

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. Children in grade school are taught that a preposition can be understood as the word used to describe how a squirrel navigates a log. What words would you use to describe how a squirrel might get to the other side of a log? How might some of these apply to how one relates to God?

2. List and describe the false ways that people relate to God. Do you find that one of those ways describes your one relationship with the Lord? How or in what circumstances?

3. What is meant by the phrase God "with God"? What difference does it make for a Christian to understand what it means for a God to be with us? Does this describe the way you see your relationship with God? What needs to change in your life for you to live with God?

4. A life lived with God is often seen in the way that a Christian lives life with others. Frances Schaeffer said, "A Christian's first call is to ... return to the first commandment to love God, to love the brotherhood, and then to love one's neighbor as himself."

Richard Phillips said, "We are to show love as an essential part of our witness, but more importantly because God is love and we are called to Godlikeness in the world. The apostle John puts this in challenging terms, writing in his first epistle: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:7-8). Loving others is an outflowing of our relationship with God, and it is how we show gratitude for his love to us." How many folks in our church family can describe the inside of your home? Who are those folks? Other your family who has had supper at your table recently? Does anything need to change there?

Praise to Jesus - From the passage consider the benefits of our "with God life". We have a love that exceeds familiarity. A love that does not consider appearances. A love that finds worth in a criminal. A love that sees a stranger as a potential family member. This is the love that Jesus has for us! If we are honest, there are times when we have not been attractive, when we have been strangers longing to be included, when we have been imprisoned for sins and life-circumstances, and we have not been treated well due to nothing other than who we are Christians with God. In these things Jesus pursued us. Give praise to Jesus today and through-out the week for these incredible gifts!

Repentance through Jesus - Meditate on the passage. As the contributor to this article typed out the "praise to Jesus" section, he is immediately convicted by the Holy Spirit working through the message of the need to repent through Jesus! And that is just from verses 1-3. How about you? If so, respond to the message. Ask for forgiveness and repent. The gospel of Mark is full of stories about how Jesus loved and lived in the way described in versus 1-3. Through his blood, his righteousness, his "right-work" can be ours too! Now tackle, verses 4-8! If you are married, spend time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to lead you to consider the state of "the marriage bed"? Discuss this with your spouse. How is your contentment meter measuring? What is your first love? Do you fear God or fear man? As the Lord leads you to see any sin in these areas confess them to Him and repent. These are incredibly significant indicators of spiritual health. Considering this passage, if your soul "check engine" light is on, consider reaching out to a pastor at FPC to get help with that trouble. This is the wonderful benefit of the "with God" life.

Consecration to Jesus - Some of the implications gleaned from Richard Phillips about the passage are that Jesus is the same and his mission for us is the same. For Jesus be consecrated for Jesus to offer hospitality, to live by Jesus' standard described in Luke 9:23 "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." The cross is the same today as well and so is Jesus' blessing "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28) In light the unchanging nature of Jesus and of the cross, be consecrated for Jesus to come to him, and to bring as many heavy-laden people as you can with you to the cross to find rest. Be consecrated for Jesus to walk in purity and display his love in all the ways that Jesus did.

The dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare.... There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.... It is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit-immortal horrors or everlasting splendours." C. S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory

"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 many topics concerning living out our faith in Jesus. Make sure to point out that as Christians we can only live out the verses in our passage through our faith in Christ as our Great High Priest. or as Hebrews 12:2 says, "looking to Jesus". Make sure that your family discussion of today's passage does not turn into a conversation about how we can live as Christians on our own power or by trying harder.

2. Verse 1 mentions "brotherly love". Ask your children if they know what that means. This is a reminder that all Christians are adopted into God's family therefore we are all brothers and sisters in Christ with our fellow believers. In some ways this verse is further explained by the rest of our passage this week.
a. Ask your children how they can love people at our church this week.

3. In verse 2 we read of hospitality. Ask your children if they know what hospitality means.
a. Ask your children why verse 2 says "Do not neglect to show hospitality" (ESV) or "Do not forget" (NIV). Remind your children that the context for the epistle to the Hebrews was that they were facing tough times and persecution. Therefore, it would be easy to forget or to neglect hospitality.

