



2010

Discipleship Framework

Study Guide on Hebrews

Welcome to your study on the book of Hebrews

This is the first study guide produced by People Christian Fellowship (PCF) in relation to the Discipleship Framework. Within this document you will find a daily reading plan. Committing to this is a very important part of your biblical study and will help you in gaining wisdom and understanding of God's word. PCF Wednesday evening prayer meetings are a great place to receive teaching on different aspects of the book as we all learn together. Your discipler will also be studying with you and will challenge you to search the depths of God's word.

Individual Study

Your reading plan is very important; it will help you to develop the spiritual discipline of studying God's word. We suggest that you spend a short time in prayer before and after studying; asking God to open your heart to His truth. By studying His word you will increase your faith, arm yourself for the challenges ahead and gain knowledge and understanding of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit so that you may confidently witness to others. It is recommended that everybody follow the daily study plan to ensure that the whole church is studying the book of Hebrews in unison.

Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting

Spending time in corporate prayer is a vital ingredient for your Spiritual development. As part of the shift to develop the discipleship framework, the prayer meeting bible study section will follow alongside the discipleship study plan. Prayer meeting will be a great opportunity for you to receive comprehensive teaching on a number of key themes found in the book of Hebrews.

Discipleship Meetings

The Christian walk is not merely an experiential moment of spiritual enlightenment, but a journey toward maturation, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. The Church 'is one', purposed for the building up of the saints in preparation for works of service; identified by its unity with Christ and amongst its members (John 17:21). The basic philosophy of the discipleship framework is:

A community of believers growing in Christ, who are accountable and involved in one another's lives.

The framework promotes a level of accountability in relation to the exercise of spiritual disciplines and a degree of involvement which supports wholesome and fruitful relationships. Through the framework the gifts of all believers can be mobilised to advance the Kingdom of God.

The study below should be used only as a rough guide.

During the study section of the meeting disciplers and disciplees should work through the study questions together discussing any revelations, opinions, issues or thoughts that may arise. You do not have to be a bible scholar to conduct or participate in the bible study. Difficult questions that may arise should be noted and brought to the church leadership.

Below is a rough guide formatting a typical disciple meeting.

Action	Explanation
Open in Prayer	Spend a short time in prayer, asking God to be in the midst of your meeting.
Reflection	You may want to start with some general reflection on how the week has been. Do not try to force information out. The amount of information should be determined by the disciplee
Study	The whole church will be studying the same book at the same time. In this section you could start by reflecting on what you have studied in the previous meeting, any homework and/or revelations. Follow the study guide and try to complete as much as you can.
Reflection	Recap what you have learnt and ask if there are specific areas of intended application. Please also share your areas of intended application. Ensure you set a task to be completed by the next meeting.
Pray	Ask your disciplee if there are any areas of their life they would like you like to pray for/about. Please also remember your community within your prayers. You could also ask your disciplee to pray.
Encourage	Before you meet prepare an encouragement for your disciplee. It must be specific. (Preferably scripture based).

The book of Hebrews

Hebrews is a masterful document written to present the sufficiency and superiority of Christ Jews who were evaluating Jesus or who were struggling with the Christian faith. Jesus, the Christ, had come, fulfilling the law, making the perfect sacrifice, and initiating the new covenant. Christ was a better prophet, a better priest, and a better sacrifice. In fact, he was the ultimate “best.” Many Jews had embraced this new way, expressing faith in Christ (“Messiah”) as Saviour and Lord. Yet the familiar Judaism continued to draw them back. Some returned to the old way, and others attempted to combine the old with the new, forming a hybrid of Judaism and Christianity. And so they were missing God's best.

Author

The authorship of Hebrews has been in doubt since its publication. In fact, none of the early writers who refer to this book mention its author. And no one since early times has been able to identify the author. The inclusion of Hebrews into the New Testament canon came from the Eastern Church as early as A.D. 185, mainly because of the traditional belief that Paul had written it.

The main themes in the book of Hebrews include: *Superiority of Christ, High Priest, Sacrifice, Promise, Maturity, Faith, and Endurance.*

Hebrews reveals Jesus' true identity as God in the flesh. Jesus is the ultimate authority. He is greater than any angel or religion. As the divine Son of God, Jesus is superior to any Jewish leader (such as Abraham, Moses, or Joshua). As the perfect man and mediator with God, he is superior to any priest. As one who endured suffering and temptation, but without sin, he knows us thoroughly. Jesus is the complete revelation of God. And he has been exalted to God's right hand (1:3), crowned with glory and honour (2:9).

In the Old Testament, the high priest represented the Jews before God. He would make blood sacrifices to atone for the people's sins before God. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would enter the Most Holy Place in the Temple to make atonement for the sins of the whole nation. The high priest would approach God only once a year, but Christ is always at God's right hand, interceding for us.

Old Testament sacrifices had to be perfect: animals without any injuries or blemishes. These animals were killed on the altar, their blood spilled for the sins of the people. Jesus, the divine Son of God and the perfect Son of Man, died on the cross, shedding his blood to secure the forgiveness for all people. Christ's sacrifice was the ultimate fulfilment of all that the Old Testament sacrifices represented.

