



What is Pulpit Driven Discipleship?

Discipleship from the pulpit to communities therein pressed into the head, heart and hands of image bearers of God every day.

Pulpit Driven Discipleship is the name of a process of discipleship. Discipleship begins on Sunday with the sermon faithfully preached by our pastors then the message of sermon is digested and pressed into the heart throughout the week through prayer reflection and discussion in the home or in smaller discussion groups. It is in this context that life transformation and growth occur.

The pastoral leadership team and the Adult Discipleship Ministry Team are excited to walk together this Fall through the message of the Book of Micah. Please prayerfully consider incorporating PDD as your primary means of discipleship. We believe that PDD is appropriate for individuals, couples, families, and groups of all kinds. This great resource can be found in the bulletin on Sunday, and will be available on-line and via email each week.

Director of Adult Discipleship Rob Davis welcomes discussion, questions, and comments of all kinds. Rob Davis 706-252-5216, RobD@fpcrome.org

PULPIT DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP



Andrew Wyeth, Christina's World, 1948 ;

Perseverance by Promise ***A Study of the Sermon to the Hebrews***

January 16, 2022

About the artwork

Andrew Wyeth is perhaps the most famous American artist of the 20th century. He, along with John Singer Sargent, are the only two American artists invited into the Academy of Fine Art in Paris, France. President Kennedy awarded Wyeth the presidential medal of freedom, the only visual artist to receive such an award. He was also awarded presidential medals from George H Bush and George W Bush.

His art is connected to his humanity. He was a man that experienced loss and grief in this broken and fallen world and often expressed his pain in visual form through art.

His most famous work, and the one that best expresses his struggle with pain and grief, is a painting called Christina's World (1948). Christina is a friend of Wyeth and had a disease that left her unable to walk. Instead of choosing a wheelchair, she preferred to crawl using her arms. The painting is a picture of her struggle...but it is also a picture of her hope...in the painting her hands are gripped to the ground portraying her daily suffering, yet her body is leaning towards the farmhouse, which was her home. Life was a struggle, but her gaze and hope were on her home, which kept her moving forward and not giving up.

The book of Hebrews has a very similar theme...the writer expresses the hope and gaze of home in the person and work of Jesus Christ...the struggle to give up or turn back was very real for the audience...most scholars believe the original audience was Jewish Christians who were facing persecution...it would have been a struggle for them to keep moving forward in the profession of Jesus Christ because with that profession came pain and hardship.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These "Sermon Discussion Questions" are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

Scriptures for further study:

2 Corinthians 5:17

Romans 8:1

Romans 8:31-39

1. Reflect on the passage, Hebrews 1:4-14. Does the preacher's (author of Hebrews) description of what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God, affirm, inform, expand, encourage, or challenge my current view of Jesus? Explain that. In what ways am I tempted to unintentionally downgrade Jesus' supremacy?

2. Jesus is superior because of His relation to the Father. Our tendency is to look to our own experiences and relationships to understand how God works. Our experience of earthly fathers is a mixed bag from non-existent or abusive fathers to fathers who were loving and present. Both poor and excellent father types in our lives shape how we think about Jesus' relationship to his Father. How has my own father experience affected how our think of Jesus relationship to his Father?

3. Pastor Bill said, "Good things like church attendance, your marriage, your kids, your vocational calling...all of these are good things, but they must remain secondary...secondary to the beauty, glory, and supremacy of Jesus Christ." What are the secondary things in my life that compete with the supremacy of Christ? How do we allow the secondary things to define and affirm or destroy me? How can orienting my life around the supremacy of Christ help me when the secondary things disappoint us?

