

December 7, 2014

Youth Topic:

Who's in Charge?

Unit I.
In Awe of God

Lesson 1

Background Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-9

Print Passage: Hebrews 1:1-9

General Lesson:

Worship Christ's Majesty



The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (*Hebrews 1:3, NIV*).

PREPARING TO TEACH

- **Resources Needed:** Bibles, student books, paper, pens or pencils, index cards.
- Prior to class, research popular people in youth culture right now, such as song artists, athletes, actors, or anyone who is very well-known. During the opening illustration, you will show their pictures and discuss what makes each person distinctive and special. Make use of social media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) in order to follow these persons throughout the week. They might say something during the week that you can use.

LESSON OVERVIEW

By the end of this lesson, the students should know that Jesus is unique and incomparable to any other. Jesus is a King, a Prophet, and a Priest. The students should connect Jesus' humanity with His divinity, knowing that He is the Son of God.

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

status update (check-in)

Before introducing your lesson, take some time to get a quick status update from your students; check in with them to see how their week has been.

Status Update: WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? **"Why do people idolize celebrities?"**

Say this to the students: "Sometimes we think that celebrities are more important than other people—but they are not. Just because they receive special recognition and have thousands or millions of followers on social networking sites does not mean that they are better than you. They are usually famous because of a talent—but everyone has talents."

It's Go Time! (illustration)

Get your students moving and thinking by using the following illustration, a game, or an activity that relates to this week's lesson.

Show your students pictures of various celebrities. Have them tell you who is hot and who is not. Have them tell you why someone is famous or not famous. Popularity changes very quickly. People are usually famous for a time and then that fades away or they are shunned. Although Jesus is not a celebrity, His eternal nature never fades away; He is forever the King, the Prophet, the Priest, and the Son of God.

WAKE UP! (10 minutes)

Have the students read this week's contemporary story and relate it back to the main points of this week's lesson.

Have the story in this section read aloud and discussed. Explain to the class that it is important to sit before God, quietly reflecting on God's magnificence and over the week's happenings. When you emerge from your quiet time, have each

student check in and review the previous week's challenge and charge. Were they able to complete it? Did they find it to be a worthwhile exercise of faith? If not, why? What do they think might have been a better use of their time?

WORD UP (10 minutes)

Inspect the passage for the day. You will want to make sure that you have Bibles or copies of the passage for those who do not have a Bible with them.

Back Up! (background)

Here is some background for today's text that should be used throughout teaching this lesson—in order to set the stage for the passage.

The book of Hebrews is actually a sermon discourse that was intended by its writer to be read aloud to the community of believers. The unknown writer proposed that Jesus is superior to the angels.

There were significant differences in ancient Israel in these three roles, but each one had important religious functions that contributed to the spiritual health of the larger community. Priests were charged with instituting and maintaining worship and the ritual aspect of religious life. Rituals such as sacrifices were used to remain in proper relationship to God. It was the priests who ensured that the sacrifices were made properly and the Temple was maintained. Jesus did not just offer a sacrifice on behalf of the people; He was the sacrifice, perfect and blameless.

The prophets in ancient Israel functioned to bring forth the Word of God. They helped to keep priests, kings, and people in proper alignment with God's will by delivering messages to each group as deemed necessary by God. Jesus was a prophet because He warned the people of the judgment of God.

Jesus was portrayed as a King through the lineage of David. Kings were divinely appointed rulers. When a king took the throne, he assumed divine sonship—meaning God had appointed and anointed him to rule with authority. Verses 5-9 are taken from the Psalms and would have been sung as a king took his throne. The writer showed Jesus

taking His throne next to His Father. Jesus is represented in this passage as a King, Priest, and Prophet. He is Word, worship, and ruler wrapped into one: Jesus is superior.

It's Text Time! (Scripture)

Here is the New International Version of today's Scripture. However, you may consider studying another one or two translations in preparation for leading.

(Hebrews 1:1-9)

1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. **3** The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. **4** So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. **5** For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? **6** And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." **7** In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire." **8** But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. **9** You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

WORK OUT (10 minutes)

Examine the intersections of the passage. What is the passage about? How was it heard at the time? How does it apply now?

After the information in this section has been read aloud, lead a discussion of the material.

Relay this information to the students: The Scripture passage's purpose is to promote the superiority of Jesus. In an atmosphere of

burgeoning Christianity, it was important to establish that Jesus was above any comparisons. Jesus would have been compared to many religious figures—those from the Old Testament as well as others from other religious backgrounds. The writer of the book of Hebrews sought to dispel any rumors that Jesus was not superior to any other popular religious figure. This is a paramount lesson for teens in today's world, which is becoming more secular and less dependent on Christ and religious distinction, as well as what it means to be a Christian.

Inside Out (interpretation)

Work on the passage from the inside out. Allow time for the students to raise their own questions about the Scripture.

In a religiously diverse world, what does it mean to listen to this passage in light of so many popular figures? Compare Jesus' actions to the actions of some popular religious figures from the Old Testament. Look at Aaron (the first priest of Israel), David (Israel's most popular king), and Elijah (one of the more popular prophets).

There's an App for That! (application)

Show how this Scripture applies to present day.

Have the information in this section read aloud and discussed.

Say to the students, "Jamie thought that Kierra Sheard was superior to all other artists. There are many people that we consider to be superior to their peers because they do so many things well in their fields. Each one of these people is unique and special in his or her own way, but does God want us to look at them in awe and become star-struck, or is the only real star that we should see Jesus? Why is Jesus superior?"

WALK OUT (10 minutes)

Help the students think about how this Scripture connects to them personally.

After the information and the question posed in this section have been read aloud, lead in a discussion of the material.

Have the students consider why people perceive other people such as celebrities or the "cool group" at school as being superior to others. Why is one group perceived to be "cool" or superior to the other group? Remind the students that Jesus is superior to all and the reasons why we should follow Christ.

Stepping Out! (challenge)

Give the students this challenge for the week. Emphasize that they can do it!

Have the information in this section read aloud and discussed. The purpose of this week's challenge is to have the students find out that there is music available that glorifies God and with which they can genuinely have a good time as well. They should be mindful of the kinds of things that God wants for them to put into their spirits and minds.

There's No Time to Waste! (charge)

Encourage the students to accomplish this challenge before your next meeting.

The students should identify worship songs by next week's class session. If there are issues of access to technology, then explain that they can go to the public library or use the computers at their schools. If that is not possible, then they can locate music through their youth pastor or family member.

It's Game Time! (Answer Key)

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|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Prophets | 4. Superior |
| 2. Jesus | 5. Joy |
| 3. The priest | |

MEDIA MISSION (after you meet!)

Finally, leave your students with a media mission. Ask them to find their own example of a Web site, video, or song that relates to this lesson.

Have the students fulfill the "Media Mission."

The purpose of this media mission is to give the students an example of the kinds of music that they can look up. This song by Trip Lee uses part of the Key Verse as its refrain. This song points to the superiority of Christ and will give further elucidation to the students.