

BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2024 – WEEK 11

Hebrews 12:1-29: Don't Grow Weary

And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

– Hebrews 11:39-40 ESV

- **A Great Cloud of Witnesses**

- All of these people were commended through their faith
- They didn't receive what was promised
 - But they had faith that the Lord would fulfill His promises
- Why is it important to remember these people?
 - The object of their faith points to something better

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. – Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV

- They are examples of enduring faith
 - They weren't perfect, but through the object of their faith they endured
 - They ran the race with endurance without receiving the promise
 - But they had hope in the Promise maker
 - The same is true for us today

- **Run the Race**

...let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely... – Hebrews 11:1b ESV

- Literally translated – “lay aside the weight that hinders”
 - Our sins weigh us down and cling to us

- Cast them aside
- We should rid ourselves of it
- How do we do this?
- Placing our hope in Jesus

...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. – Hebrews 12:2 ESV

- We are told to focus on Jesus, specifically His humanity
 - He is the founder and perfecter of our faith and that is why we look to Him
 - He is the source and model of faith
 - His life is the embodiment of trust in God
 - He lived a perfect life of faith in God
 - We cannot do this
 - But because He did, we should strive to follow his example of obedience

“Had he come down by some gesture of supernatural power, He would have never been hailed as the ‘perfecter of faith’ nor would He have left any practical example for others to follow.” – F.F. Bruce

- Jesus endured the trials of this life just like we do
- He joyfully took on the cross because he knew what it would bring
- Now He sits at the right hand of the throne of God
 - We can look to Him as the perfect example of faith in the trials of life

“The readers are exhorted to consider Jesus and His endurance, so they will likewise endure.” – David Allen

- **Loving Discipline**

*“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reproved by him.*

*For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”*

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? – Hebrews 12:5b-7

- We will experience hardship in this life

*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. –
Psalm 34:19 ESV*

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. – 2 Timothy 3:12 ESV

In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. – John 16:33 ESV

- We will experience the discipline of God
- What is Godly discipline?
 - It can be **corrective**
Corrective discipline –

*“Undergoing corrective judgment that comes directly from God’s love.” - R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul**

- King David (2 Samuel 12)
 - ~ His son with Bathsheba died
 - Violence was attended his home
 - Stiff correction, but he learned from it

*Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I keep your word.
It is good for me that I was afflicted,
that I might learn your statutes.* – Psalm 119:67, 71 ESV

- It can be **preventative**
Preventative discipline

*“God allows his children to undergo hardships to prevent their falling.” – R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul**

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. – 2 Corinthians 12:7-8 ESV

- Paul’s thorn was not the result of a specific sin he committed
- God would be legalistic if that were the only way he dealt with sin
- We should be clear that Godly discipline is never vindictive

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. – Romans 8:1 ESV

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. – John 5:24

- For the believer, discipline is never about **retribution**
 - God’s discipline is loving
 - It is for our good
 - It should encourage us

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. – Hebrews 12:7-8 ESV

- God’s discipline of us proves we are His children
- You aren’t building endurance, God is doing it in you

*“The ancient world found it incomprehensible that a father could possibly love his child and not punish him. In fact, a real son would draw more discipline than, say, an illegitimate child for the precise reason that greater honor and responsibility were to be his.” – R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul**

- The best example of this is Jesus
Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him... - Hebrews 5:8-9 ESV
- Our hardships are signs of our sonship
~ They should remind us of the grace, love, and faithfulness of God

- **Final Warnings**

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled... - Hebrews 12:12-15

- Do not fail to lean into the grace of God
 - Grace allows the believer to persevere
 - God’s grace empowers us to endure

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. – Hebrews 3:12

- We know there will always be grace for us
Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. – Hebrews 4:16 ESV
- The grace of God is instant
- What does this look like practically?
 - Confession
 - Repentance
 - Time in God's Word
 - Community with believers
- We are all held accountable for our confession, repentance, etc.
 - We are called to hold each other accountable for this

"Beautifully here in our text "see to it" is a plural command, making it everyone's responsibility to make sure no one misses the grace of God." – R. Kent Hughes, Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul

- Why should we do these things?
 - We are told to do them in scripture
 - It cultivates honesty and purity
 - It reflects the unity the church is meant to embody (Eph. 4:32)
- Not leaning into the grace of God leads to bitterness
 - Think about how someone would respond to discipline without the grace of God
 - Sin takes root
 - It would be easy to blame God and become bitter
 - The root of bitterness is unconfessed sin
 - This infects all those around you (body of Christ)
 - We are persevering because our hope is in the "city of the living God"
- **We Won't Be Shaken**
For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a

new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.
– Hebrews 12:18-24

- They want to go back to Judaism
- The author reminds them of what it was like back then
- He turns their attention to the New Jerusalem
 - o Where they will enjoy God's presence without fear
 - o Because God will shake the Earth again

