



April 03Better Ministry
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Participant Guide for April 3, 2022

Better Ministry

Hebrews 7:1-8:6

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. What is the difference between ministry and missions? When does ministry become missions, and why is it important to recognize that distinction?
2. Read 1 Samuel 13:9-14 and 2 Chronicles 26:16-21. What happens in these two passages? What do they have in common? What happened to Saul and Uzziah when they tried to play the role of king and priest?
3. Read Genesis 14:17-20: From this short passage, what do we learn about Melchizedek?
4. Melchizedek served as both king and priest. Who else in the Bible is described as serving in both roles? Why is the author of Hebrews spending so much time explaining this point in chapter 7? Why would it be difficult for these Jewish Christians to wrap their mind around the idea of someone being greater than Abraham?
5. Read Hebrews 8:6: What does the author mean when he says that Jesus “obtained a superior ministry?” What is superior about it? Jesus’ ministry is superior to what?
6. Because his ministry is superior, we have a better covenant and better promises. What does Jeremiah 31:31-34 say about the coming of the new covenant? How does the new covenant prepare us for ministry and missions?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Who are you serving and who are you training to serve? This week, make time to serve someone else and bring someone else with you that you can mentor.

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Participant Guide for April 10, 2022

Better Covenant

Hebrews 8:7-9:28

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. A covenant is a formal commitment between two parties. Name some covenants that we see in our culture today? See how many covenants between God and His people you can think of and briefly discuss the purpose of each. (Prompts: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David.)
2. Why do you think God chose to covenant with His people instead of forcing them (us) to do what he desired?
3. Why was the covenant of the law of Moses not sufficient for the salvation of the world? In other words, why was Jesus' death necessary? (See Romans 8:1-4, Hebrews 8:7-13)
4. Contrast the old covenant Hebrews 9:1-10 with the new Hebrews 9:11-28. Discuss the meaning of v.23. Why was this such a challenging idea for the 1st century Jews to accept?
5. Why is the death of Christ as payment for your sins such a hard concept to accept? Why is it necessary for God himself to atone for our sins? How can we help others understand the concepts of this new covenant? How can we help them see the mercy, love, forgiveness, and the greatness of the sacrifice made for all mankind? How can we help People understand the tragedy of rejecting such a covenant?
6. Why was this God's final covenant with His people? (See Hebrews 10:26-31)
7. As you close your time together, ask God to search your heart and convict you of your need for salvation or your need for daily repentance for the sins of the heart.

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Offer up a praise of thankfulness for the covenant given to you for the forgiveness of sins. Pray each day for God to lead you in this grace.

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Participant Guide for April 17, 2022

Better Forgiveness

Hebrews 10:1-18

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. What is a shadow? What does a shadow signify? A shadow may resemble the outline of a real object, but it is not the object itself. What does the author of Hebrews mean when he states, “the law has only a shadow of the good things to come?”
2. What comes to mind when you think about the Old Testament (OT) laws? How do you view the OT laws and practices such as offerings through the sacrifice?
3. Why is a sacrifice necessary for the forgiveness of sin? How did these practices point forward to (or shadow) an ultimate sacrifice?
4. How does the author of Hebrews contrast the old and new covenants in this passage? What did the OT sacrifices accomplish? What did Jesus’ sacrifice accomplish?
5. Apologist Francis Schaeffer was once asked, “What would you do if you met a really modern man on a train and just had one hour with him to share the gospel?” Schaeffer answered that he would spend forty to fifty minutes demonstrating the dilemma that he was morally dead. Then he would take ten to fifteen minutes to preach the gospel. Why do you believe that Schaeffer said he would spend so much time trying to demonstrate to the person that they were a sinner in need of forgiveness? What is sin, and why are people in need of forgiveness?
6. Christians might tend to view our forgiveness in Christ as only part of our relationship and walk with him. But how should our great gift of forgiveness impact how we view and interact with others around us in our day-to-day lives?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ We receive vertical forgiveness through Christ. Christians are also called to horizontal forgiveness with the people in our lives. Is there anyone you need to extend forgiveness to that you’ve been holding back?