4.. Verse 3 tells us to "Remember those who are in prison" since they knew people who were put in prison for being Christians. Ask your children what it might look like to remember those in prison.

5. In verse 5 we read about the "love of money". Ask your children what that might mean. Then ask why the author would remind us that God will never leave us or forsake us in a verse about the love of money.
a. Ask your children what it means to "be content with what you have".

6. Ask your children how you all can "remember your [church] leaders" this week

7. In verse 8 we read that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever". Ask your children how this truth encourages them this week. Be prepared to share your own answer to that.

Scriptures for further study:

John 15:12

John 13:35

Matthew 25:30

1 John 4:7-8

Big Idea

There are numerous false ways of relating to God, but the Biblical picture is of life lived in communion with a God who promises to always be with us.

Outline

1. Overview of the text

2. False Ways of Relating to God

a. Life Under God

b. Life Over God

c. Life From God

d. Life For God

3. God With Us

4. Application

"Never Will I Leave You"

Scriptures for further study:

Ephesians 4:22

1 Corinthians 9:24

Hebrews 6:18

Luke 24:26

Philippians 2:8

Isaiah 53:11

Hebrews 1:3

Hebrews 13:1-8 ESV

1 Let brotherly love continue. **2** Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. **3** Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. **4** Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. **5** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." **6** So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" **7** Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. **8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Historical Context

"When Jesus Christ readied to leave his disciples on the night of his arrest, he gave them one clear command to guide them in days ahead. "This is my commandment," he said, "that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). We have come to a similar point in the Book of Hebrews. This letter was sent to a body of Jewish believers who were tempted to revert from Christianity back to Judaism in order to escape persecution. The great refrain of Hebrews is both a warning against apostasy, against a falling away from the faith, and an exhortation to hold fast to Christ for salvation. Five times this warning is given in one form or another, including the one at the end of chapter 12 referring to the voice of God in the gospel: "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking" (v. 25). Now, not unlike Jesus on the night of his departure from the twelve disciples, the writer of Hebrews prepares to leave his readers, and in this last chapter he gives his final words of exhortation. It is no surprise, therefore, that he begins in the same manner as Jesus did, exhorting them in verse 1: "Let brotherly love continue." Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 7425-7432).

FOR STUDENTS

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

1. How does this passage help you rethink hospitality? What are some practical steps you can take to do hospitality better?
2. Read Genesis 18:1-19:29. What light does this passage shed on what it means to "entertain angels without knowing it" (Heb 13:2)?
3. In what way does God ask us to "remember the prisoners" (13: 3)? How does this represent "brotherly love"? How can you bear the burdens of those in prison?
4. What are some practical steps that can be taken to protect a person's marriage?
5. Why do you think money is such a key litmus test for our faith? How's your heart doing in regard to your love for money? What can you do to fight this idol?
6. What can we confidently say when we are content (13:6)? Hebrews 13:6 is a paraphrase of Psalm 118:6, combined with a line from Psalm 56:4. How can you live what Hebrews 13:6 teaches?
7. What is the "outcome" of a Christ-centered leader's way of life (Heb 13:7)? Why should we imitate our Christ-focused leaders?

**Selected questions borrowed and adapted from Hebrews: How Jesus speaks into everything by John D. Barry*

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

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

1. Some people see their faith as just one part of their lives. But note in this passage how truly all-encompassing is our faith, impacting every aspect of our lives. Write down, according to this passage, the numerous areas of life the gospel impacts.

2. Our text speaks of the ways Christians should live and conduct themselves. Inevitably, we Christians often fall short of these standards. One commentator observes: "Many unbelievers claim they are not interested in Christianity because of the hypocritical behavior of believers. In your opinion, to what extent is this a valid excuse or simply a smokescreen?"

3. What does this passage teach about God's presence? How does this certainty of God's presence encourage you personally right now?

4. The Book of Hebrews has made clear that we are saved solely by the work of Jesus Christ, our high priest. And yet, as those who now believe in him, we are called to a life of spiritual growth and sanctification in him. In what areas do you currently see yourself growing? In what areas do you need to ask God to give you more grace to progress?

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***

June 19, 2022
Hebrews 13:1-8 ESV