

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. Do you feel powerless in your Christian life right now? Why? What did God teach you from the sermon about how to combat this powerlessness?

2. Verses 1-6a show how Jesus' ministry as the Great High Priest is better than the priests of the Old Covenant. What did the author mean when he wrote that Jesus is in the true tent and that the Old Covenant priest served a "copy and shadow of the heavenly things"? How do we look to earthly shadows today?

3. Verse 6b speaks of the "better promises" of the New Covenant. What are those better promises that are listed in verses 8-13 that quotes from Jeremiah 31:31-34? Which of these promises means the most to you right now in your faith journey?

4. What did God bring to your mind when Pastor Ken asked you to consider who or what you look to for your salvation or where you look when life gets difficult?

Gospel Application

1. To what or to whom do I look for my salvation? Where do I turn when life gets difficult? To what do I turn to prove that I am enough?

2. Let us look to Jesus, who is the Great High Priest of the Better Covenant.

“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. Since this passage deals once again with the role of the High Priest, then ask your children what the role of the High Priest is from the Bible. Make sure to talk about how the High Priest would be the one to offer the sacrifice for the Day of Atonement where the Israelites came for forgiveness.
2. In verse 5 we read how the Old Covenant priests served “a copy and a shadow of heavenly things.”
 - a. Ask your children what a shadow is. Perhaps you can get a flashlight and make a shadow.
 - b. Ask your children if they would rather play with the shadow of their friend or play with their friend. Or ask if they would rather eat the shadow of a piece of cake or a piece of cake itself.
 - c. Ask your children if they know what the author meant the Old Covenant sacrifices and tent, or tabernacle or temple were a shadow of the real things that came with Jesus and the New Covenant. Make sure to discuss how the Old Covenant worship pointed forward to Jesus and the New Covenant. Also talk about how the Old Covenant was based on the heavenly patterns (Hebrews 8:5) shown to Moses by God (see Exodus 25:40).
3. Verses 8-13 are a quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34 and show the “better promises” of the New Covenant. Ask your children to identify the better promises listed in these verses. Make sure to talk about how God’s law will be written on our hearts, how we will be God’s people, how we will know the Lord personally, and how we will have forgiveness from our sins.
4. Ask your children what they learned about the greatness of Jesus from this passage and how this will help them persevere this week. Take time to pray for your family to look to Jesus this week.

Scriptures for further study:

Philippians 3:7-11

Big Idea

Because of the greatness of Jesus and His better covenant, we can have a new life of Spirit-filled power through faith in Jesus that enables us to persevere in this broken world.

Sermon Outline

1. The Better Ministry of the Better Covenant (8:1-6a)

2. The Better Promises of the Better Covenant (8:6a-13)

"The Better Covenant"

Hebrews 8:1-13 ESV

1 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, **2** a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. **3** For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. **4** Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. **5** They serve as a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. **7** For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. **8** For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, **9** not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. **10** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **11** And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. **12** For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." **13** In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

FOR STUDENTS

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

1. What was every high priest appointed to do (8:3)? What do the priests on earth offer and whom do they serve (8:4-5a)? Why was Moses asked to make things for the sanctuary as he was "instructed...on the mountain" (8:5b) ? (Hebrews 8:5b is a quote from Exodus 25:40) .

2. What covenant did Moses represent (Heb 8:6a)? What covenant does Jesus' ministry embody (8:6b)? What are the "better promises" mentioned in Hebrews 8:7? (See Heb 7:15-22) .

3. In what ways do you struggle with keeping God's law only on an external basis? How does this passage help you?

4. How does this new covenant actually make us (perhaps unexpectedly) better law-keepers? What does this say about the role of grace in our lives?

5. How does God's persistent pursuit of his wayward people encourage you today?

**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 Corinthians 3

Romans 8: 3-4, 11, 14-17

2 Corinthians 5:14-17

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

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

1. To say, in verse 1, that Jesus Christ “sat down,” suggests the finality of what he did to secure our salvation. But this does not mean that he is now at rest. Verse 2 states that Christ continues to be active in serving us. He not only brings our heartfelt gifts of worship, praise, repentance, and thanksgiving to the Father, he constantly prays for us and serves to meet our ongoing needs. Praise him for what he has already done for you but praise him for all the ways he continues to serve you faithfully!

2. In the Old Testament, God’s law was originally given to the people on written tablets. The law itself was good, but people did not have the necessary power to obey the law. A heart transplant was needed. This God provided in the new covenant. Now, his law is written on our minds and on our hearts, meaning God has given us a new ability (and desire) to live as we ought. This power is available to you also when you ask God to give you a new heart.

3. See verse 10: “I will be their God, and they will be my people.” See also verse 11: “They will all know me.” Do you have this kind of personal relationship with God? Has he become your God, and are you one of his own people? In fact, the Bible elsewhere speaks of God’s desire for you to know him in the most intimate terms as your Father, and you as his son or daughter. We call this adoption. And this kind of deeply personal relationship with the God of the universe is offered to you through Jesus Christ.

4. Do you struggle with the idea that God could ever forgive you for the things you have done? This passage promises (verse 14) that God will forgive our wickedness and remember our sins no more. He not only forgets our sins, but it is impossible for him to remember our sins any longer. Jesus Christ offers this to you. It cost him everything, even his own blood, to provide this gift of forgiveness. But it costs you nothing to receive it and causes you to gain everything. This is the best deal you can find anywhere! But the Bible says you must first repent and then truly believe in Christ.

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 24, 2022
Hebrews 8:1-13 ESV