

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. Are there folks in your life whose phone call or text you make every effort to answer? What has earned them immediate access to you? What motivates you or compels you to respond to that those folks? For example: If one of the people has a supervisor role in your life, what is it about that relationship which merits an "all-access-pass" to you?

2. Read verses 19-21. Why does acceptance matter? Think about a time in the past when the reality of acceptance and access to the Father was really clear to you. When are the times that you need access and acceptance to the Father? What are the barriers to living in the relational reality of verses 19-21?

3. Read verses 23-24. According to investopia.com, "Consumerism is a theory that individuals who consume large quantities of goods and services will be better off." Is there a connection between consumerism and a cultural mindset about church? For folks attending church, in what ways can consumerism influence a Sunday worship service in terms of how a service is structured or how folks attending the service might think about a worship service? How do you think about a worship service? Is your participation in worship passive? Pastor Bill challenged the congregation in referring to another pastor who said, "When we leave worship, we should first ask, not what did I get out of it? But how did I do my work in honoring the Lord." How might you approach worship differently in light of this?

4. Read verse 23. Pastor Bill reminded the congregation that Christians live in a culture in which Christians who live their lives according to the Bible will suffer a cost. In the meantime, how can you practice steadfast hope without wavering? Where are the places in the kingdom of God (work, civic clubs, sports teams, neighborhood etc.) where you have been specifically placed to proclaim your hope? Or are your present circumstances such that your practice of proclaiming a confession to steadfast hope begins between your head and your heart. What is needed to see these moments as opportunities to proclaim hope with confidence in the faithfulness of Jesus?

5. Read verse 24. Who are the encouragers in your life? How do they encourage you? What are the opportunities available to you to care for the needs of folks within our church? In our church, do you have a place where you connect with others in such a way that you know their needs? What are the barriers preventing you from building deeper, need-sharing, relationships within our church?

Praise to Jesus - Pause today to praise the Lord for his grace. Praise the Father! His love for his people is so real that he wants us to know him very well. He is that loving! Praise Jesus for his sacrificial work on our behalf which has given us great assurance and full acceptance. Praise the Lord for our church family who are committed to motivating one another to love and good deeds.

Repentance through Jesus - Take this time to think about the daily rhythms of your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to confess and repent through Jesus Christ of any ways that you find that you are too busy to fully attend worship and to actively participate in the life of the church.

Consecration for Jesus - Because of the grace of God in the work of Christ, we are motivated to faith, hope and love. Let us consecrate ourselves to Jesus for active participation in Sunday worship and to the confession with assurance of our hope in Christ to the people in the places where the Lord has today. Let's seek specifically to know folks in our church family in such a way that we share in spurring one another on to love and good deeds.

"God lavished his grace on his people for many wonderful purposes. Here the Lord assures us of our acceptance through Christ that leads us to know and worship God; to persevere in believing the gospel, even in difficult times; and to show practical care for one another." - Gospel Transformation Study Bible

"The word *busy* is the symptom not of commitment but of betrayal. It is not devotion but defection. The adjective *busy* set as a modifier to *pastor* should sound to our ears like *adulterous* to characterize a wife or *embezzling* to describe a banker." -Eugene Peterson

"Here is a summons to a life of community. It mandates that we take a lively interest in the affairs of other believers. This means that no Christian can be an individualist. We are our brothers' keeper. This alone provides excellent reason to come to church and other Christian gatherings: that we may be of benefits to others simply by being present."
- Richard Phillips

"The listeners are to motivate one another to love that is expressed in good deeds. These tangible expressions of care had distinguished the congregation in the past. Such a concern for the welfare of one another was all the more urgent in a community exposed to testing and disappointment."
- Peter O'Brien

"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)

Scriptures for further study:

Acts 2:42-47

1. This passage draws our attention to three applications of the gospel of Jesus. The author wants us to understand what it means for us to have Jesus as the Great High Priest.

a. Hebrews 10:19-21 seeks to remind us of what Jesus has won for us with His sacrificial death. Ask your children what they learn about the person and work of Jesus from these verses. If your children are younger you may need to walk them through each verse.

2. Verse 22 is the first application. Ask your children if they know what the difference is between being near someone and being far away. Then ask your children what it means to draw near to God.

a. What does this verse teach us is the reason we are able to draw near to God? Talk with your children about how sin separates us from God because He is holy and perfect.

b. This verse reminds us of the amazing privilege we have to be able to worship God. Talk with your children about the impact that worship has on you.

3. Verse 23 tells us to "hold fast the confession of our hope". Ask your children if they know what it means to hold something fast. Perhaps you can show them the difference by asking them to try to take something from your hand that you hold tightly versus when you hold it loosely.

a. Talk with your children about how the author urges us to persevere in our faith in this verse because God is faithful.

b. Ask your children if they can describe what it means that God is faithful. Talk with them about how God never lies and that we can trust His Word and His promises.

4. Verses 24-25 tells us of the importance of our Christian fellowship.

Remind your children that this book was written to Christians facing persecution and difficulty. Talk with them about how God blesses us with a church family to encourage each other as we face tough things in life.

a. Ask your children if they know what it means "to stir up one another to love and good works". Then ask how we can do that this week with our family and with our church friends.

b. Verse 25 reminds us that we cannot encourage one another from far away. Instead, we need to regularly meet with our fellow church family. Ask your children some of their favorite things about going to the church.

