priest, and king.	
Head Change To know that following Josus is worth it, even when it	
To know that following Jesus is worth it, even when it makes our lives more difficult.	
Heart Change To feel confident in our security in Jesus, even when the world around us seems to be falling apart.	
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Life Change To trust in the words of Jesus our prophet, the salvation of Jesus our priest, and guidance of Jesus our king.	
bests our priest, and gardance of bests our king.	
OPEN	
What is your favorite piece of trivia?	
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Trivia can be a fun way to learn more about very specific	
topics, but it rarely changes anything in our lives. It is, well, trivial.	
Learning about locus or the Pible can cometimes feel like	
Learning about Jesus or the Bible can sometimes feel like trivia: a lot of facts that don't seem to change much in our	
lives. But in this series, Pastor Derwin Gray will walk us	
through Hebrews, connecting the rich theology of both the Old and New Testaments to our everyday lives.	
When you learn about Jesus, you meet the God of the	
universe. And that's anything but trivial.	
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READ	
Hebrews 1:1–3	
Note: If you would like to read through the entire book of Hebrews, you can find a reading plan in Go Deeper Section 1 at the end of each session of this study.	
WATCH	
Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.	
In what ways is Jesus our prophet? Our priest? Our	
king?	
Where is God when we experience difficulties in life?	
Session 1: Jesus's Identity (16 minutes).	

1/25/22, 11:19 AM

DISCUSS

Hebrews was written to Christians in Israel who were persecuted for their beliefs and pressured to abandon their belief in Jesus and return to their former Jewish way of life. In addition, Christians were being persecuted across the Roman Empire by decree of Emperor Nero. If you were in the shoes of the early Christians, what kind of encouragement would you have wanted from a letter like Hebrews? Instead of starting with comforting words, the author of Hebrews begins with theology, reminding his readers of God. Read Hebrews 1:1-3. Note: To learn more about who wrote Hebrews, go to Go **Deeper Section 2** at the end of this study. Hebrews begins by showing us where to find truth. It may seem like a strange place to start a letter to people who are in trouble. But often when we are in trouble, we start to look for something secure to hold onto. When you are stressed, having a bad day, or are in a difficult season, what do you hold onto for comfort and stability? Hebrews 1:1 is a reminder of what we can trust when the world seems to fall apart. In the Old Testament, God spoke through prophets. But then, he sent us Jesus, his Son. Jesus is the ultimate prophet, the most reliable rock you can hold onto in any season. In other words, he is trustworthy. Why do you think it is important to have someone you can trust when times are difficult? In order to trust Jesus's words, we have to know them and practice them. What habits help you learn and practice the promises of Jesus? What does it look like for you to believe in his promises, even when circumstances and outside forces are telling you to walk away from him? rightnow MEDIA

Reader

1/25/22, 11:19 AM Reader In verse 2 and the beginning of verse 3 we learn that Jesus is more than a prophet—he is also a king. What do you think of when you think of a king? What sort of king is Jesus according to verses 2–3? Many of our ideas about kings come from the flawed human royalty we see today or in history. Many of them weren't men we would want to serve, much less worship. But Jesus is different. As Derwin taught in the video, Jesus is a king who is holy and glorious but also loving and kind. What kind of person do you think of when you think of a king? We don't often think of a king as someone nearby or empathetic. But if we assume God is like a distant human king, locked away in his castle, we will struggle in the tough times of life. When does it feel like King Jesus is far away from you or not listening to your prayers? When Jesus gave his disciples the Great Commission in Matthew 28, he promised to be with them until the end of the age. What could it look like to spend time with him in your current circumstances? The final sentence in verse 3 shows us that Jesus is not only the ultimate prophet and our good king, but he is also our great priest. There is nothing we have done that cannot be forgiven or washed clean by the work of Jesus. But the voices of our sin and shame often tell us we cannot really be fully forgiven. What are your initial reactions or challenges to the full forgiveness of Jesus? Is there anything in your life that you think Jesus is disappointed by or cannot forgive? Why do you think that is? At the end of the video, Derwin reminded us that in seasons of hardship, Jesus is with us, protecting, shaping,

At the end of the video, Derwin reminded us that in seasons of hardship, Jesus is with us, protecting, shaping, and loving us. If you have placed your faith in Jesus, there is nothing that can separate you from him. What anxieties and difficulties are affecting you today?

