

# Hebrews

## Jesus is Better...



**5/7pm Gathering**  
**BIBLE STUDY GUIDE**





## How to use these Bible Studies

These 10 studies are designed to accompany the 10-week sermon series at 5/7 in Terms 3-4, 2012. They can be done on your own, with a friend, or in your homegroup.

Each bible study has an **appetizer** to get you thinking, a **main course** to help you engage with the text, and some **dessert** to drive application.

The following table shows how we're breaking down the series ...

	Passage	Title
1	1:1-14	The Number 1 Son
2	2:1-18	"What if God were one of us?"
3	3:1-19	Don't be like your parents
4	4:1-13	Imagine not having to work ...
5	4:14-6:12	A great high priest
6	6:13-7:28	A priest in the order of Melchizedek
7	8:1-10:18	A priest of a new covenant
8	10:19-39	A new and living way
9	11:1-12:13	A great cloud of witnesses
10	12:14-13:25	"Only a short letter"

Not much is known with absolute certainty about the letter to the Hebrews (eg author, date, recipient). The best way for you to make sense of it is to read it as often as you can, and to marvel afresh at the incredible variety and depth of ways in which we see that **Jesus is better** ...

## Study 1: The Number One Son Hebrews 1:1-14

### *Appetizers*

1. Where do Australians look for guidance in life? What about Christians? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of each source of authority?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 1:1.** In the OT, what are some of the ways that the bible records God speaking to His people? What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of these means of communication?

2. **Read 1:2-3.** Why is it so significant that "in these last days" God has spoken through "His Son"? Why is His Son qualified to be God's spokesman? What do the Son's credentials mean?

3. **Read 1:4-14.** Compare the Son with the angels (note: “angel” in Greek could also be translated “messenger”). List all the differences. What is the writer trying to tell us about the Son?

### ***Dessert***

1. If the Son is so highly credentialled, why don't Christians always listen to Him? What's so hard about listening to Him? What distracts us or leads us astray? How might we respond if we find ourselves “drifting away”?

2. How might you speak of Jesus' superiority with unbelievers?

## Study 2: "What if God were one of us?" Hebrews 2:1-18

### *Appetizers*

1. Christians believe that Jesus was "fully man and fully God". Which aspect of His divine or human nature do you find hardest to grasp? Why? What's at stake?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 2:1-4.** These verses continue the contrast between Jesus and the angels in Chapter 1. It's also the first of the so-called "warning passages" in Hebrews. What's the point that the writer is making? How does it make you feel? How ought we respond?

2. **Read 2:5-9.** What has God done to Jesus? Why? Is God's work finished yet? Why not?

3. **Read 2:10-18.** How do you know if you are related to Jesus? What assurance is there in knowing that Jesus “shares in our humanity”? What are the benefits (positive and negative) for us?

### ***Dessert***

1. How is Jesus “able to help those being tempted” (2:18)? Do you find the given reason(s) comforting? Why or why not? What might convince you otherwise? Share some of the parts of your life where you most struggle with temptation, and pray for each other.

2. How might you speak of Jesus’ humanity with unbelievers?

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## Study 3: Don't be like your parents

### Hebrews 3:1-19

#### *Appetizers*

1. Who's been a good Christian role model to you? Why?

#### *Main Course*

1. **Read 3:1-6.** How are Moses and Jesus compared and contrasted? How would this be significant for a Jew? What does this say about Moses' relevance (eg the Law) to a Christian?

2. **Read 3:7-11.** Which episode in Jewish history is this referring to (check out Psalm 95)? How is it connected to 3:1-6?

3. **Read 3:12-19.** What's the exhortation that the writer gives? List the various aspects, both positive and negative.

### ***Dessert***

1. How might we "encourage one another daily?" What would that look like in practice, and what would it require?

2. How might you speak to someone who has "hardened their heart"?

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## Study 4: Imagine not having to work ... Hebrews 4:1-13

### *Appetizers*

1. How do you feel about “giving an account to God” for your life? When do you think about doing so? How do you respond to such a thought?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 4:1-2.** What’s the connection between these 2 verses? How do you make sure you don’t fall short of what God has promised?