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Participant Guide for April 24, 2022

Better Boldness

Hebrews 10:19-39

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Has there ever been a time when you felt God's presence so powerfully that you found boldness that you did not know you had? What happened, and what was that feeling like? When we have those moments of boldness, they often come and go? But - does the power that gives us boldness come and go? What is that power?
2. For these Hebrew Christians, why would the idea of Jesus giving them boldness to enter the sanctuary through the curtain have been such a hard concept to grasp? What did the curtain represent to them?
3. The author calls these people to hold on to the confession of their hope without wavering. What is the foundation of their hope? What promises of God are present in this passage?
4. To what sort of action is the author calling us in verses 10:24 and 10:25? How do verses 10:23-25 connect back to their foundation in verses 10:19-22?
5. We talked last week about the importance of recognizing our sin and the need for forgiveness. What warning do we read in the second half of today's passage (10:26-39)? How does this passage speak of the true gravity of sin in our lives?
6. How does the brokenness of our world display the reality of sin? How would you connect the world's brokenness and the reality of sin to someone who has not placed their trust in Christ? How do you then present Christ as the answer to fixing the world's brokenness?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Christians say that fear is the number one reason they don't share their faith. This week, ask God for his boldness to overcome your fear and turn a casual conversation into a gospel conversation.

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Participant Guide for May 1, 2022

Better Faith

Hebrews 11

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Hebrews chapter 11 is often referred to as the “Hall of Faith” and is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. Why does this chapter carry that title? What is it about this chapter that makes it stand out and memorable?
2. Create a list of each Bible character listed in this passage. Describe why each character listed in this chapter is described as having great faith.
3. What is the context of this chapter? What was the author discussing at the end of chapter 10 (10:32-39)? How does chapter 11 fit into the author’s purpose in writing?
4. Define faith. Define hope. How do faith and hope connect to one another? What does the author mean in verse 1 when he says, “Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen”?
5. In verse 3, the foundation of the author's point is creation itself. What is the typical Christian position for how we believe the Universe was created? What might be the position of an unbeliever? What is the difference in the amount of faith required for each view? How might you use this information to witness to an unbeliever?

Respond

- **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**
- ◆ What changes would you need to make in your life to be counted among the “Hall of Faith?” What will you do to demonstrate your faithfulness to God?

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Participant Guide for May 8, 2022

Better Joy

Hebrews 12:1-3

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever given up on something because you were miserable or unhappy with the situation? Why can it be hard to find joy amid suffering?
2. Hebrews 12:2 tells us that “[Christ] sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” What does this tell us about God? Why is this Good News?
3. Hebrews 12:2 later says, “Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross.” What does it mean Christ is the pioneer & perfecter of our faith? What was the joy before Christ?
4. The author of Hebrews calls us to endurance. What different motivations and ways does the author give for us to endure?
5. Suppose an unbeliever says to you, “Why do Christians find so much symbolism in the cross? After all, the cross was a Roman execution tool. It seems to me that if Jesus were to come back, the last thing he’d want to see is the cross.” How would you respond? How would you use this verse to help form your answer? How do you explain the joy that you receive in Christ, his death, and resurrection?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Find one way the author of Hebrews calls us to endure and remember this week to fight against sin and endure in the faith! (Bonus points for sharing it with another Christian to encourage them to keep going in the faith.)

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Participant Guide for May 15, 2022

Revival – Guest Speaker

Tommy Green, Executive Director, Florida Baptist Convention

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

Discussion notes:

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

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Participant Guide for May 22, 2022

Better Discipline

Hebrews 12:4-13

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. When was a time you were “disciplined?” There may have been occurrences as a child, at work, or at your school.
2. How can thinking of God as our Father encourage you during suffering?
3. Sometimes we suffer because there are consequences to our sin, and we need to be disciplined. Sometimes we suffer not for a particular sin but because this world is sinful. Have you seen God use either kind of suffering to strengthen your faith?
4. Verses 10 & 11 show that God disciplines us for our benefit. What do we gain from discipline? What does God benefit from disciplining us? Does our benefit & God’s benefit contradict or work against each other?
5. What does a healthy practice of discipline look like? Do you ever discipline yourself?
6. How can we strengthen ourselves by seeking strength from God? What does it mean for God to strengthen us?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ We have all fallen short of God’s glory (Rom. 3:23), but Christ has taken the judgment and penalty of our sin by dying on the cross. In Christ, discipline is not a means of ultimate judgment but a warning, so we go running to the Father’s arms. Praise God today for holding us fast and doing everything for our ultimate benefit and salvation!

