

SERMON OUTLINE

In Hebrews 12:1-3, we are given three commands based on the reality of innumerable, faithful, commended, Old Testament witnesses (v. 1a).

- I. Let us lay aside (v. 1a) . . .
 - A. Every weight (v. 1b).
 - B. Every entangling sin (v. 1c).
- II. Let us run (v. 1d) . . .
 - A. With endurance (v. 1e).
 - B. The race set before us (v. 1f).
 - C. Looking to Jesus (v. 2a) . . .
 1. The pioneer of our faith (v. 2b).
 2. The perfecter of our faith (v. 2c).
 3. Who endured the cross (v. 2e).
 - a. While despising its shame (v. 2f).
 - b. While pursuing joy (v. 2d).
 4. Who is exalted (v. 2g).
- III. Consider this Jesus who endured hostility from sinners (3a) . . .
 - A. So that we may not grow weary.
 - B. So that we may not grow fainthearted.

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 2, 2021

Passage: Hebrews 12:1-2

Memory Passage: Hebrews 12:1-2

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Heb. 12:1-2.** Verse 1 begins with “Therefore.” To what verses & concepts does this refer?
- (b) Notice the structure of vs. 1-2: “Therefore, since . . . let us . . . let us . . . looking.” How does this inform your understanding of these verses’ meaning and purpose?
- (c) To what does “cloud of witnesses refer?” Who makes up this group, and what qualifies them to be witnesses?
- (d) The Greek word behind “witnesses” is μαρτυρες (martyres) is a form of the same word (either as a verb or its cognate noun, as here) translated “commend/commendation” earlier in the chapter (11:2, 4, 5, 39). Does this fact cause you to change your answer to (c) in any way? Explain why or why not, and how you changed.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Heb. 12:1-2.** What does “surrounded by” mean? Is it a literal surrounding of people in heaven watching us, or is it a figurative way of referring to a group? How does the context support each possibility? Which option is best and why?
- (b) To what does “every weight” refer, both figuratively (within the metaphor of a race) and literally (remember the context)?
- (c) What sin is referred to (v. 1)? Is this sin the “weight” we are to “lay aside” or something different?
- (d) What is the phrase “clings so closely” (lit. “easily ensnaring” or “skillfully encircling”) describing about sin?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Heb. 12:1-2.** To what “race” does our author refer?
- (b) How does the phrase endurance qualify and explain how we are to run this race (also, notice how endurance is pivotal in our author’s primary argument: 10:32, 36; 11:27; 12:1, 2, 3, 7, 20; 13:13)?
- (c) How, exactly, is the race “set before us?” Who sets it, what is its route, what encouragement does this fact bring, etc.
- (d) Explain how this great cloud of witnesses is foundational (“since we have”) for the two exhortations (“let us . . . let us”).

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Heb. 12:1-2.** Explain the connection between v. 1 & v. 2.
- (b) In what ways is Jesus the “founder” (or “pioneer;” cf. Heb. 2:10 where we first encountered this term) and “perfector” of our faith?
- (c) What “joy” was “set before” Jesus in His earthly life, and how did this fuel His endurance of the cross?
- (d) What was the “shame,” and in what ways did Jesus “despise” it? How is this related to the “joy set before him.”

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Heb. 12:1-2.** Explain, in practical yet full terms, what it means to “look to Jesus” as you run your race.
- (b) What besetting, encircling, ensnaring sins are you in need of laying aside in order to run your race with endurance?
- (c) In what ways are you encouraged by the witness of the commended OT saints and their faithful endurance of the race, and in what ways are you equipped by the perfect endurance of our Pioneer, Jesus, as He faithfully ran His race?
- (d) We are to run with endurance the race set before us and consider the joy set before us as we run. How does the latter fuel the former (consider, for example, Rom. 8:18-39, 2 Cor. 4:16-18, & Phil. 3:20-4:1, et al.)?

DATE: May 2, 2021

PASSAGE: Hebrews 12:1-2

Looking to Jesus