

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session: Tuesday, February 11, 2003

IHOP Bible Study

Contextual Statement: Remember, there are two ways to read scripture. One way is to run the information through our heads. The other way is to run it through our human experience. I like to say to run it through your gut. (A friend replied that "gut" is not a very polite word: whatever!). Our purpose is to run the scriptures through our "human experience." This is the uniqueness of this bible study. Continue to work at it, and I'll push back on you in the weekly "comment" report. OK?

Romeiser's work in blue. Pastor Bill's comments in Red.

HEBREWS 5

1. Read through the whole chapter at one time.
2. Write a summary statement of your research in your study material, and/or on the Internet of the following:

High Priest--

The high priests had to be a man and appointed by God.

Paul presents us with the "high priest" because this was proof text using an example with which the Hebrew community was very familiar. Paul's point is the Jesus is now the new "high priest." To run this idea through our gut (or our human experience) reveals that the "high priest" was the one who was fully awake to be the representative person who lives the AT-ONE-MENT; this was God's representative of God's AT-ONE-MENT.

Aaron (Moses' brother)

Aaron was appointed by God as the 1st high priest.

Again, Paul uses the key figures from Jewish historical experience to illustrate the role Jesus assumed. Jesus was the new Aaron--the new representative of God's At-One-Ment.

Melchizedek

He was a priest of God long before Aaron's time and also the king of Salem (Jerusalem).

Melchizedek is a mysterious presence in the Hebrew Testament. Suddenly, he appears, represents God (as the At-One-Ment), and then mysteriously disappears. The Jews understood this appearing/disappearing as evidence Melchizedek was God's Ambassador! This Ambassadorship is understood as the eternal presence of The Christ (in the Greek)--the Anointed One (in the Hebrew.) In this way, and for this purpose, Jesus bore the mantle of Melchizedek (The Anointed Christ).

3. How is Paul using these "figures," and what is the argument Paul puts forth in this chapter.

Since King David later became "king of Jerusalem," it can be said that David was in the order of Melchizedek. Because Jesus was descended from David, he too was in the order of Melchizedek.

Paul just completed God's Ambassadorial order of Christ's symbolic presence on earth! So, who is this Jesus? Who is this one from Nazareth, of all places? Paul is the New Testament District Superintendent of the new church, and he reports this Jesus is up with the big boys of Aaron, Melchizedek, and King David--in fact--we'll learn in a couple of chapters--Jesus the Christ Bearer is more than these guys. In fact, this Jesus--the Anointed Christ--has the same contacts as does Father Abram himself. Yet, don't despair, because the story gets better than this. However, we must wait until chapter 7 when the secret is revealed of who this Jesus really is.

4. Summarize Paul's evaluation of where the Roman--Greek--Hebrews were in their spiritual journey.

He felt they were still spiritual infants. They had not fully learned even the elementary truths of God's word. They had grown a little in their faith but had now stopped growing.

Oh, Lord! Haven't we all. However, now we are awake and ready for more meat than milk.

5. Research the word "righteousness" (vs. 13 b), and use your "gut" to identify the significance of this word.

Righteousness is acting in accord with divine or moral law.

This is a "head trip" response, albeit a good one. Now, to make it a "gut trip," I'll share with you my response, and see what you think. The divine or moral law is the "law of At-One-Ment. to be in a right relationshipship (the meaning of Righteousness) is to live in accordance of being At-One with my neighbor (sociology), At-One with my self (psychology), and At-One with the Perfect At-One-Ment who is God (theology). These three responses fulfil the great Commandment of Jesus to love God, and to love neighbor as you love yourself. "To Love" means "to be in At-One-Ment." This kind of living we experience as harmony, health, wholeness, being in tune--that is to be RIGHT with GOD.

It also means free from guilt or sin.

Again, you are right on; it does mean to be free from guilt or sin. Now, when these terms are run through our "gut," the word "freedom" can be associated with "liberation." When we live At-One with neighbor, self, and God, automatically we are liberated from ANTI-At-One-ment (the definition of "sin"). When we do mean things to drive others away from us (ANTI-At-One-Ment), we feel Guilty. However, when we live in a relationship of At-One-Ment, then we no longer have a reason to feel guilty.

6. Do the same thing with "distinguish good from evil" (vs. 14 b)!

As we grow in Christ, we will be able to see more clearly the good in Jesus' life and the sin in our own lives. As we grow in faith, we will be better able to understand how Jesus was able to live a life without sin and therefore able to live a better life ourselves.

OK. Once again, let's decode some of these words by running it through our human experience. "To grow in Christ" means to grow more enlightened, more "awake" in order to "see more clearly." (Isn't this the meaning of the Christ Event--to be awakened to live the awakened or resurrected life?)

"The good in Jesus life" means to appreciate how Jesus demonstrated that humans can live as awakened individuals. Against this demonstration of Jesus, we judge our own awakenment: Do we continue to do things that supports ANTI-At-One-Ment (Sin)?

To "grow in faith to better understand how Jesus was able to live a life without ANTI-At-One-Ment," is to ask the question before every decision, "WWJD?" In this way we will "be able to live a better life ourselves."

Alright now, are you getting a better grasp on how our old "Code Words" are used today. In the Early Church, these Code Words were used to mean the very same human experiences we have. We know this is true, because "REALITY" is always the same. it is the same for everyone, all the time. Now, our perception of reality changes, and this is where the rub comes in for us living in the 21st. Century. After using these old Code Words for 2100 years, these words became associated with "Head Trips;" something to "know." rather than something experienced. Our Purpose is to return these wonderful Christian Code Words to their original meaning by applying the principle of "Think like a Jew, and believe like a Christian." The process begins in your innards. Once we've got a handle on this process, and the more we practice this process, the more meaningful and relevant the scriptures are. I appreciate this is a difficult journey. But now, we are on the way. Once we've scaled the mountain of process, the whole endeavor is exciting, applicable, and useful in helping others along the this journey. Stick with it, you all. The winning of the battle is underway, and the victory is in sight. Maybe you'll have to trust me on knowing the victory is already won. However, don't lose your nerve. Pastor Bill