

## Jesus Is A Better Priest

Hebrews 7:22-8:13

*This Winter, we are experiencing God's presence together by encountering Jesus in the Book of Hebrews. This week, we return once again to the theme of Jesus' priestly ministry. And we see an incredible truth: unlike the old priests, whose ministry was limited in both effect (they couldn't renew the heart) and time (their ministry stopped at death), Jesus is a priest who "is able to save to the **uttermost** those who draw near to God through him, since he **always** lives to intercede for them."*

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## GETTING STARTED

We start each week by intentionally being present to one another. If you need a little help getting the conversation going, consider starting with these questions...

### *Ice Breaker*

You can only have one for the rest of your life: cloudy and 70° or sunny and 55°... Which do you choose?

### *Going Deeper*

Who would your 12-year old self say is your biggest hero?

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Our discipleship to Jesus is meant to be a holistic way of living, involving our whole selves - **head, heart, and hands**. While each person will likely gravitate to one of these over the others, it's important we all consider how God's love affects our minds, our hearts, and our actions.

REMINDER: These guides are meant to facilitate PRESENCE - to God and one another - not to check boxes. Feel free to let conversation naturally flow to whichever questions connect with you personally. As the Spirit leads you, feel free to set aside this guide to pause, praise, and pray together.

## HEAD

Read Jeremiah 31:31-37. Why does the author of Hebrews call these “better promises?” What does God say could overcome or undo his new covenant promises?

How does Jesus fulfill all the various roles that priests held in Scripture? [NOTE: Some priestly roles include: Teacher (Lev. 10:10-11), Representative (i.e. before God - Ex. 28:29), Protector (Num. 18:5-7), Caregiver (Num. 6:22-26), and Mediator (Lev. 16:32-34)]

## HEART

Have you ever struggled with feeling distant or separated from God because of something you’ve done, or that’s been done to you? How does it impact you to know that Jesus is “able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him”?

How does understanding Jesus’ priestly ministry increase your affections for God? How do you feel knowing that Jesus is interceding on your behalf before the Father?

## HANDS

The Bible teaches that we not only *have* a priest in Jesus - we are *made* a kingdom of priests in Jesus. In what ways does our priesthood look similar to Jesus? What priestly roles can only Jesus fulfill?

## PRACTICE OF PRESENCE

Hebrews 7:25 says that Jesus “always lives to intercede for” us. Close your discussion with a time of personally meditating on Jesus’ ongoing priestly ministry - his intercession before the Father (5-10min of individual, quiet prayer).

Look back to a time when you were struggling or unsure of how God was working - imagine Jesus interceding for you in that time. What do you think he’s saying? Looking back, how do you think Jesus’ ministry came to fruition in your life? (Remember, we are inviting the Spirit to work in us as we imagine - not trying to figure God out or somehow get the right answer.)

Think about your life today - How do you need Jesus to intercede for you right now? Imagine him before the Father asking for those things on your behalf. Are there any other ways Jesus might be interceding that aren’t at the forefront of your mind? Ask the Spirit to fill your mind with the reality of Christ’s present ministry to you.

After 5-10 minutes of individual, quiet prayer and reflection, share with the group what stuck out to you from this exercise.