What would it look like to trust King Jesus with those anxieties and circumstances?

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LAST WORD

Jesus made and upholds the universe, ruling everything with the radiant glory of a king. He brought us truth as a prophet, speaking honestly and in love. And when we sin, we know that we have a high priest, sitting at God's right hand who is able and willing to forgive us.

In times of difficulty, we can find reliable truth, steadfast guidance, and unending love in Jesus. Knowing him is more than trivia; it is the secure foundation for our lives.

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GO DEEPER

This section has two potential functions:

- 1. It can supplement your small group discussion with topics your group may be interested in. We've highlighted where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide. As the leader, it would be good to familiarize yourself with this section just in case your conversation turns to one of these topics.
- These sections can also function as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting. Consider using these sections to deepen your group's study of the book of Hebrews.

1. Hebrews Reading Plan: Week 1

Hebrews is a long book, and we won't be able to study every verse of it during these sessions. This reading plan will help you familiarize yourself with the entirety of the book so that you can dig more deeply into God's Word. This plan keeps pace with Derwin's teaching, so some weeks will have more reading than others. Feel free to complete the daily readings at a pace that makes the most sense to you and your group.

Week 1: Hebrews 1:1-3

Week 2: Hebrews 1:4-3:19

Week 3: Hebrews 4

Week 4: Hebrews 5-6

Week 5: Hebrews 7-9

Week 6: Hebrews 10

Week 7: Hebrews 11-12

Week 8: Hebrews 13

Session 1 only covers the first few verses of Hebrews, which gives you space to explore passages about Jesus in other New Testament books. Use this week to study who Jesus is, his work, and the effect of his work on our lives.

Day 1: Prophet, Priest, and King (Hebrews 1:1–3)

<u>Day 2</u>: The Supremacy of Jesus (Colossians 1:15–20)

Day 3: Jesus, the Word (John 1:1–18)

Day 4: Jesus of Our Salvation (1 Peter 1:10–21)

Day 5: Jesus, Fully God (John 14:1-14)

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Most New Testament books start with some sort of introduction or preface, but not Hebrews. The author never bothers to give a name. But he or she was not anonymous. Whoever wrote Hebrews was known to the church and apostles. So, who wrote this letter?

The truth is, we don't know for sure. Even theologians like Origen, a third-century leader of the church, couldn't identify its author. "But who it was that really wrote the epistle, God only knows." Commentators and researchers have suggested a wide range of potential writers: Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Epaphras, Clement of Rome, Apollos, Priscilla, and Mary mother of Jesus, for example. But the text does give us some clues that can help narrow the field for us:

- When the author refers to himself or herself in verse 11:32, the author uses a masculine participle, implying that the author was a man.
- The author was most likely born a Greek speaker or was highly educated in Greek. The author's creative use of the language and large vocabulary are unmatched in the rest of the New Testament.
- The author regularly quotes from the Greek translations of the Old Testament, suggesting that the author was more familiar with that translation than the original Hebrew Old Testament.
- The author had come to faith through the teaching of the apostles (Heb. 2:3–4).
- The author was well known by the audience of this letter, the church in Jerusalem, enough to skip introducing himself or herself at the start of the letter and well enough to talk about mutual friends and church issues at the end of the letter.
- The author was a spiritual authority to his audience and had a close relationship with Timothy (Heb. 13:23).

Most likely, the author could have been Apollos, Barnabas, Silas, or Epaphras, but we cannot know for sure. Despite not knowing who the author was, God inspired him or her to write this letter, helping both an ancient church in need and us today.

How has this background changed your view of the book of Hebrews?

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What could you do to remind yourself of the context of Hebrews as you walk through this study?			
Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, p. 247.			
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