



DISCIPLE
TEAM

DISCIPLE SERIES

E-3 "Hebrews"

Monday Overview:

As I am writing this on a late December day, snow covers everything in a sparkly majesty. The past week has been overcast, and drab, but the sun just came out. You know that moment when the clouds part, and days of greyness vanish in blue pools of sky? Well that moment is happening right now. That's exactly the way reading Hebrews 1 feels to me. The author is overwhelmed with just who Jesus really is. Line upon line about Jesus' awesomeness spill out of him. You can feel the awe that the author feels at being alive in the generation that got to see God's Son on earth. He gets more excited. Jesus is the Son of God, the heir of all things, co-Creator of the universe, the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of His nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. The glory keeps piling up!

Bible Reading:

- Hebrews 1:1-14

Now What?

Here are some of the things that blew my mind: Jesus is God and He made you and me. He became a human being. That's crazy!!! Not only did he make the world, but He took on a human nature and lived in the world that He made. He then died to redeem it, and rose again to rule it. Nothing about Jesus is tame. Another thought that blew my mind was that he upholds the universe by the word of his power. Right now, I can type this because Jesus' word of power is keeping the power button of the universe on. We exist right now because He says so. Thinking about these things makes me realize that I need to constantly remember just who Jesus is. Really, there is so much going on in these statements that it makes my mind boggle. Sometimes we just need to be blown away by who Jesus is in order to remember who we are talking to.

The 4 Q's

1. Who is Jesus contrasted with in 1:1-2?
2. Who is Jesus contrasted with in 1:5-15?
3. Who is being talked about in 1:8-12?
4. How can Jesus blowing your mind change your daily perspective?

Things To Pray For:

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

Tuesday Overview:

Some days, doesn't it feel awesome to just sit down? Jesus sits in Heaven. Sitting is not only comfortable; it means your work is done! The burden of Hebrews explains the priestly work of Christ. The author wrote this letter to Jewish Christians, and wanted to impress upon them that Jesus was the original to Old Testament copies. In other words, the sacrificial system and priesthood that they had grown up with were a foreshadowing of Jesus. In every way, Jesus had established a more lasting, and superior covenant, to which the Mosaic covenant was only a lead-in. For us today, learning about the priestly work of Christ as part of the Ascension (rising to heaven) is of utmost importance because we need it just as much as anyone! Just get prepared for thinking about this to blow your mind.

Bible Reading:

- Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16; 9:24-28; 10:11-15

Now What?

These first two chunks emphasize Jesus' likeness to us. Not only does Jesus have a human nature like ours (yet without sin!), but He has experienced temptation just like us. A priest's job is to mediate between God and us, and Jesus knows how to sympathize with us in our times of deepest need. He knows how to pray for us, and how to help us through temptation because He's been there.

There are two upshots to this for our lives: 1) we know where to look for help in temptation, and 2) we know where to go for mercy and grace in time of need. Just the fact of knowing that Jesus has walked in our shoes can really help us get through a tough tempting. Jesus made it to the other side, and we can too. If we are hard pressed, or when we fail, He's there for us too. He'll take away our sin, and get us back up on our feet. Let's draw near!

The 4 Q's

1. How does it feel to know that Jesus has been there?
2. What does "draw near" mean for your life today?
3. What does Hebrews have to say about the confidence we should have in Jesus' high priestly work?
4. Why is Christ sitting as the high priest? Why did he only have to make offering once?

Things To Pray For:

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

Wednesday Overview:

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 begin to unfold why Jesus' priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood. In Chapter 7, based on priestly order. By the power of an indestructible life, a.k.a. His priesthood will never be interrupted by death. Jesus is the guarantor of a better covenant. Jesus has no need to cover His own sins. Jesus had no need to offer sacrifice more than once (on the cross), because His first was perfect. In Chapter 8, Jesus' intercession takes place in the heavenly tent, of which the earthly temple was just a copy. In Chapter 9, Jesus entered once for all (9:11) into the holy places, by His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Bible Reading:

- Hebrews 9:1-28

Now What?