Big Idea

Our access to and acceptance by the Father through the Son propels us to a life of unwavering worship by the Spirit in the context of community.

Outline

1. Access and Acceptance

Application – Why does access and acceptance matter?

2. Unwavering Worship

Corporate worship, (Hebrews 10:22) Let us...

Application – So what does this mean for us?

Convictions, (Hebrews 10:23) Let us...

Love & Good Works, (Hebrews 10:24) Let us...

3. Covenant Community

"A handful of times a year all Israelites were commanded to gather together before the Lord at his tabernacle, for the festivals of the Passover, firstfruits, and so on (Lev. 23)... In other words, for Israel, corporate worship was a special, few-times-a-year occasion. Worship, understood as exclusive devotion to the Lord, was something that Israelites were called to practice around the clock (Deut. 6:13–15). But in the sense of having intimate access to God's presence, worship was restricted to specific people, places, and times." - Bobby Jamieson

"We possess what the Old Testament saints did not, namely, the right to enter through the holy place and into the presence of God. Jesus has opened it by his life and death, so that we have free access to God through him."
- Richard Phillips

"The word *busy* is the symptom not of commitment but of betrayal. It is not devotion but defection. The adjective *busy* set as a modifier to *pastor* should sound to our ears like *adulterous* to characterize a wife or *embezzling* to describe a banker."
- Eugene Peterson

"Gospel Confidence"

Hebrews 10:19-25 ESV

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Historical Context

The author of Hebrews is very familiar with the themes, events, and dwellings of the Old Testament. When he speaks of entering the Holy Places, he has in mind both the tabernacle and the temple and in particular the sanctuary, which is where the priests would serve in worship. There was a holy place within the sanctuary called the Most Holy Place, or what some refer to as the Holy of Holies. This is the place where only the high priest could enter and only once a year. These places were holy because God's presence was there. When the author of Hebrews speaks of entering holy places, he is speaking about entering the presence of God.

"God calls us to enjoy continual consciousness of his supreme greatness and beauty and worth." - John Piper

"The word 'confession' here means a public and doctrinal confession." - Richard Phillips

"The central message of biblical Christianity is the possibility of men and women approaching God through the work of Christ." - Frances Schaeffer

"Redemption is the means; worship is the goal." - John Frame

FOR STUDENTS

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

1. How are you doing today with your confidence and assurance about drawing near to our holy God? How has this passage helped you?
2. How important have doctrine and theology been in your life? Are there areas in which you feel that you are wavering about what you believe? How does this passage help?
3. How does this passage help you know how to better help people caught by sin?
4. What are the three things we need to do when approaching God (10:22)? Do these things apply to us today?
5. What should we have confidence to do now that Christ has obtained victory over death and evil (Heb 10:19)?

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:

Hebrews 3 4

Matthew 25:1-13

Deuteronomy 6:13-15

Leviticus 23

Exodus 3:12

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

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

1. Carefully consider verses 19-23. These verses not only declare what Christ Jesus has accomplished through his loving sacrifice, they also describe all the results for those who believe in him: confidence in your relationship with God, closeness to him, full assurance of salvation, no more penalty of sin or guilty conscience before God, a new condition of heart, and hope for our future. Is there any reason not to trust in Christ and receive these incredible gifts?!

2. Our relationship with God is first of all personal. But the Bible insists that the only way to grow in that personal relationship is for you and me to be in relationship with other Christians. For one thing, verses 24-25 teach that meeting together in the church is necessary in order to be encouraged and spurred on in the faith. Are you meeting together regularly with other believers? If you are involved in church, do not let yourself fall into the bad habit of neglecting church involvement. And church community is all the more important when we are going through tough times, as many of these Hebrews were. In short, church is not optional. It is vitally important!

3. Nobody likes to think about God being angry with anyone. But the Bible is unmistakably clear—and this passage, verses 26-31, is as sobering as any—that God does judge and punish men for sin. This passage is not a warning to believers that we can never sin again after our baptism, or else... Rather, it speaks of those who refuse to repent, who renounce the gospel, who willfully stand opposed to God's will, and who spurn all attempt at reformation or renewal. In light of this kind of sin, the better question is not, "How can God judge people?" but rather, "What kind of God would he be if he didn't judge people who have determined to live their lives in direct opposition to him and his will?"

4. Maybe you and I have not faced the kind of persecution, insult, loss of property, etc., that made the Hebrews tempted to declare that the Christian life just wasn't worth it. But have you ever been tempted to question your faith? What can help us resist such temptation?

5. Make no mistake: Christianity was never intended to be easy. In fact, Jesus told us it would be costly to follow him. But we should also take comfort in the even more important truth that he will reward us one day, for the ways we have stood strong in our faith and stood with other believers in their trials and sufferings. Read verses 34-36 again. By the grace of God, hang in there. Be encouraged to know that the hardships of today will give way to the blessings and rewards of tomorrow. Believe it!

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***

May 22, 2022
Hebrews 10:19-25 ESV