DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



TEXT SUMMARY

This year our Advent series will focus on the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The entire letter was written to encourage the Hebrew (Jewish) believers. They were beginning to experience hardship and persecution as Christfollowers, and some of them were becoming discouraged, even thinking of returning to Judaism, which was more comfortable and socially accepted than following Jesus.

Our text this first Advent Sunday is <u>Hebrews 1:1-3</u>, where we see the writer contrast the piecemeal and incomplete revelation given to their forefathers with the consummate revelation they have in Christ.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- 1. These opening three verses of the letter are expressed in three sentences in our translation, but they are only one sentence in the original language. In this singular long sentence, the writer tells us seven specific things about the Son. What are they?
- 2. The writer says that God spoke to their forefathers "at many times and in many ways" (v. 1). What are some of the various methods of communication God employed to speak to His people over the centuries of history?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

- In these opening words, the writer to the Hebrews echoes the way John opens his gospel: "In the beginning was the Word... and the Word became flesh..." (John 1:1, 14). What are some of the ways God's "word" to us in Jesus brought all His previous revelation into clearer focus? What are some of the ways the appearance of Jesus brought together disparate themes from the Hebrew Scriptures?
- 2. The seven things the text tells us about Christ amount to a very impressive set of credentials. Why was it important for the writer to speak to this question of Jesus' qualifications?

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SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

Here we move toward first-person pronouns as we begin to consider how we must respond to what God has said in His Word.

- 1. Our text opens with an assertion about the supreme value of what God has said in "the Son" (Christ) compared to the lesser value of what He had said to His people up until Christ came. This means that two-thirds of the Bible (the entire Old Testament) is pointing to the Gospels the accounts of the life of Christ that appear in the opening pages of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then the rest of the New Testament is devoted to explaining what the coming of Jesus means for us and for human history.
 - What has God said to us in Jesus?
 - ...about our sin?
 - ...about what vexes and discourages us?
 - ...about our future?
 - What other competing voices tend to drown out or confuse what God is saying to you in Christ?
 - What are some things you can do to attune your heart to hear more clearly what God has said in Christ?
- After contrasting God's Word to us in Christ with His Word to our spiritual forefathers in the past, our text goes on to point to the Son's supreme qualifications as God's Son: who he is and what he's done.
 - What do your daily habits look like when you forget who Jesus is and what he's done?
 - What are some things you can do to attune your heart to remember who Jesus is and what he's done?