

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.

1. Refer to the Big Idea. What purpose does an anchor serve on a ship? What does it mean to have one's soul anchored in heaven? How does the illustration of our anchor in heaven differ from the reality of the way an anchor is typically used? Who holds onto our anchor in heaven? Refer to John 10:28&29. What assurance and encouragement are there for Christians in obstacles and opposition?

2. The unchanging faithfulness of God. Refer to Hebrews 6:13-17. "I swear! I'm telling the truth!" Often when someone is telling a story that is hard to believe they feel the need to back up the story with an oath. What does that tell us about the person? We know there is a 50/50 chance that the story is true. Their oath tells us at least that they are earnest. What do the promises of God tell us about God? What do they tell us about what God wants us to know about him? (Isaiah 46:9-10, Jeremiah 1:2, Romans 8:28, Numbers 23:19, Romans 8:1, 1 Corinthians 5:17).

3. The calling to the church to hold fast to hope. Refer to Joshua 20:1-4 & Hebrews 6:18. God in his kindness provides for his children in absolutely every circumstance of life. If God has even made provision for one who has accidentally killed someone, we can rely on him in any present challenge (Isaiah 8:17, Psalm 33:18, Psalm 42:5, Psalm 43:5, Romans 8:24, 2 Corinthians 1:10).

4. The anchor of our soul (Refer to Hebrews 6:19). What words does the writer use to describe the anchor? Refer to Hebrews 6:20. What does it mean that Jesus is a forerunner on our behalf? Refer to Hebrews 6:15. Abraham did not have what we have. What was his anchor? How did Abraham use the anchor for his soul? What can we learn from Abraham? What can be our outlook in facing not only obstacles but our sin struggle (John 17:1-26)?

Praise to Jesus - Praise God that your savior has entered into the heavenly realms and has secured through His life, death, and resurrection your place in the presence of God; that by His Spirit, even now, you get to experience the loving, lasting, and lavish presence of God truly as you await the ultimate experience of it in glory.

Repentance through Jesus- Repent of the ways we allow circumstances and even sins to dictate how we respond in faith. For example, when things are going well, it is easy to praise and trust God, but when things are not so good, we begin to doubt God's character and his promises for us.

Consecration for Jesus - Our confidence and patience are not rooted in what happens to us, but in what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Rededicate yourself to living your life based on God's promises and not your circumstances or sins.

“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 brings up the topic of hope. Ask your children if they can describe hope. Most of the time when we talk about hope we are talking about wishful thinking. Biblical hope is something different because it has a certainty about it. As we will see in this passage Biblical hope is tied to the faithfulness of God and the completed work of Jesus Christ.

2. In Hebrews 6:13-18, the author mentions the example of Abraham and God’s faithfulness to His promises to Abraham.

- a. Ask your children what they know about the story of Abraham from the book of Genesis.
- b. God’s promise to Abraham can be found in Genesis 12:1-2, 15:1-6, 17:1-8, and 22:15-18. If you have a Jesus Storybook Bible, then you read the two chapters entitled, “Son of Laughter” and “The Present.”
- c. In Hebrews 6:15 we read that Abraham “patiently waited.” Also read Romans 4:18 about Abraham’s hope. The reason we need Biblical hope is that our timing and God’s timing are not the same. We have to learn to wait and trust in God’s faithfulness and His timing. Perhaps share a story with your children about your experience in waiting on God’s timing.
- d. In Hebrews 6:18 we read that the author wants the readers to have “strong encouragement.” Ask your children what “encouragement” means. Then ask them why we as Christians might need “strong encouragement.”

3. In Hebrews 6:19-20, we read of the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul” that Jesus is.

- a. Ask your children what an anchor is and what purpose it serves for a boat.
- b. Then ask them how Jesus is an anchor for our souls.

4. Ask your children what promises God has made for us when we trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior that provides hope for us. Make sure to talk about the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, adoption as God’s children, Christ’s promise to be with us forever, and His promise to return and make all things right again.

- a. Ask your children how those things give us hope for dealing with our present struggles.

Big Idea

If our souls are anchored eternally in heaven and neither our present sins or circumstances can sever this cable of hope in Jesus Christ, then let us confidently and patiently endure today's obstacles and opposition.

Outline

1. The Unchanging Faithfulness of God

2. The Calling to the Church to Hold Fast to Hope

3. The Anchor of Our Soul

Scriptures for further study:

Galatians 3:29

Romans 12:12

Romans 15:4,13

1 Timothy 4:10

Isaiah 40:31

"Gospel Anchor"

Hebrews 6:13-20 ESV

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, **14** saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." **15** And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. **16** For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. **17** So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, **18** so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. **19** We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, **20** where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Historical Context

“First-century Judaism rightly viewed Abraham as a model of faithfulness to the Lord. people swear by somethings greater. Oaths were a substantive part of ancient life, appealing to higher authorities (including deities) to establish the oath’s guarantee.” ESV Archeological Study Bible.

FOR STUDENTS

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

1. What is “sure and steadfast” and an “anchor of the soul” (6:19)?
2. Jesus metaphorically enters into the inner place behind the curtain in the temple, where God is in His “holy of holies” (6:19). Whose forerunner is He (6:20)? What has Jesus now become? How long will He hold this position?
3. In what ways do you see people struggling to trust God and his word today? What about you personally? How does this passage help to reassure you?
4. How are you doing today in terms of waiting patiently on the Lord? What would it look like in the week ahead for you to do this?
5. How does the Melchizedek passage remind you of the importance of noticing every detail in the text? How does it reassure you that the Bible is a divinely authored book?

**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:

Matthew 20:17-19

Genesis 15 & 17

Romans 4:18

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

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

1. The writer of Hebrews presents to us the example of Abraham, mainly because Abraham was a great model of faith. In this way, the writer is encouraging his audience not to rely on the Levitical system of worship, but rather, like Abraham, to rely on God through faith. What are you relying on? Your religion? Your goodness? Are you trusting in anything other than Christ for your salvation?

2. The writer of Hebrews speaks of the “hope” that we have (verses 18-19). In modern terminology, “hope” just means something like wishful thinking. But in biblical usage, hope generally means a firm trust or faith in God. Yet, in the New Testament in particular, “hope” refers to future realities/blessings promised by God which we are certain will come to pass. For example, we hope of: God’s salvation (1 Thess.5:8); God’s glory (Rom.5:2; Col.1:27); resurrection (Acts 23:6; 24:15; 1 Thess.4:13); the redemption of our bodies (Rom.8:23); righteousness (Gal.5:5); eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7); the glorious appearing of Jesus (Titus 2:13); and the hope that shall become like him when he does appear (1 John 3:2-3). Do you have this kind of hope for your future?

3. The audience being addressed in the Book of Hebrews is undergoing a time of trouble or testing. This is often true of our own experience as well. If you are experiencing trials, or you are in the middle of some challenges right now, what are you putting your hope in? In what are you anchoring yourself? The writer of Hebrews makes clear that only hope in God can serve as a true anchor for the soul (verse 19). This alone makes us firm and secure. Our hope is grounded in God’s promises to us, and these promises in turn are grounded in God himself (his unchangeable character). Moreover, we put our hope in Christ Jesus our Savior (verses 19-20). Again, we might ask, do you have hope? And if so, what are you basing it on?

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

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



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 through the Book of Hebrews. 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***

April 10, 2022
Hebrews 6:13-20 ESV