Let's end this time with two final chunks; 9:24-28 is a good summary of Jesus' high priestly work. Read this, and then think about what it has to say. The connection to the Ascension is essential: Jesus was seated at God's right hand not only as triumphant king, but also as successful high priest. His death on the cross took away all sin forever for those who believe in Him! Hallelujah! Now we know where to go for a high priest who ever lives to intercede for us.

The 4 Q's

1. How does this connect to what you already know?
2. What new stuff did you learn?
3. What background knowledge would be helpful to better understand this?
4. What does it mean for your life that Jesus is your High Priest? Reflect on the hope this gives your life.

Things To Pray For:

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

Thursday Overview:

You know that feeling when you've really blown it, and you feel distant from God. There is good news in this passage that can lift your spirits into heaven itself. When I read Hebrews 10:14, I want to stand up and cheer! Jesus paid it all! "Once for all" is not only right theology, but also good news because we know that His perfect sacrifice took care of God's wrath against our sin forever! When I sin against God, I feel helpless, and like I need to do something to earn back God's favor. But I can't. I simply need to confess my sin to God, and remember that Christ has already paid for it on the cross. I then am free to enjoy the full fellowship of God's love. 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." My love for God only grows when I experience this joy in Jesus' victory over my sin.

Bible Reading:

- Hebrews 10:11-25

Now What?

Not only do we have this beautiful truth to base our confidence in God on, but we have a command at the same time to draw near to God! When I read this commandment, I can't help but feel in it a clarification that God really does want me to draw near—to experience the bliss of "full assurance of faith," and to know that a real change has occurred in my life. I have been sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and I have been washed with pure water. The result is that I hold fast to the hope that I have in Jesus. This affects my relationships by leading me to affirm this hope in my brothers and sisters, especially by meeting together with them at church.

Activity:

Think of ways that we can "stir one another to love and good works" make a list.

The 4 Q's

1. Why is it good news that Jesus covered sins "once for all?"
2. Why are we encouraged to not neglect to meet with each other?
3. What does it mean that God has written his law on our hearts?
4. Why is it good news that our hearts have been sprinkled clean from an evil conscience?

Stir Others...

Things To Pray For:

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

Friday Overview:

I ran cross country in high school and college. Each race was a different experience. Sometimes you'd have a fast start, and sometimes you'd get stuck behind a huge mass. What didn't change was that there was usually a point in the race when you would really need encouragement to keep pushing yourself. You'd feel your strength slipping away and then someone would cheer you on, and you'd feel a surge go through you. As you approached the last 100 meters, sometimes you'd hear someone shout your name and you'd kick past a couple of people right at the end! Chapter 12:1-17 describes life as a race in which we have that encouragement, strategy, an example in Jesus, and training to give us a successful race. Jesus is the 'role model' who we model our own endurance on. Let's follow him!

Bible Reading:

- Hebrews 12:1-28

Now What?

As I read 12:18-29, I am struck by the awesomeness of the kingdom that God has promised to us. The kingdom we encounter in the Old Testament is one that was marked by fear. In contrast, the kingdom we look forward to is one of joy. In every way we have more to look forward to than those living under the Old Covenant. This comes with a warning however, not to make us return to fear, but as a hard encouragement. We are going to receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken, so we need to live like it! As we live in awareness of the kingdom coming, we have awe and reverence for our God who is a consuming fire. This is a major reality check for us in our daily lives. Our priorities and viewpoints will shift to reflect this reality.

The 4 Q's

1. Take a look at the cloud of witnesses in chapter 11. Which faith story gives you encouragement?
2. How does 12:7-11 change your attitude on discipline?
3. Do we sometimes forget just how big God's promises are?
4. How can Jesus' example as a racer help you in your race?

Things To Pray For:

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

Journal:

The Final Q's

1. What does it mean for your life that Jesus is your High Priest?
2. What does faith look like in terms of encouraging others?
3. How does Hebrews give you a bigger picture of life?

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:14