4. Reflect on how the following statement impacts your daily life: "When we understand the supremacy of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and our relationship with Him as brothers and sisters, then we realize, though we are not supreme, we have the most privileged position in all creation through Jesus Christ. In Him we have the Father's utmost attention, involvement, and care and are treated like sons of God...and that is what we are," Pastor Bill. In what areas of my life is the Lord inviting me to have fearless faith and walk in gospel confidence? With whom can I share this opportunity and invite them to pray for me in this? If gospel confidence is the last thing on your mind and you really want this to be primary, and don't know where to start please reach out to the pastoral staff of the church for help.

Praise to Jesus

Praise God today for the sonship of Jesus Christ and how in him, you too are invited in sonship with the Father.

Repentance through Jesus- Confess to the Lord the many ways you give to secondary things that which is reserved for first things only. Confess the many moments where you diminish the beauty, glory, and supremacy of knowing Jesus and being found in Him.

Consecration for Jesus – Consecrate yourself to living with Gospel confidence and facing life's situations and circumstances in Jesus and for Jesus.

"JESUS: OUR CONFIDENCE"

Hebrews 1:4-14 ESV

4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. 5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? 6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." 7 Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." 8 But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." 10 And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; 11 they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, 12 like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end." 13 And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Historical Context

The audience of Hebrews had some distorted beliefs about angels.

"Ours is not the only time when false or inappropriate attitudes toward angels were held. Among many Jews in the first century there was an unhealthy emphasis on angels, in part because of the excellent things said of them in Scripture." – Richard Phillips

"Angels loomed large in the piety and thought of the Jews of that day. We see some reflection of this in Galatians 3:19, where Paul says the law was 'put in place through angels.' Although Paul had an orthodox view of the angels, this idea that the angels were instrumental in revealing the law to Moses tended to make the Jews view angels as superior to everything else besides God." – R.C. Sproul

FOR STUDENTS

If you want to connect with our student ministries, contact Pastor Jimmy (jimmyl@fpcrome.org)

1. The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 2:7 in Hebrews 1:5. What is the theme of this Psalm? What figures are involved? How is God characterized? Why do you think the author would choose to quote this passage?

2. How does the Son's unique superiority affect our lives?

3. The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 102:25-27. Read Psalm 102. What are the primary themes of Psalm 102?

4. Are you too easily impressed with things other than Jesus? What are some of those things, and how does this passage help you correct your thinking about them?

5. What characteristics of Jesus stood out to you from this passage? How did those encourage you?

6. How should Jesus' position of power and exaltation affect your everyday life?

**Selected questions borrowed and adapted from Hebrews: How Jesus Speaks into Everything by John D. Barry and Hebrews for You by Michael J. Kruger.*

Scriptures for further study:

2 Samuel 7:1-17

Psalm 2,

Psalm 102

Deuteronomy 32:43

“Pastoral discipleship from the pulpit for you through the week.
Each of our pastors has designed content with you in mind.”

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

If you want to connect with our family ministries, contact Pastor Ken (kenc@fpcrome.org)

1. This passage deals with the comparison between Jesus and angels. Depending on what types of things your children like, ask them to compare different things and tell you which one is better or greater. For example, which are better pets: dogs or cats? Or which hero is better: Spiderman or Captain America? Or what is better: chicken nuggets or pizza?
 - a. Then ask your children to decide which is stronger: a squirrel or a grizzly bear? Great White Shark or a goldfish?
 - b. Today's passage compares Jesus to angels and reminds us that Jesus is far superior to angels.
2. Ask your children to tell you what they know about angels.
 - a. Talk with your children about what the Bible teaches us about angels. You could look at the Christmas story from Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-38, Luke 2:8-14. The Bible shows angels as heavenly beings that serve as messengers for God. People that meet angels are scared and want to worship them.
 - b. Hebrews 1:6-8 quotes from the Old Testament to talk about how angels are to worship God.
 - c. Most commentators believe that the original readers of Hebrews were overly fascinated with angels and tempted to worship angels. Talk with your children about how we can be tempted to worship good things such as angels, sports, teachers, food, video games, and money.
3. This passage highlights Jesus' name as Son of God and highlights His eternal Kingship to remind readers that He is far superior to angels.
 - a. Take time to talk with your children about how great Jesus is. Read passages such as Hebrews 1:1-4, Philippians 3:7-8, and Colossians 1:15-20 and talk about what these passages tell us about Jesus.
 - b. Read Romans 8:16-17 and Galatians 4:4-7 and talk about how our trust in Jesus, the Son of God, allows us to become children of God.
4. Talk through situations that you all are facing as a family and how our understanding of the greatness of Jesus can strengthen you. Pray together for God to grant you His strength and peace.

