

SEEKING GOD'S GREAT

Riches

The Book of Hebrews

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Dedication

*To Dawn and Michael,
who are running their race with patience
as they look unto Jesus*

SEEKING GOD'S GREAT RICHES: THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

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Preface

Looking for something? Perhaps you've been searching for a lost piece of jewelry, a recipe you cut from a magazine, or that elusive sock that is hiding from its twin! We seem to spend much time *seeking* in this life. Some of our efforts are rewarded; some are futile.

Human beings, whom God has created with spirit, soul, and body, have a spiritual longing which they seek to satisfy. In our world today hundreds of pathways promise to lead seekers to spiritual peace and prosperity, but often they lead to emptiness, doubt, and at worst, enslavement. Only one way leads to a real relationship with God, to spiritual fulfillment and assured eternal life. Jesus Christ declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

The New Testament book of Hebrews presents the absolute superiority of Jesus Christ and the true Christian faith that embraces Him. We are urged to seek Him and the glorious promises of our God, Who abides with us as we journey through life.

Let us, then, seek after the spiritual treasures that come from God's vast storehouse of riches. They are found only in Him Who is the greatest of all God's riches: Jesus Christ, our Lord!

Introduction

The Lord Jesus told a parable in which people “receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away” (Luke 8:13). The recipients of the letter to the Hebrews were facing persecution for following Christ. Some were being tempted to “fall away,” to go back into Judaism (the keeping of the Old Testament laws) to avoid persecution. Some of these people, perhaps, were not even truly Christians because they had never received Christ as Savior by faith alone. To come so close to the truth, and to purposely reject Christ, put them in great spiritual danger.

To these people the letter of Hebrews was written. Who wrote it? That fact is still a mystery. Some think it was the apostle Paul, based on similarities between his epistles and Hebrews. Others think it was someone else who was a respected church leader, but not one of the apostles who had seen Christ (Hebrews 2:3). “The writer” (as I will refer to him) was eloquent, well-versed in the Old Testament Scriptures, with which the book of Hebrews is saturated. He presented—almost as a lawyer would—a very strong, well laid-out case for the excellency of the new covenant of grace that came by Jesus Christ, God’s own Son. Why should these people go back to Judaism when God has given a way far superior?

Seek a life of grace, a life of faith. Seek the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the persuasive argument of the book of Hebrews.

How to Use This Study

Each lesson in this study is divided into five sections. Follow these suggestions as you prepare each lesson.



I. LOOK INTO YOUR HEART

Following the introductory comments, these questions will prepare your heart to study God's Word. These questions will not be discussed in class.



II. SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

The questions in this section concentrate on the actual text of God's Word and will help you understand what God's Word says.



III. DISCOVER THE TRUTH

As you answer the questions in this section, you will see how the truths of God's Word apply to your life.



IV. CLAIM YOUR TREASURE

This section is personal. It is designed as a starting point to help you put God's truth into practice.



V. REJOICE IN YOUR RICHES

These final words will help seal firmly in your mind what you learned from the Bible passage.

Seek the Son

Hebrews 1 and 2

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9).

Just a glimpse! Have you ever endured being squeezed by a crowd just to catch a glimpse of some famous person? Perhaps it was a president, a sports hero, or some celebrity. If only you could see that person in real life, just for a moment!

Remember Zacchaeus? In Luke 19 we are told that the diminutive tax collector couldn't see the One Who was coming to his town; the crowd was too great. So he humbled himself, climbed a tree, and waited for a glimpse of this One about Whom wondrous things were told. Zacchaeus was not disappointed, for he received much more than a glimpse. Jesus Christ paid Zacchaeus personal attention, and his life was never the same.

Seek the Son. You are not just one of the crowd to Him. He cares personally for you. Once you know Him, your life will never be the same.



I. LOOK INTO YOUR HEART

What role does Jesus play in your life?

- ☐ I don't know much about Him.
- ☐ I know a little about Him.
- ☐ I know Him; He is my Savior and Lord.



II. SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Read Hebrews 1 and 2.

1. In Hebrews 1:1–4 we are introduced to the Lord Jesus Christ. According to these verses, what is one reason God sent His Son to earth?