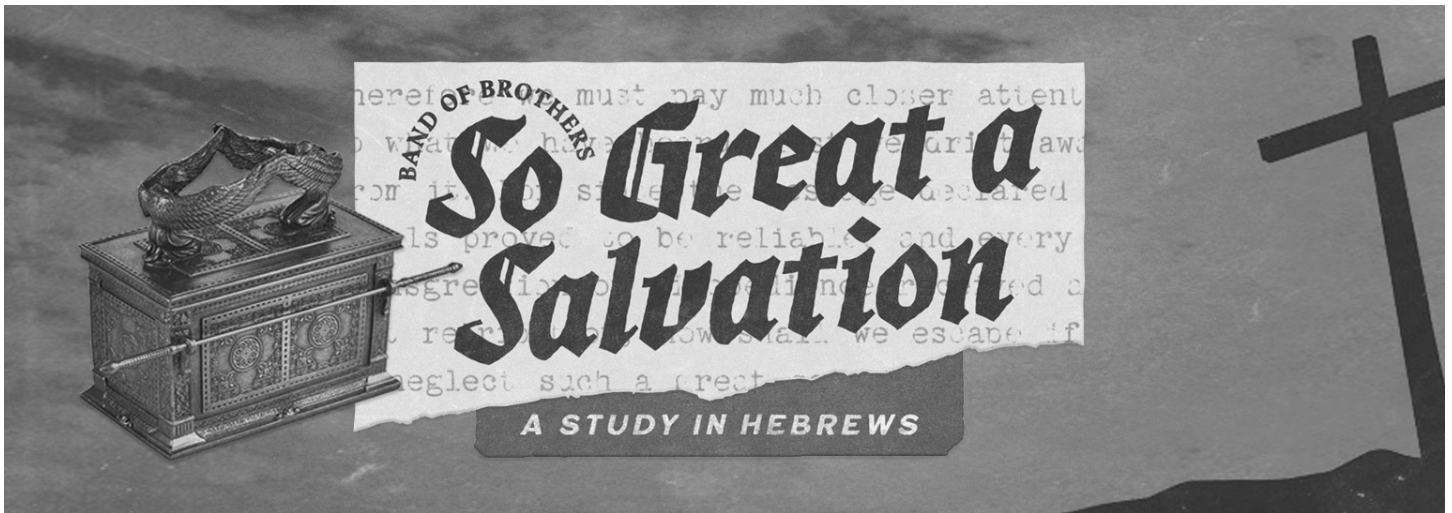
Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. – Hebrews 12:28-29 ESV

- **Discussion Questions**

Is there any “root of bitterness” that you hold onto that prevents you from leaning into God’s grace?

What trial, hardship, or discipline have you gone through, and how has the Lord grown your faith through it?

What sin or weight that hinders you do you need to cast aside?



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SPRING SERIES 2024 – WEEK 12 HOMEWORK

WEEK 12 – Hebrews 13:1-24: Peace, Power, and Provision

The author wraps up his letter with a call for his readers to live up to their calling as God's sons and daughters. Their faith in the promises of God should produce hope for tomorrow but also fruit in the here and now. Their faith should show up in the form of good deeds done for the glory of God and the good of the body of Christ. Their actions were not to be motivated by earning or merit, but solely based on the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Those who have placed their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ should exhibit the characteristics that mirror His righteousness, love, grace, and mercy.

- Read Hebrews 13.
- Over the week, read pages 161-168 of Ken's Devotionalary™ on Hebrews.
- Go back and look carefully at verses 1-19. In this relatively short section, the author gives a series of commands. Write down all the ones you can find.

It's interesting to note that the first 12 chapters have been an attempt to convince the recipients of the letter to refrain from returning to a life under legalism (the Law). Yet, the author gives a lengthy list of dos and don'ts. Why do you think he is providing his readers with a list of commands to obey when he has spent so much time stressing faith in what Christ has done?

- Read James 2:14-26. How does this passage shed light on what the author of Hebrews might be trying to accomplish with the final chapter of his letter?

Why is it so vital that our faith have evidence or proof of its existence and how would obeying the list provided by the author of Hebrews prove our faith is real?

- Go back and look at verses 9-16 again. Here, the author is warning about false teaching. Anyone who brings in “new” teaching that in any way adds to or distracts from the grace of God or the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross is to be avoided at all costs.

Read the following quote from Devotionary™:

“Under the old covenant, the priests were allowed to eat part of the sacrifice that was made. It was how God provided for them. But any animal whose blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat within the Holy of Holies was not allowed to be eaten but was burned outside the camp. His point was that Jesus was sacrificed ‘outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood’ (Hebrews 13:12 ESV). Only those who live according to the new covenant in His blood are allowed to benefit from His body and blood. Those who want to live under the old covenant of law and legalism are not partakers in the new covenant.”

Why is it so vital that we not embrace teaching that diminishes the value of Christ’s sacrificial death and ability of His blood to cleanse us of ALL sin for ALL time?

- Read verses 20-21. According to the author, how do we receive the equipping we need to do the will of God?

What does this look like in real life?

What does 2 Peter 1:3 tell us about our source of power for living a life of faith?

The author desires for his readers to have peace, power, and provision. Which of these could you use more of and would you be willing to ask God to graciously provide it?