2. **Read 4:3-9.** The writer is establishing that there is a greater promise even than “the Promised Land” awaiting Christians. What is it? How is it described? How do you enter it?

3. **Read 4:10-13.** What will enable you to enter God's rest? What "test" must you first pass? How does the certain reality of v13 affect you and what you do with your life?

### ***Dessert***

1. Share how you might enable "the Word of God" to "judge the thoughts and attitudes of your heart." Since v11 speaks of "us", how might we look out for each other? What practical resolutions might we make? What does "make every effort (v11)" mean for you personally?

2. How could you talk about this kind of "rest" with an unbeliever?

## Study 5: A great high priest

### Hebrews 4:14-6:12

#### *Appetizers*

1. How do people try to “atone for their sins”? What lengths will they go to? How effective are they at that? What are some of the consequences of their efforts?

#### *Main Course*

1. **Read 4:14-16.** We’ve already seen something of Jesus’ sympathy for us. What does v16 tell us about what that means for us? When would you find this reassuring? Why would you doubt it?

2. **Read 5:7-10.** What happened to Jesus on earth? Why? What does it mean for us?

3. **Read 5:11-6:12.** We've already heard warnings in Chs 1-4. What's the nature of this particular warning? What's different about this one? Why do you think the writer gives the warning? What hope is offered?

### ***Dessert***

1. What would constitute "solid food" for you? How might you go about obtaining it? What motives (good and bad) might inspire you to do so?

2. How would you think through the need for "solid food" with a recent convert?

## 6 Study 6: A priest in the order of Melchizedek Hebrews 6:13-7:28

### *Appetizers*

1. Which of God's promises are significant for you? Why? How have they affected you?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 6:13-7:10.** What criteria does the writer use to show how Melchizedek is superior to Abraham? Which of these do you find compelling? (note: you can read the original story in Genesis 14)

2. **Read 7:11-28.** What criteria does the writer use to show how Jesus is superior to all priests? Which of these do you find most compelling?

***Dessert***

1. When do you find it hard to believe God's promises? Which promises do you find it hardest to believe? What would help you to believe them?

2. Think of 3 unbelievers whom you know. Which of God's promises might mean the most to each one? Spend some time praying for them ...

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## Study 7: A priest of a new covenant

### Hebrews 8:1-10:18

#### *Appetizers*

1. Why do you continue to sin? When are you most tempted to sin? What strategies have you tried to defeat sin? How effective have they been (or not been)?

#### *Main Course*

1. **Read 8:1-13.** In what ways is Jesus' "new covenant" ministry superior to that which came before? Which of the various elements in 8:8-12 mean most to you personally? Why?

2. **Read 9:1-28.** This section compares the work of the priest in the first covenant with the work of Christ in the new covenant. Why is Christ's work superior? Compare what is being purified in each case, and how it is purified, and the effect of that purification? Why is it necessary for Christ to appear again?

3. **Read 10:1-18.** What do these verses tell us about the sacrifices that God desires? (note: compare this section with Psalm 51 and Isaiah 1) How might you be guilty of similar shortcomings?

### *Dessert*

1. How do these chapters help you understand and deal with the ongoing presence of sin in your life?

2. How do you respond to an unbeliever who maintains, "it doesn't matter if I sin - God will forgive me; that's His job"?

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## Study 8: A new and living way Hebrews 10:19-39

### *Appetizers*

1. What do you love most about being a Christian? What do you find hardest? Why? What has helped you to deal with your struggles?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 10:19-25.** What does the writer exhort us to do? Why does the writer encourage us to do such things? When do you find these things hard to do, and why?

2. **Read 10:26-31.** Why does this very serious warning come immediately after such an encouraging passage?! How are we to respond?

3. **Read 10:32-39.** What does the writer say to encourage us after the very confronting warning in the previous verses? Do you find his strategy comforting or not? Why or why not? What might help you to take his advice?

### ***Dessert***

1. Look at each of the 5 “let us” exhortations in 10:22-25. For each one, share a positive and negative practical application (ie something you might start doing, and something you might stop doing).