2. From verses 2–4, list some of the truths you learn about Jesus Christ.

3. Read verses 5–9 and give three reasons why Christ is superior to the angels.

4. Finish the chapter by reading verses 8–14 as a unit. To Whom is Jesus, the Son, equated in verses 8 and 10?

5. What work is attributed to Christ in verse 10?

6. What qualities (attributes) of Christ are mentioned in verse 12?

7. What promise did the Father make to the Son, as mentioned in verse 13? Read Psalm 110.

8. What is the job of angels according to verse 14?

9. Read Hebrews 2:1–4. Verse 1 begins with the word “therefore.” The writer was connecting all he had just said with all he was about to say. What warning did he give in verse 1? How is this related to chapter 1?

10. (a) “The things which we have heard” in verse 1 is equated with what word in Hebrews 2:3?

(b) What are we told NOT to do?

11. (a) Where did this idea of “salvation” come from (v. 3)?

(b) How do we know these things are true (v. 4)?

12. In Hebrews 2:5–8 we see the position of man in God's plan for the universe. What is man's "job description" as set forth here?

13. Hebrews 1 presents the Lord Jesus as God, stressing His deity. In Hebrews 2: 9–18 the writer discussed Christ's humanity: Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man. As God, taking on a human body, He came to earth to dwell among us. In doing so, what was Jesus willing to do (v. 9; see also Philippians 2:5–8)?

14. Why did Jesus come to earth and die on a cross? Read the following verses to formulate your answer: Romans 3:8, 9, 23; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; 1 Peter 2:24.

15. The Word of God declares that forgiveness of sins and eternal life (salvation) are a gift. How does a person receive this gift? See John 1:12, 3:16, and Ephesians 2:8 and 9.

16. What are some of the results accomplished for us by Christ's incarnation and sacrificial death, as stated in these verses in Hebrews 2?

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verses 11–13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verses 16, 17

Verse 18



III. DISCOVER THE TRUTH

We have had a glimpse of the Lord Jesus Christ in Hebrews 1 and 2. As God, He stooped to become a man and enter the stage of human history so that He could speak to us of the Father (1:2). He tasted death for every man by dying for each one's sins on the cross (2:9), and as a result, He destroyed the power of death and the Devil. Furthermore, He became our merciful and faithful brother, willing and able to help us in all our spiritual need. Many people today (even though they say they read the Bible) claim that Jesus was just a prophet or a teacher.

1. Write down five facts from Hebrews 1 and 2 that prove that Jesus is more than a prophet or teacher.

2. Angels are popular beings today, seemingly society's generic mode of acknowledging God. Biblically, who are angels according to Hebrews 1:7 and 14? Why are they not to be worshiped?

3. People also exalt creation in our day. Why must we not worship creation (Hebrews 1:10–12; Romans 1:25)? Why should we treat creation with respect?

4. Hebrews 1 teaches us that Jesus Christ—God the Son, Creator, Sustainer, and King—came to this earth. Chapter 2 declares that His mission was to suffer and die as a representative of man, making reconciliation for our sins and defeating death and Satan. The writer warned in 2:3 that we must not neglect the great salvation God offers to us. In what ways do unbelieving people neglect their souls' eternal destiny? (See, for example, Luke 12:16–21.)

5. Do believing Christians neglect their salvation? How do they do this? Read 2 Peter 1:5–9.



IV. CLAIM YOUR TREASURE

God has great riches for you in Christ! What decision do you need to make as a result of your study in His Word? Select one of the following decisions and spend some moments in prayer, asking the Lord to work in your life as you seek Him and His excellent riches through Christ.

- ____ I have never before understood that Jesus Christ is God, dying on the cross to pay the penalty for my sin. I want to put my faith in Him right now, inviting Him into my life and receiving His gift of forgiveness and salvation.
- ____ I have not been giving Jesus Christ the worship and honor of my heart for which He is worthy. I have neglected my salvation, and I want to renew my commitment to my Lord right now.



V. REJOICE IN YOUR RICHES

Now that you have seen Jesus, the true Jesus, is not your heart filled with wonder and worship? He is far above the created beings, “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Ephesians 1:21). Jesus Christ is God’s greatest treasure. If there is someone or something to seek, it is the Lord Jesus. Let us begin there. He became a man to bear human sin and put Himself under God’s wrath. He shared our sufferings so He could sympathize with us. He defeated sin, death, and Satan so He could free us.

Have you received Him? Is He the Savior of your life?