

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 28, 2006

Passage: Hebrews 12:1-3

Memory Passage: Hebrews 12:2

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Hebrews 12:1.** What conclusion does the writer make after listing the “heroes” of the faith in chapter 11?
- (b) What does the writer use to motivate these struggling believers to not give up (also see 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3)?
- (c) How does the presence of other witnesses keep you going at times? Would you be more inclined to give up or less inclined if we knew no one was watching?
- (d) Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. How does Paul describe the Christian life? Read 2 Timothy 4:7-8. What was Paul’s motivation in this verse?
- (e) What motivates him to keep his body under control? Is this heaven or something else? If it is heaven, why does Paul fear becoming a “castaway?”
- (f) *Family:* Read Hebrew 12:1 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. Talk together about things that motivate us to accomplish difficult things in our lives. How does the presence of others around you motivate you to do your best and not give up? How does knowing that others have completed the race motivate you? How would the idea of a reward for running the race motivate you? Pray together that each person might recognize that many have “run the race” faithfully before them.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Hebrews 12:1.** To what kind of race does the writer compare the Christian life? Why is this significant?
- (b) What two things are mentioned in this verse that hold runners back? Are they the same? How are they different?
- (c) What might the “weights” refer to? Are these bad (or sin) in themselves? How do “weights” affect our ability to live for Christ?
- (d) Read Matthew 13:18-23. What is the characteristic of the third soil? What keeps it from bearing fruit?
- (e) Read 2 Timothy 2:20-21. What two types of vessels does Paul say are in the Lord’s house? What is different about a vessel of honor? What is required to be a vessel of honor?
- (f) *Family:* Read Hebrews 12:1 and Matthew 13:18-23. Talk together about how things that we love can keep us from fully loving or serving the Lord. What is the difference between sin and weights? What are some weights that keep people from following Jesus with all their hearts? Pray that the Lord will show you some weights that you need to set aside so that you might bear fruit for His glory.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Hebrews 12:1 again.** How is the sin described in this verse? What does it do to us?
- (b) How is sin described in James 1:13-15? What warning does Paul give in 1 Timothy 6:6-10? How is the love of money a “snare?” Why is this picture of sin used so often in the Bible?
- (c) In 1 Timothy 6:10-12, what does Paul encourage Timothy to do? Why does he mention the presence of “many witnesses?”
- (d) What does Paul remind believers about sin and its escape in 1 Corinthians 10:13? What did Jesus tell his disciples (Matthew 5:29-30)?
- (e) How are believers to run the race (with what?)? What was the concern with these Hebrew believers (Hebrews 10:32-36)? What was their great need (Ephesians 4:22-24)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Hebrews 12:1 again and 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. Discuss how sin and temptation work in our lives. How can we keep ourselves from sin that will hinder us in the race? What sins do you need to deal with so you might run the race? Pray that God will show you the sins that are affecting your spiritual life. Give thanks for the forgiveness and cleansing that is found in Jesus!

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Hebrews 12: 2.** While we are to recognize the presence of others in the “great cloud of witnesses,” who are we to keep our eyes on? Why is this so crucial for enduring difficulties (John 15:5)?
- (b) What does it mean that Jesus is the *author* of our faith (Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15:20; Hebrews 5:9)?
- (c) What does it mean that He is the *finisher* (Hebrews 10:14)? How should this encourage struggling believers (John 15:18-20)?
- (d) Read Jude 1:20-25. What are we told to do to protect our own lives in difficulties? How do each: prayer (in the Holy Spirit), the love of God, and the mercy of Jesus strengthen us to face difficulties?
- (e) What confidence can we have if we are in Christ (verse 24-25)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Hebrews 12:1-2 and Jude 1:20-25. How can we keep our eyes on Jesus? Why is this essential for living the Christian life? How does this keep us encouraged when we face difficult times? What are some things we can do to keep us strong in the Lord? Spend some time thanking the Lord for all He has done for you and ask Him to help you keep your eyes on Him.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read Hebrews 12:2-3.** What kinds of shame were these Hebrew Christians facing (Hebrews 10:32-34; also 11:36)?
- (b) What motivated Jesus to endure the cross (Isaiah 53:3-6; 53:11)? How does knowing this motivate you to live for Christ?
- (c) What motivated Paul to live for Christ according to Philippians 3:12-14?
- (d) What do believers tend to do when they become discouraged and what do we need to be reminded of (Galatians 6:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 15:58)? How is the expectation of a reward included in this motivation?
- (e) What encouragement does Isaiah 40:30-31 give to us? How is this related to Hebrews 12:1-3?
- (f) *Family:* Read Hebrews 12:2-3 and Isaiah 40:30-31. Discuss the reasons that people become discouraged and stop serving the Lord. What are they forgetting when they think like this? How does remembering what Jesus endured for us motivate us to live for Him? Where can we get strength during times of weakness? Pray together for someone who is weak, weary or struggling.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What would you do to prepare for running a race? How is the Christian life like a race? What are some things that would hinder a runner from doing his best? What are some things that hinder believers from living the best they can for Jesus? Pray for worship services tomorrow, that believers might be encouraged in their faith and that some unbelieving may come to faith.

DATE: May 28, 2006

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Faith Fixed on Jesus

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith ...”