

Hebrews

Lesson 15:

Forging Forward

Hebrews 12:1-17

12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

12:4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

from Proverbs 3:11-12

12:7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? ⁸ If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! ¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

12:12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³ "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

from Isaiah 40:3

12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ¹⁶ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. ¹⁷ Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.

Forge forward, friends

▲ Examine the heroes of history

12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses,

▲ Engage the highway

12:1 and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

▲ Eliminate the hindrances

▼ The elimination of sin

12:1 let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles,

▼ The examples of sin

12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ¹⁶ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. ¹⁷ Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.

- ▶ *Strife* – Make every effort to live in peace with all men
- ▶ *Secularism and sensuality* – and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.
- ▶ *Sulking and sullenness* – and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.
- ▶ *Sexual sins* – See that no one is sexually immoral,
- ▶ *Sacrilege* – or is godless like Esau,

▼ The everyday struggle against sin

12:4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

▼ The enormous expense of surrendering to sin

12:15 See to it that no one misses the grace of God

▲ Endure the hardships

▼ The perception of difficulty as divine discipline

12:5 And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." ⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?

▼ The properness of discipline

12:8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

▼ The profitability of discipline

12:10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

▼ The priority of pressing through difficulties

12:12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³ "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

- ▶ *We need a confident posture* – strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees.
- ▶ *We need a clear path* – "Make level paths for your feet,"
- ▶ *We need continual perseverance* – so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

Focus fiercely and fixedly

▲ Concentrate on the person of Jesus

12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith,

▲ Consider the perseverance of Jesus

12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

- ▶ *Jesus was full of expectation* – for the joy set before him
- ▶ *Jesus was focused and enduring* – endured the cross, scorning its shame,
- ▶ *Jesus finished and was exalted* – and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- ▶ *Jesus was fully and fantastically effective* – Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith,
- ▶ *Jesus is our faithful example* – Consider him...so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.