

Hebrews 12:1-13

Week Nineteen

Study written by Holli Worthington

Day 1



Heavenly Father, fill my thoughts with you today. Help me through your Holy Spirit to see you and know you better as I study your word.

- ✓ Read through the passage in each translation.
- ✓ Underline or write in the margin, themes that you see.
- ✓ Write a question you have about the passage.
- ✓ In the space below, write out a verse from our passage that stands out to you, that you can meditate on throughout the week.

Day 2- Hebrews 12:1-2

1. The Hebrew's author pictures the Christian life of faith as an endurance race. What two things must we do in order to run with endurance according to verse 1?



When you are running a race, especially an endurance race, you don't want to be carrying extra weight with you! You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out! So we are told to lay aside every weight. *Weight* is also translated as *encumbrance*, *hindrance*, or *impediment*. It is not necessarily sin (although it might be), but something that slows us down in our race. We wonder why we grow weary so quickly, and why it is so hard for us to run the race of a true Christ follower—maybe it's because we are carrying some extra weight with us!

- ❖ What are the weights or hindrances that are impeding your spiritual growth, holiness, or devotion to God? A good question to ask is this _____ nurturing my love for God and his ways or dulling it?



Father, help me to be willing to lay aside things in my life that are weighing me down from being wholly devoted to you.

2. “Sin which *clings so closely*” is also translated as *ensnares, entangles, besets, trips*. How is this even more dangerous than extra weight?

-What are the ramifications of the truth that sin clings so closely?

3. Our author describes the faithful people he wrote about in chapter 11 as a great cloud of witnesses surrounding believers. They have finished the race and are living now in eternity, cheering us on. How does this truth impact you as you run the race set before you?
4. Verse 1 tells us that we are to lay aside the weights and sin and run the race by looking to Jesus. What does it mean in everyday practice, to look to Jesus to do these things?

-How does this relate to chapter 11 and faith?

-What are things that distract you personally from looking to Jesus?

Picture and Ponder: “Looking at your faith will depress you, whereas exercising faith by looking to Jesus frees you.”¹



Forgive me Jesus for letting lesser things distract me from looking to you

Picture and Ponder: “Faith in Christ produces union with a living Lord who reigns in the heavens, who is seated at the right hand of God's throne in power. Therefore, when we fix our eyes on him, he works in us by his power, sending God's Holy Spirit to sustain us in our trials.”²

5. Why did Jesus endure the cross according to verse 2?

Day 3- Hebrews 12:3-4

6. What problem do we face according to verse 3?

-What is the remedy for it?

7. *Looking to Jesus*, in verse 2, emphasizes that we are to keep looking away from distractions and fix our eyes on Jesus. In verse 3, *consider him*, means to consider intently.³ What are things in life that you

consider intently? How can you do this with Jesus?



Jesus, help me to remember that you are the point of everything! I run the race to you, and by you and because of you. And you are the prize, you are the joy set before me!

Scholar's Note: "The "struggle [antagonizomai retains the imagery of athletic games] against sin" (v.4) seems to refer not to sin the readers might be tempted to commit (though some think apostasy is in mind) but to the sin of oppressors who tried to terrorize them into abandoning their faith."⁴

8. According to verse 4, none of the Jewish Christians had been persecuted yet, to the point of death, though they had faced hardships because of their faith. How would thinking on what Jesus endured help them?

For Discussion: Sometimes seeing the suffering of others can lead to fear, but how can it also help us?

Day 4- Hebrews 12:5-8

9. What instruction are we given in verse 5?

Scholar's Note:

Discipline- 1. the whole training and education of children. 2. Whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, esp. by correcting mistakes and curbing passions.

Reprove- To find fault with, correct. 1. By word- to call to account, show one his fault, chide, admonish. 2. By deed- to chasten, to punish.

“The word for discipline combines the thoughts of chastening and education. It points to sufferings that teach us something.”⁵”

10. What would it look like to not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord?

11. What is linked to discipline in verse 6?

12. Verse 5 in the NLT calls these words from God encouraging. Why are they encouraging according to verse 6?

13. If you don't experience discipline from God, what does that mean according to verse 8?



The author encourages his readers that the persecution they are facing because of their faith, is discipline from God. It is part of being a child of our loving heavenly Father. The Bible gives all sorts of reasons for our trials and sufferings. They come to test our faith, to produce perseverance, to cause us to rely on God, to chastise us for sin, to achieve glory in heaven for us and to let us have deeper fellowship with Jesus. Peter reminds us in his letter that we

should not be surprised by the fiery trials that come our way (1 Pet. 4:12). As a child of God we can be assured that our heavenly Father is never harsh, uncaring or arbitrary in his discipline, but he is always gentle, compassionate and wise.

- ❖ With any trial we go through, regardless of the reason for it, what questions should we be asking ourselves and what prayers should we be praying?

- ❖ How do these verses in Hebrews assure you that God is not mad at you or against you when you go through trials and suffering?

Day 5- Hebrews 12:9-13

14. How should we respond to our heavenly Father's discipline according to verse 9?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the question:

- The context of these verses in 1 Peter is suffering and they tell us how to respond to trials. How does Peter explain submitting to trials or discipline? What good comes from this?

- What do we do with the fear and anxiety that come with trials?

1 Peter 5:6-7 "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."



You are a good and caring Father, God. May I be a submissive child.

15. How does verse 10 inform us that our trials and suffering are purposeful?

16. What do we have to let discipline do in our lives according to verse 11?

-If we do this, what will the outcome be?



Verse 10 tells us that God disciplines us so that we might share in *his* holiness so that our character will be made like his. This is good for us! We have such a hard time doing what is good for ourselves! Thankfully we have a good and loving Father who loves us so much that he will always do what is best for us. God arranges circumstances and uses trials to weaken and subdue sin in our hearts and to shape us and mold us to be like him which is what we truly want as his children.

- ❖ What attitudes must we keep in order to be *trained* by discipline?

- ❖ Pray that when trials come, you will value God's character being formed in you more than you value comfort and ease.

- ❖ Discipline that works righteousness in us not the righteousness that is imputed to us in Christ, but righteousness that conforms to God's word and God's ways is called a peaceful fruit in v. 11. Isaiah 32:17 says,

*“And the effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.”*

Doesn't that sound amazing? Pray that God will work this in your life when trials come.

17. In light of the truth that God disciplines every child of his for their good and so that they will be like him, how are verses 12-13 a metaphor for how we should respond in trials?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the question:

- Verse 12 is borrowed from Isaiah 35. How does the rest of the Isaiah passage encourage us in trials?

Isaiah 35:3-4a “Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, ‘Be strong; fear not! Behold your God will come...and save you.’”

- Verse 13 is taken from Proverbs 4:26. Why is this so necessary during trials? If we do this how will it help those who are weaker in their faith to persevere?

Proverbs 4:26-27 “Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.”

One Thing: Look back over this week’s study. Pick one thing that God was stirring in your heart, convicting you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ Miller, Paul. J Curve- Dying and Rising with Jesus in everyday life, Crossway, 2019 p.73

² Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 6808). Kindle Edition.

³ Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 6808). Kindle Edition.

⁴ Expositor's Commentary Copyright © 1998-2018 Olive Tree Bible Software

⁵ Expositor's Commentary Copyright © 1998-2018 Olive Tree Bible Software