

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. Don't you want to worship God in a way that involves full access? Why did Christ have to die? How did Christ's death change your standing with God?

2. How is Jesus' blood-bought sacrifice working both backwards and forwards?

3. Why does it matter that Christ is now presently at the right hand of the Father interceding for us?

4. What aspects of your "inheritance" in Christ are you most looking forward to? How are some of those blessings present in your life already? How would looking forward to the second coming affect your life in the present?

Praise to Jesus - Praise God that he is favorable toward us because of Jesus' once and for all sacrifice. Give thanks Jesus is our mediator, better sacrifice, and perfect representative before a holy God.

Repentance through Jesus - Repent of the times that you have looked to justify sin or explain away your sin instead of looking to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus to cleanse you.

Consecration for Jesus - Consecrate yourself to embrace the knowledge that Christ's blood gives us better hope that he "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (v 28).

“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 important, yet serious subjects. You may want to pray with your family before you start. This passage deals with the consequences of our sin and how God forgives our sin. Ask your children if they know what it means that sin has consequences. Perhaps talk about a time when you had to punish them.

- a. Ask them if they know what holiness means and what it means that God is holy. Ask them why a holy God has to punish sin.
- b. Read Hebrews 9:22. Talk about how God is saying that the consequence of sin is His righteous judgment. But God has offered a way of forgiveness. In the Old Covenant it was the shedding of animal blood, but in the New Covenant it was the shedding of the blood of Jesus.

2. The author of Hebrews once again compares the Old Covenant High Priest with Jesus the Great High Priest. Look at Hebrews 9:25-26 and ask your children what difference is brought up about the Old Covenant sacrifices offered by the High Priests and the New Covenant sacrifice.

3. Read Hebrews 9:27 and ask your children what it means that we will face God’s judgment. Talk with your children about the concept of justice. Then talk with them about how we will all have to face God about our sins. This passage and the Bible teach us that either we will bear the punishment for our sins or Jesus does when we trust Him as our Lord and Savior.

4. Hebrews 9:28 is a verse of hope. Ask your children what in the verse provides hope. Make sure to talk about Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself for our sins. Also talk with them about the hope of Jesus’ return when He will gather all believers in Him and then we will get to be with Him forever.

After all, one’s last will and testament (by analogy to a covenant) are only established on the basis of death (9:16–17). It follows, therefore, that the first covenant was inaugurated with the blood (the death) of sacrificial victims (9:18). The author supports this by appealing to Exodus 24:8 where Moses established the covenant with Israel, sprinkling blood on the book of the covenant and on the people (9:19–20). Moses proclaims, “This is the blood of the covenant” (9:20), demonstrating that the covenant depends on the sprinkling of blood. Indeed, virtually every cultic object, along with the tabernacle, was sprinkled with blood (9:21), showing that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (9:22).

*Thomas R. Schreiner, *Hebrews*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Thomas R. Schreiner, and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021), 274.

Big Idea

Because Jesus Christ’s sacrifice is clearly superior, let His blood-bought righteousness be the all-access representation before a holy God, sharing in His promised eternal inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

Outline

1. Cancelled Debt

2. Blood-bought Representation

3. New Covenant Benefits that bring future glory

"Unrestricted Access"

Hebrews 9:15-28 ESV

15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. **16** For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. **17** For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. **18** Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. **19** For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **20** saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." **21** And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. **22** Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. **23** Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. **25** Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, **26** for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. **27** And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, **28** so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Historical Context

Christ's sacrifice is far better than Old Testament sacrifices, for worshipers were not cleansed from their sins, and free access to God was not granted when the tabernacle and temple system were still valid (9:1-10). Christ, on the other hand, entered the true tabernacle, God's presence in heaven, cleansing with his blood the conscience of those belonging to him (9:11-14). Because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice, he is the mediator of the new covenant, so that those who are called may enjoy the promise of an eternal inheritance (9:15). The author then explains why death was necessary under the old covenant (9:15)

FOR STUDENTS

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

1. Who is the mediator of the new covenant (Heb 9:13-15)? Whose death is in picture in Hebrews 9:15-17, and what is its effect?
2. We have a future inheritance and a current one. If eternal life begins now, what is our future inheritance? Must we work for it or toward it?
3. Why did Christ have to die? How did Christ's death change your standing with God?
4. What aspects of your "inheritance" in Christ are you most looking forward to? How are some of those blessings present in your life already?
5. In what ways might you have underplayed the seriousness of your sin, or the seriousness of God's holiness?
6. How would looking forward to the second coming affect your life in the present?

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

Scriptures for further study:

Exodus 24

Romans 8:34

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

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

1. Sometimes people think sin is no big deal. But when we consider the fact that dealing with sin required God needing to send his one and only Son to die for our sins, we realize sin must be a very big deal indeed! But we also realize that his love for us must likewise be very great indeed! What does Jesus' sacrifice reveal about the heart of God towards you?

2.. Verse 15 says that Christ ransomed us to set us free from our sins. To ransom something is to pay a debt or to purchase someone who is enslaved. This is what Jesus did for us. Only he bought us or purchased us at the cost of his own blood so that we might be truly free. What is the most expensive payment anyone has ever made on your behalf? Can anything compare with this greatest payment of all?

3. If you thought you needed to marry your spouse every year, every month or every week in order to be married, it would mean you hadn't really understood what the wedding ceremony was about in the first place. What does it tell us about Christ's sacrifice that it was something that only happened once for all? (Wright)

4. What are some of the more common ways people face (or refuse to face!) their own mortality? (MacArthur)

5. Some people think that when you die, you get a second chance to be saved or get right with God. But how does verse 27 dispel that notion? And are you prepared to face the judgment that comes to all of us after we die? (2 Corinthians 5:10) You can face that judgment with confidence if you believe in Christ and you have received the verdict of "innocent" and "righteous" based on the love and sacrifice of Jesus 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.

6. This passage speaks in part about the salvation Christ has already accomplished for us. The passage also speaks about the salvation that is yet to come. He will bring salvation to those who are waiting for him (verse 28). He will grant us the promised eternal inheritance (verse 15). By his blood, he has purified the heavenly sanctuary and now welcomes sinners into his glory (verse 24). Our salvation is comprehensive. It is not just what he has done for us already, it is also a matter of what he will do for us in the life to come. May all of us come to know this hope and have this great blessing and assurance of life!

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***

May 8, 2022
Hebrews 9:15-28 ESV