

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

Hebrews 12:1-15

Lesson 16

Some of the recipients of this letter were growing weary in their walk. We saw in Hebrews 11 examples of many who pressed on, enduring and applying their faith so as to receive a good testimony. Chapter 12 is our encouragement to not only walk well, but run in the race that God has set before us. May your study of these first fifteen verses of chapter 12 encourage you to put on your "running shoes".

DAY ONE: Read Hebrews 12:1-15

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?

- a. Hebrews 12:1-15 has been divided into three sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 1-2

Verses 3-11

Verses 12-15

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

Used in prior homework lessons: *God, Jesus* and *sin*

New to this lesson: *chasten (chastens/chastening)*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in Hebrews 12:1-15. Remember, as you mark the words for *God* and *Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them.

3. Note the term of conclusion, *therefore*, in verses 1 and 12. Mark each reference. Choose one; record the conclusion stated and what it was based upon.
4. Hebrews 12:1-15 contains 4 contrasts (verses 8,10,11, and 13). Mark each time the contrasting word *but* is used. Choose one of the contrasts and briefly reflect on its significance.

5. Using the chart titled *Jesus*, list a few things that Hebrews 12:1-15 reveal about Him.

DAY TWO: Read Hebrews 12:1,2

1. The phrase, *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses*, in Hebrews 12:1, links this chapter with Chapter 11 and the examples of those who endured and gloriously triumphed in faith. They are *witnesses of the life of faith* (NLT) and should be an encouragement for believers today to endure and persevere in what the writer describes as a race. With this analogy in mind, he exhorts believers with two *let us* phrases. Thoughtfully write the first one here.
 - a. Underline, in this phrase, what a successful runner needs to do to run effectively and endure.
 - b. The New Living Translation reads: *let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress*. What does this mean in practical terms?
 - 1.) What are some things that might be considered a *weight*; something that could encumber or hinder us?
 - 2.) Consider the word *ensnares* as it is used in this verse. What are some synonyms for this word?
 - a.) What does the word *ensnare* reveal about *sin* and the urgent need for us to get rid of it?
2. Record the second *let us* phrase in Hebrews 12:1c.
 - a. According to this phrase, how we are to run this race?
 - 1.) This race is not a short sprint, but a long distance race requiring *endurance (patience)*. What does the word *endurance* imply?
3. It is important for a runner to have focus and inspiration. Who should be the Christian's focus and inspiration? Hebrews 12:2
 - a. *Look* (fix your eyes) on Jesus as you write the phrases about Him in Hebrews 12:2.
 - 1.) What does it mean that Jesus is the *Author and Finisher of our faith*?
 - 2.) What ministers to you the most about Jesus' endurance?

- b. How would *looking unto Jesus*, having our eyes fixed on Him, enable us to run the race more effectively?

- c. What does 1 Corinthians 9:24 teach us about *running*?

DAY THREE: Read Hebrews 12:3-6

1. This passage should encourage us to faithful endurance in trials, difficulties, or hardships. What does Hebrews 12:3 call us to do?
 - a. The phrase *become weary and discouraged in your souls* has been translated *grow weary and lose heart* or *give up*. If you were experiencing this, how would considering Jesus and the cross make a difference?

2. Complete the following phrases concerning the Hebrew believers from Hebrews 12:4,5a:
 - a. *You have not*

 - b. *And you have*

3. Write *the exhortation* they had forgotten. Hebrews 12:5b,6 (see also Proverbs 3:11,12)
 - a. God *chastens* His children. The Greek word for *chasten* infers discipline, instruction, and training. Why should the believer *not despise* (ignore or disregard) or *be discouraged* when *chastened* by the Lord? Answer from Hebrews 12:6.

 - b. The word *scourges* is translated *punishes* in some versions. The *chastening* of God is motivated by love and is designed to correct His children. *Chastening* brings temporary suffering that is for our eternal benefit. What more do you learn about *chastening* from the following verses?

Psalm 94:12

Revelation 3:19a

DAY FOUR: Read Hebrews 12:7-11

1. Today's Scripture reading continues with the subject of the *chastening of the Lord*. According to Hebrews 12:7,8 what relationship does God's *chastening* prove?
 - a. As a loving Father, God will chasten His children. He loves and cares for us too much to not discipline us. This should cause us to *endure chastening*. Identify the benefits of God's *chastening* from Psalm 119:67,71.

2. In Hebrews 12:9,10 we view *chastening* from the standpoint of the natural compared to the spiritual. Read these verses carefully, comparing the discipline of an earthly father to the discipline of our heavenly Father. What do you see?
 - a. What should be our response to our heavenly Father? verse 9

3. To be *partakers of His holiness*, that is to become more like Jesus, is the Father's goal in our trials and sufferings. When you are in the midst of the discipline process the reality is: *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful*. Hebrews 12:11a What does Hebrews 12:11b tell us is produced *afterward*?
 - a. *Chastening* is painful yet there is hope in its outcome *to those who have been trained by it*. How should the outcome enable us to endure *chastening*?
 - b. Think about your own life and the state you might be in today if God had not disciplined you. In what way has His discipline affected you?

4. In every trial we can grow as a Christian if we have the right response. Trials should press us closer to Jesus. What principles from these verses can you apply when suffering, regardless of the source?

5. Consider the statement "Reproof is one proof of God's love for us". In what ways have you grown to appreciate God's reproof?

DAY FIVE: Read Hebrews 12:12-15

1. The writer now exhorts believers to action as he continues with the picture of a runner in a race. What three things does he tell Christians to do in Hebrews 12:12,13a?
 - a. Share what this means in a practical sense.
 - b. According to Hebrews 12:13b, what reason is given for these exhortations?
2. Thoughtfully write Hebrews 12:14 phrase by phrase.
 - a. *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy.* NIV How would the following verses help you *pursue (follow) peace and holiness*?
 - 1.) Romans 14:19
 - 2.) 2 Corinthians 7:1
3. In Hebrews 12:15, believers are exhorted to *look carefully*. Consider the consequences of disobedience as you complete the following phrases from the NKJV:
 - a. *lest anyone* (verse 15a)
 - 1.) God's grace does not fail, but man can fail to appropriate His grace. Give an example of this.
 - b. *lest any* (verse 15b)
 - 1.) Notice the result when a *root of bitterness* is allowed to grow. Bitterness comes if we allow disappointment to grow into resentment or when we hold grudges over past hurts and offenses. Bitterness often comes when we cannot understand the ways of God. Our trials can make us bitter or better. What should we do to keep this destructive sin from taking root in our heart?