2. These 5 “let us” exhortations in 10:22-25 describe different aspects of the Christian life. Which ones might appeal to particular unbelieving friends and family, and why? Pray for them ...

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## Study 9: A great cloud of witnesses Hebrews 11:1-12:13

### *Appetizers*

1. When do you find it hardest to “live by faith, not by sight”? Why? What has happened, and how have you responded?

### *Main Course*

1. **Read 11:1-40.** Which of the examples of “living by faith” most resonate with you? Why do you think the writer lists so many? Who else, from the bible, might you add to this list (and why)?

2. **Read 12:1-13.** How does God discipline us? Why does He do so? How ought we respond to discipline? What will enable us to persevere?



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**Study 10: "Only a short letter"**  
**Hebrews 12:14-13:25**

***Appetizers***

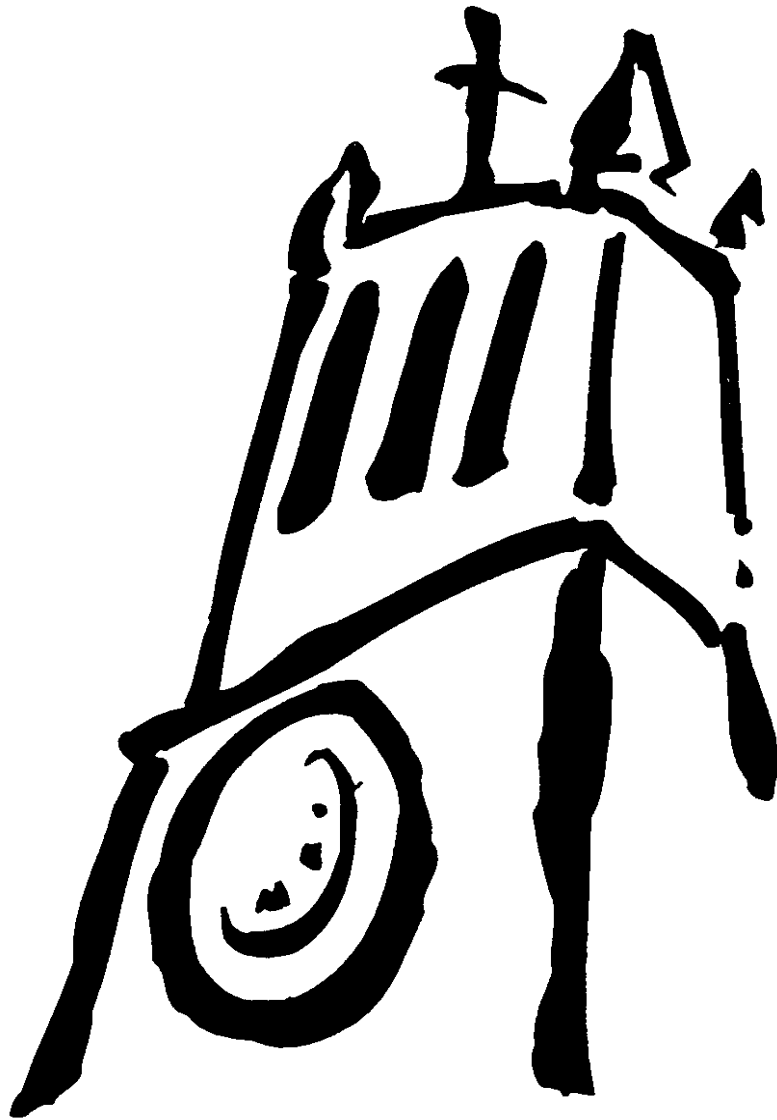
1. Imagine that a friend has just become a Christian. What would you say to them about what lies before them?

***Main Course***

1. **Read 12:14-29.** This is the last of the so-called warning passages in Hebrews. What does the writer say both positively and negatively? Which do you find more compelling (and why)?

2. **Read 13:1-25.** This section is probably headed "concluding exhortations" in your bible. Look carefully at the various exhortations and try to list them all. Is there anything connecting them together? What clues are given to motivate us to put them into practice?





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