Scriptures for further study:

Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew 17:1-8

Philippians 2:5-11

Big Idea

Jesus' prevailing position as Son is the rock upon which the waves of temptation to demote his supremacy and our spiritual strength crash and subside.

Outline

In Hebrews 1:4-14, the writer emphasizes Jesus' superiority to angels. Let's look at how Jesus is superior to the angels, what that meant to the original audience, and what it means for us today.

1. Jesus' Supremacy

2. Secondary Things

3. Gospel Confidence

The point of the book of Hebrews is the supremacy of Jesus. This principle isn't to be acknowledged in our minds, only, but in our hearts. Then we will see it worked out in our daily living.

Praise to Jesus: Praise God today for the sonship of Jesus Christ and how in him, you too are invited in sonship with the Father.

Repentance through Jesus: Confess to the Lord the many ways you give to secondary things that which is reserved for first things only. Confess the many moments where you diminish the beauty, glory, and supremacy of knowing Jesus and being found in Him.

Consecration for Jesus: Consecrate yourself to living with Gospel confidence and facing life's situations and circumstances in Jesus and for Jesus.

In other words:

Jesus' sonship moves me to walk in and with Gospel confidence.

Scriptures for further study:

Hebrews 1:14

Acts 7:38

Matthew 18:10

Revelation 4:8; 5:9-12

Luke 1:19, 28

Luke 2:9-14

Psalms 34:7

Psalms 91:11-12

Acts 5:19;

Acts 12:6-11;

Daniel 9:20-23;

Matthew 24:31;

1 Thessalonians

4:16-17;

Matthew

13:39-42

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

If you want to know more about Jesus and Christianity, contact Pastor Jonathan (jonathans@fpcrome.org)

1. While some skeptics reject the existence of angels, most people believe in their reality. There has even been a recent resurgence of interest in today's culture about these heavenly beings. Regardless of what we believe about angels, what does our interest in them say about us?

2. Often we place our confidence in things other than Jesus Christ, even good things like angels! In what ways does this passage assert that Christ is superior to the angels, in terms of his nature, his power, and status? Based on these verses, could there ever be anyone or anything greater?

3. Jesus is clearly superior to angels, but this does not mean that we are to neglect the importance of angels. Nor are we to have an excessive interest in them, or develop notions that are speculative or unbiblical, or derived from pop culture. Please take a moment to consider some of the important roles and functions of angels according to the Bible. Look up the passages below concerning the role of angels in worshiping God, communicating God's message to men, ministering to believers, and serving as God's agents in the final judgments.

4. Ultimately, we look to Christ to deliver, minister to, and protect us. But isn't it also encouraging to our faith to know that God also uses angels to serve us in these sovereign purposes?

Like Christina. But even more so...we need something to fix our gaze upon...we need a home to pull us forward...and according to Hebrews, that is Jesus Christ...like the home on the hill in the painting, Jesus is the pinnacle of God's plan of redemption...so considering this painting and background, here these words afresh from Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1-2:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

And so, church, let's begin this journey in Hebrews together...which is not disconnected from our humanity and our struggles...for we to live in Christina's world...a world of suffering, pain, and hardship...but we are in a relationship with the savior, Jesus, who has overcome the world...and because of His supremacy, calls us to fix our eyes on Him in order that we might persevere in faith. -Tremper Longman, EBC, 23-25