



GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

2 = We Are His House

Announcements:

12/13 @7:30 -

Prayer

12/14 @6:30 -

Grace Group

12/17 @8:30 -

Sunday School

12/17 @6:00 -

Family Night

PSALM 9

ICE BREAKER: Describe your “Dream Home”? Where is it? What is It Like?

READ: Hebrews 3:1-6

When I planned this particular sermon series, I thought that the theme and idea would be “Jesus Is...” and that we would be looking at some of the things that the book of Hebrews teaches us about Jesus. And while that has been true, there has been another theme and idea that has been lurking underneath all of this. In particular, the theme of “What was David Thinking?” Hebrews is a really hard book to preach out of. It has so many incredible truths, and it is such a dense book. By preaching little sections and not the whole book we do not have all the context. Also we just end up not spending as much time in this book as I would love. ALL that to say, we are bound to miss some things that the writer is doing. In particular there are little phrases that we might overlook and not see the truths that are right there. In this passage it is the phrase “We are his house” seen in verse 6. So let's dive into that.

The first question to ask is this: What exactly does it mean to say that we are Jesus' house? To answer this lets think of how we would think through some of these thoughts in the english language. We have phrases like “Home is where the heart is” which get us to see that there is an emotional and relational aspect to a house. We make a distinction between a “house” and a “home” to try and get at these same thoughts. But we also say “I want to go home” and by this we mean a physical house. So we can use “house” to mean a broad array of things from an emotional connection and family type of thing to a physical location at a certain address. Now let's think back to the original question: What does it mean to say that we are Jesus' house? I would say that we can (carefully!) say all the same sorts of things. One of the themes that the writer of Hebrews was developing here in this section is the fact that Moses was a servant in the house of God while Jesus was a Son. We are part of the Household of God in an even more profound way than Moses because we are Jesus' house (think John 1:12-13). We are “children of God” through being in Christ in a rich and powerful way. Part of this is the familial connection that we have through Jesus.

DISCUSS: Why is it important that we understand our standing in the house of God through Jesus? What does this mean for us?

But we can also say that there is also a way that we can and should think about this phrase in the more of a “location and address” sort of way. The ESV Study bible is helpful here with their note: “Like other New Testament building metaphors for the church, this speaks to the corporate identity of the church as God's own abode.” In other words, part of what the writer of Hebrews means is our identity in Christ (see above), but part of this as well is the presence of Christ with his people. He has promised to be “closer than a brother” and be with us “always, to the end of the age”. So part of saying that we are his house is to say that we are the ones that he has chose to reside with. He is our God and we are his people.

DISCUSS: What does it mean to say that the church is God's “abode”? What does this practically mean?

But there is one more word that we have to wrestle with. In Greek: “ἐάν” in English “IF”. As one commentator notes: “The conditional statements in this epistle are significant. The writer wishes to make it clear that only those who are consistent with what they profess have any claim to be part of the ‘house.’” Here we need to be careful that we don't proclaim a works-based keeping of salvation. Rather what the writer here is getting at is a similar thought to James that “faith without works is dead”. We are his house as long as we live by a living faith. As long as we hold fast to Christ who is our confidence and we boast -- not in ourselves -- but rather in the completed word of our Savior. The one who is greater than the angels, greater than Moses, and greater than (see next week) Melchizedek. He is Our God and king and we are his house, with all that that means.

DISCUSS: Why is this “IF” so important? What are the dangers of overemphasizing it? What are the dangers of forgetting it?