

Karl's answers in blue. My answers in red.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY
Tuesday, April 8, 2003

HEBREWS 12 Spiritual Athletics and a kingdom that can not be shaken.

I. Read through the chapter to enjoy the metaphors.

II. vss 1 - 13 Running these words through your "human experience," and write a brief definition:

1. Great cloud of witnesses (who are they?)

The Hero and Heroines in Hebrews 11. O-o-o, sneaky answer. Now, what do the heroes and heroines in Chapter 11 represent? Don't make it difficult. They are the AWAKE! They are archetypes or representations of what it means to be fully awake and fully aware that we do not live in this world; this is vacation. We were created to live in the Realm of the Totally Awake! (God). And, one more thing. These people are those who surrendered themselves totally under the influence of the Perfect At-One-Ment.

2. vs. 1 Name the "things that hinder," and the "sin that so easily entangles."
Anything we do that causes anti-atonement. Bravo!

3. vs. 2a What does it mean to "fix our eyes on Jesus?"
Being focused on reaching ATONEMENT. Another basket! Good for you.

4. vs. 2b What and where is the "throne of God?"
When and where we are at one with God. This is getting scary! Fantastic!

5. vss. 5/6 What does it mean to be a "son?"
To be loved, guided, protected, and disciplined in becoming like (a clone?) your father. Spiritual clones. U-m-m, an interesting metaphor. My answer during the IHOP session on Tuesday was that a "son" is an AWAKENED ONE. However, your answer is warmer than my cooler answer. Just one little problem to settle in this sentence, who does the "father" represent? In my context, God is the Perfect At-One-Ment. OK, so the "son" of this "father" is the little picture of what Perfect At-One-Ment represents.

6. vs. 8 Describe how the metaphor "illegitimate children" is used, and what it means.
Opposite to answers in #5 above. Without God's love? Oh no!! We are never, ever without God's love. Karl, you are on the right track here in the first part of your answer. "Illegitimate children" are those ASLEEP, and because they are asleep, they do things that characterize anti-At-One-Ment. This is why we are never without God's love -- IT IS ALWAYS THERE. True, we can forget its there, we can deny its there, or we can be unconscious that it is there!

7. vs. 10 What is the "good" to which God disciplines us?
His love. Oops! Fell into a head trip answer. (It easy to do that, isn't it.) Your answer is correct, but tell me what you experience when you are "loved by God!" Beverly doesn't like me to tell this story, but it so clearly illustrates God's Love. You see, my wife is the Wrath of God. We experience this as "wrath" because it is experienced as someone telling us NO! However, in reality the Wrath of God is "Tough Love!" Bert Polk, on the men at the Tuesday IHOP meeting, reminded me of this word last Tuesday.

When I get to acting around the house in anti-At-One-Ment ways, I am far less than being a fully human being who is fun to be around, thoughtful and sensitive. It is at these

times that Beverly tell us, "William Elrod Salmon! Take out the garbage!" The garbage is the dumb things I do to hurt her.

So, Beverly WAKES ME UP TO BEING A FULLY HUMAN BEING! I experience this as a No being said to me. In reality, Beverly loves me so much, she is willing to endure my reaction. She stands before me as the one to call me into accountability.

NOW, I HAVE A CHOICE! Do I "kill the messenger" by anger and/or passive resistance, or do I change and RE-AWAKEN?

8. vs. 11 What is the "harvest of righteousness and peace" earned by those who are trained for it?

Same as 4. above. (When and where we are at one with God.) U-m-m, I believe I understand. However, I experience this as being slightly off the mark. My answer is "FULL HUMANNESS. Righteousness is the cool, or head trip, word in this sentence. Rightousness means to be made right with God: to translate-- we became a partner with Perfect At-One-Ment. Also, it means being made fully human. How can you not be what we are created to be when we stand in the shadow of Spiritual Perfection.

III. vss. 18 - 24 Read this passage carefully, and provide your own interpretation of this comparison between the experience of Moses on the mountain of fear, and our experience on Mt. Zion -- the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God.

We follow Jesus Christ (WWJD) in seeking atonement, because of his sacrifice. OK. So, who did Moses follow? I have'nt thought about this in this way, but Moses was standing in the presence of "WRATH:" remember, this "wrath" loves us enough to give us "tough love." Isn't this what the 10 Commandments are all about? Jesus, is standing in the presence of "PROFOUND LOVE:" this is the kind of love that forgets all things we do to remain asleep, and/or to do dumb things to promote anti-At-One-Ment. O-o-o, I even like this answer! How about you?

IV. vss. 25 27 Not heeding the message

1. What would happen to us if we did NOT heed the message? Be sure to describe the experience, and not just the explanation.

Anti-atonement. OK, maybe a little skimpy! OK people. Get loosed up! Go to your experience bin, and share something of your life and living!!

How about this? A prisoner at the Saline County Jail is remorseful and ashamed that his alcoholism hurts his family. He asks to talk to a jail chaplain, and I'm selected. After getting out his story, I ask permission to share some insights. We visit about the "hole in his middle" that I testify to him that I tried to fill with class clowning (what else is a pastor, but a person who wears a funny suit?). Other people try to fill it with love, food, sex, drugs or alcohol. However, the hole in our middle can never be filled, because it is where God lives. Now, if an individual surrenders themselves to this hole---to take the leap of faith and to fall into the care of the Perfect At-One-Ment, they will never be left alone (in anti-At-One-Ment.

The clue to follow, is that when we feel un-loved, this is the first sign we need to re-surrender. Then we experience being cared for until the next episode. And on, and on it goes: fearing the emptiness, jumping into the lap of God, being cared for (At-One), and falling off the wagon as the sign we are to take the leap of faith again.

V. vss. 28 - 29

1. Describe the "kingdom that can not be shaken."

Atonement. Well, you're right. Could you be a little more poetic?

2. Describe the meaning (experience) of:

being thankful ---

Loving God. Oops! Too cool! While this is correct, what is the "warm" treatment of it? If I was walking down the street, and I saw you "loving God" what would you be doing? Don't make this too hard. Smiling, whistling, being out-going and friendly. Also, laughing at yourself. Or, in the middle of adversity, to smile anyway: take for instance, a horrible

round of golf.

worship God acceptably, with reverence and awe (The experience, please!!)

Personal relationship thru prayer. Awe, come on! You know this is true, but what does it mean? For me, a personal relationship through prayer means to be a nice human being who is fun yet thoughtful, who is relaxed wherever he or she finds him/her-self, and who is aware (as much as possible) of their need to surrender and to live the surrender life; i.e., to constantly be reminded (by their Wrath of God), or become more conscious about the need to jump into the lap of God when life overwhelms us.

NOW, THIS IS LIVING IS CONSTANT PRAYER, and it has very little to do with bowing our heads, or attending church. Yet, it represents a very personal relationship with my SUSTAINER -- or the one who keep my head above the waters of life that continually flood in to drown me.

God is a consuming fire---

God is in control. OK, so the lesson got a little long, didn't it! We might try the "Wrath of God" bit again, couldn't we? Or, we could say the one that defines God as The Guarantor - - who guarantees the the "reward is found in the deed itself." Both of this experiences describe a refining fire to make us more pure; i.e., more fully human!