God made a holy promise, a covenant, with Abraham. In this covenant, God promised to bless Abraham, to make of Abraham's descendants a great nation, and to bless all the world through him. God also promised to be with his people and to give them rest. Although the people often failed to live up to their side of the covenant, God always kept his: through Abraham came the nation of Israel, and eventually Christ. In addition, God brought his people to the Promised Land, and eventually he will bring them to their eternal rest.

Although God's people are saved from sin and given eternal life when they trust in Christ as Savior, they are given the task of going on and growing in faith. Too often, however, believers remain immature, feeding only on “milk” and not “meat” and arguing over the basics (6:1). Through a living relationship with Christ, however, believers can live blameless lives, be used powerfully by God, and mature in their faith.

The Bible, from beginning to end, is a book about faith. Many believed God and received multiplied blessings on earth. Others believed God and were persecuted, tortured, and martyred for their faith. God expects his people to come to him in faith and to live by faith, regardless of the circumstances or outcomes. Faith is confident trust in God and his promises. God's greatest promise is that people can be saved from sin and have eternal life through Christ.

It wasn't easy to be a Christian in the first century, especially a Jewish Christian. Believers who had come to faith in Christ out of Judaism were ostracized by their families and persecuted by the religious leaders. When the Romans began to persecute Christians, they seized their property, imprisoned and tortured them. These believers felt tremendous pressure to denounce Christianity, to combine Christian teachings with Judaism, or to be secret believers. Hebrews, therefore, warns against apostasy and against slipping back into old habits and beliefs; the message of this book challenges believers to endure to the end.¹

¹ Pocket Bible for Windows: *The Life Application New Testament Commentary*: (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton), 2001 (Commentary on Hebrews: introduction)

Prayer Meeting and Discipleship Study Guide on the Book of Hebrews

Prayer Meeting study duration: 2 weeks

Total Prayer Meeting teaching time: 1 Hours

Start Date: 05/04/10 End Date: 18/04/10

Discipleship study duration: 2 weeks

Total Discipleship reading time: (15mins a day)

Week and Date	Chapter	Prayer meeting Bible Study	Discipleship Reading Plan	Discipleship Study Questions
<p>Week 48</p> <p>Monday 05th Apr 10</p> <p>–</p> <p>Sunday 11th Apr 10</p>	11	<p>Wednesday 7th April 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith is... <i>(the definition of faith)</i> Faith that pleases God Seeking God with all diligence <i>(the reward of faith)</i> By faith... <i>(the evidence of faith)</i> The Heavenly hope... <i>(the depth of faith)</i> The Patriarch's trial... <i>(the test of faith)</i> By faith they overcame...<i>(the victory in faith)</i> A better promise... <i>(a sure promise in faith)</i> 	<p>Mon- 11:1-3</p> <p>Tue - 11:4-6</p> <p>Wed - 11:7-12</p> <p>Thur - 11:13-16</p> <p>Fri - 11:17-29</p> <p>Sat - 11:30-38</p> <p>Sun - 11:39-40</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Write down your definition of faith. What kind of reputation has your faith produced? Why were Abel's offerings and Enoch's devotion to God rewarded? Considering James 2:19-20 is it enough to believe? Why? How do you '<u>diligently</u> seek Him'? At God's request, would you act or move even if you didn't know why or where? What qualities did these men possess, that were attributed to faith? (v13-16) How does faith in God move you toward trial and suffering? What motivated Moses? Is faith powerful? (Discuss) What does 'out of weakness were made strong' mean? (v34) Reflecting on the reward, evidence, depth, test, victory and promise of faith, re-visit your definition – would you change it? If so, do so. <p>This week let us more diligently seek Him not merely for the promises concerning our earthly existence but for the promises of our heavenly hope.</p>

Week and Date	Chapter	Prayer meeting Bible Study	Discipleship Reading Plan	Discipleship Study Questions
Week 49 Monday 12 th Apr 10 - Sunday 18 th Apr 10		<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 14th April 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The race of faith • The Discipline of God • Endure chastening as a son • Spiritual Strength • The glorious company • The Heavenly voice • A consuming fire 	Mon – 12:1-2 Tues – 12:3-6 Wed – 12:6-11 Thurs – 12:12-17 Fri – 12:18-24 Sat – 12:25-29 Sun: Reflection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the witnesses? What images & thoughts do vs. 1 & 2 bring to your mind? 2. How do your sufferings compare with Jesus'? How do you regard His discipline? 3. How does discipline benefit you? Compare with John 15:2 and discuss 4. What does it mean to 'fall short of the grace of God'? Discuss 5. Does the glorious company & cloud of witnesses make you more self-conscious? 6. Today take some time out to listen to the voice of God, what is He saying to you? 7. This week reflect on that description of God – 'A Consuming Fire' and as you approach Him keep it in mind. Note any changes in your approach toward God.