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Participant Guide for May 29, 2022

Better Mountain

Hebrews 12:14-29

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. What are some things that are so obvious that a warning label seems unnecessary?
2. Read Verses 14-17: How can the author of Hebrews say “holiness—without it no one will see the Lord” (v. 14) if we are saved by faith?
3. If we are called to pursue peace, then why help others pursue holiness? Will calling others out for sin not bring conflict? How can we pursue peace & holiness simultaneously?
4. Read Verses 18-24, Exodus 19:16-19, and Revelation 4. What are the similarities and differences between the scene of Mount Sinai and the Old Covenant and Mount Zion and the New Covenant? What picture of worship should this give us?
5. Read Verses 25-29: We have received an unshakable heavenly kingdom through faith in Christ. Because of this, what does the author of Hebrews want us to do in v. 28 -29?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ The warning passages are a time for us to examine our lives for sin. Take a moment to examine your life for any unrepentant sin and repent. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9 CSB). Receive God’s grace and know you are forgiven because of Jesus Christ our Lord!

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Participant Guide for June 5, 2022

Better Conduct

Hebrews 13:1-13

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. What are some decisions you've made (or desire to make) that have lasting implications? Getting married? Having a baby? Where to work or attend school?
2. How did the permanence of those decisions shape how you live? For example, because you want to be married, you take dating seriously; because you have a spouse, you choose to spend time with them; because you have a child, you forgo certain behaviors or actions you used to do; because you want a certain job, you go to school.
3. Read Hebrews 12:28-29 and then read Hebrews 13:1-9. How does the permanence of an unshakeable kingdom one day affect how we live today?
4. Read Verses 10-12: Here, the author makes a comparison to show that the "temple" for Christians is better than the tabernacle. The sin offering was not allowed to be consumed by the tabernacle priests; however, we are called to be filled with Christ, who became the sin offering once and for all. How was Jesus the better sacrifice?
 1. Where was the sin offering killed and burned? (Outside the gates)
 2. In relation to Jerusalem, where was Jesus killed? (Outside the gates)
 3. How often did a sin sacrifice in the OT have to be performed? (Once a year)
 4. How long does Jesus' sacrifice last? (Permanently)
 5. Jesus's sacrifice is better because of the permanence of the sacrifice, and we live in light of that permanence.
5. Read Verse 13 aloud: We are being called to be imitators of Christ and bear the reproach he bore. To walk away from loving this world to love the unshakeable kingdom to come. Jesus says this in Matthew 16:24-27. (Read this) So we walk away from the love of the temporary for the love of the permanent. In what ways are you sitting still in the temporary instead of walking with Jesus out of the camp into the permanent? (Examples: comfortability, Job security, social status, acceptance, apathy)

Respond

- **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**
- ◆ In your life, what can you do to replace that temporary love you thought of with something formed by the permanent love of Jesus?



Participant Guide for June 12, 2022

Better Worship

Hebrews 13:14-25

Highlight

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. What does it mean to worship? What kind of things do we see people worshipping in our culture? Might Christians also be guilty of falling into habits of making something good, something that they worship?
2. The author points out that this current city will not endure. In what ways do we put our hope into things that will not endure? What does it mean to live your life like someone “Looking for the city that is to come?”
3. Before, the Jewish people would offer up animal sacrifices to God. Now, the author is calling the people to offer up sacrifices of praise and worship. What does he mean by a sacrifice of praise? What does that look like?
4. How do we worship God through doing good and sharing with others as we are called to do in verse 16?
5. When the world sees us worshipping and singing praises to God, this is going to seem strange and unusual to them. How would you explain the concept of worship to an unbeliever? How could you use that question to share the gospel with that person?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Do you consider what you do every Sunday morning to be worship? This week, reflect on what your heart tells you about how you worship God on Sunday and throughout the week.

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