

Small Group Sermon Response

Title: "Greater Help"

Text: Hebrews 2:5-18

Date: Sunday, April 21, 2024

Preacher: Pastor Caleb Widmer

Last Week's Sermon Summary:

In "Christ Superior to Angels," Pastor Alain Alfonso discussed Hebrews 1:4 to 2:4, highlighting the superior role of Christ over angels. The sermon emphasized Christ's divine role as mediator and Savior, His eternal reign, and the theological implications of His superiority, urging believers to reflect His kingship in their lives.

Introduction

This week, Pastor Caleb Widmer explores how Jesus uniquely assists us through trials by sharing in human suffering and overcoming death, as outlined in Hebrews 2:5-18.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does **Hebrews 2:5-9** illustrate the intended governance of creation by humans versus angels, and what role does Jesus play in restoring this order?
2. In **Hebrews 2:10-13**, how is the necessity of Jesus' suffering portrayed in achieving His role as the author of our salvation?
3. What solution to human fear and bondage to death is provided by Jesus' death as described in **Hebrews 2:14-16**?
4. How do **Hebrews 2:17-18** portray Jesus' capacity for empathy and sacrifice in His role as a high priest?

Application Questions:

1. Reflecting on **Hebrews 2:13**, where Jesus is quoted saying, "I will put my trust in Him," how can we model this trust in our personal challenges?
2. Considering Jesus' empathy for our weaknesses (**Hebrews 2:17-18**), how can this knowledge influence our interactions and ministry within the community?
3. Drawing from **Hebrews 2:14-15**, how can the understanding that Jesus conquered death influence our daily approach to fear and anxiety?
4. Based on Jesus being described as a "merciful and faithful High Priest" in **Hebrews 2:17-18**, how should this affect our approach to prayer and reliance on divine grace?

Quotes from the Sermon:

- **William Lane:** "The presence of death makes itself felt in the experience of anxiety." This highlights the profound impact of Jesus' victory over death in alleviating our existential fears.
- **Gordon Fee:** Describes Jesus as having "invaded the strong man's fortress, disarmed him, bound him fast, and robbed him of his spoil," emphasizing the triumph of Christ over the forces that hold humanity in bondage.

Additional Biblical References:

- **Psalm 8:** Reflects on humanity's intended dominion and dignity, restored through Christ.
- **Psalm 22:** Foretells Christ's sufferings and His ultimate deliverance, symbolizing His deep connection with human anguish.
- **Isaiah 8:18 & 12:2:** These prophecies underscore the Messiah's solidarity with His people, emphasizing His shared experiences and ultimate trust in God.

Closing Thought:

As we contemplate how Jesus is uniquely positioned to aid us through His experiences of suffering and triumph over death, let us deepen our reliance on Him, allowing His life to profoundly shape our responses to life's challenges and our service to others.

Biographic References:

William L. Lane (1931–1999) was an influential New Testament scholar and theologian known for his deep understanding of biblical texts. He held a Ph.D. from Drew University and taught at several institutions, including Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Seattle Pacific University. Lane is renowned for his commentaries on Mark and Hebrews, which are appreciated for their scholarly rigor and theological insights.

Gordon D. Fee (1934–2022) was a prominent New Testament scholar and an ordained minister within the Assemblies of God. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Southern California and taught at Wheaton College and Regent College, among others. Fee was especially noted for his work in textual criticism and his books on biblical interpretation, including influential commentaries on 1 Corinthians and Philippians for the New International Commentary on the New Testament series.

Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel, based in Sydney, Australia, is an Assyrian Orthodox bishop at Christ the Good Shepherd Church. Known for his presence on platforms like YouTube and TikTok as the "TikTok Bishop," he addresses theological, social, and political issues in both English and Assyrian. His outspoken views, particularly against liberal Christianity and various social policies, have stirred significant discussion and controversy. In April 2024, he survived a stabbing attack during a sermon, an event that highlighted his polarizing influence. Bishop Emmanuel is notable for his advocacy of traditional Christian values and his critical stance on modern cultural and political trends.