

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 07 Sep Hebrews 1:1-14 Who Is Jesus?
- 2) 14 Sep Hebrews 2:1-13 Pay Attention
- 3) 21 Sep Hebrews 2:14-18 Why One of Us?
- 4) 28 Sep Hebrews 3:1-19 Watch Out
- 5) 05 Oct Hebrews 4-5 Secured with Confidence
- 6) 12 Oct Hebrews 6:1-20 Don't Walk Away
- 7) 19 Oct Hebrews 7:1-28 Only Jesus Saves
- 8) 26 Oct Hebrews 8:1-13 Only Jesus Transforms
- 9) 02 Nov Hebrews 9:1-28 The Perfect Offering
- 10) 09 Nov Hebrews 10-11 Faith Defined
- 11) 16 Nov Hebrews 12:1-17 The Discipline of Suffering
- 12) 23 Nov Hebrews 12:18-29 A New Kind of Community
- 13) 30 Nov Hebrews 13:1-25 Living Out the Faith

INTRODUCTION

- FINALLY – The author has finished his discourse of what we need to know at the 40,000 foot level, and now he is about to show us how to take that info and minister at the street level
- Some think Christianity should be a **Luxury Cruise** where we just pray our heart's desire & presto-whamo, we get it on a silver platter – No hunger, no thirst, no worries, & everything's paid for?
- Actually, Christianity should be viewed more as a life-long tour of duty on a **Battleship**, where we are engaged in an all-out war. We are assured of ultimate victory, but we are promised hardships, persecutions, & shipwrecks along the way – & it's all for our good.

Passage	Comments
Hebrews 12:1-4	<p>Let's Get Serious With Our Faith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1a. "THEREFORE" since we are the ones who know Christ as Savior, and we have this Christian life sort of figured out, we need to be doing some stuff...BUT WHAT STUFF? • v1b. Who is this <i>"great cloud of witnesses"</i> that surrounds us? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Angels? OT Saints? Loved ones who have passed on? ◆ More likely, they are our neighbors, co-workers, family members & friends who are constantly watching us to see if our faith is REAL • v1c. What are the burdens that entangle us and how do we lay them aside? What happens if we like our burdens? What is our motivating force to drop our burdens? • v1d. How do we "run with endurance" in this Christian race? Can we sprint, or just walk casually? Is there an urgency to finish the race? • v2a. How do we stay focused on Jesus? • v2b. What was the joy that was set before Him? • v2c. What was the "shame of the cross"? More than likely Jesus was hung naked. Also, since death by crucifixion came by suffocation, what happens to a man struggling for air? • v3. Here is our MOTIVATION to not grow weary and faint – If Jesus can do it, so can we (SAY WHAT?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recall what transpired in the previous 11 chapters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus took care of the hard part of life – Our sins are covered, we are as pure as Jesus is before God 2. We have boldness to access God directly & seek help 3. If God can use imperfect characters like Abraham, Sarah, Moses, David, Elijah, & Gideon – He can use us • v4. <i>"You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin"</i> (SAY WHAT?) – IOW, we should not be High Maintenance Whining Babies when persecuted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recall these Christians lost their homes and jobs for Christ ◆ They and we are in a real war, and good soldiers still die
12:5-11	<p>God's Discipline Confirms Our Adoption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv5-7. How do we tell the difference between God's discipline in our lives vs "Sowing what we Reap" vs Happenstance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ For example. Is a car accident, an illness, or a job loss the result of God's intentional doing, or a fluke on our part, or it just rains on the just and the unjust? ◆ Consider this. If there is known, unrepentant sin, then consider it to be God's doing, and confess & repent

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v8. Illegitimacy if no discipline, means no ownership by God • vv9-11. Legitimacy of ownership if disciplined Illustration. A busy mom asked my wife and me if we could watch her troublesome young boy for a half a day. This boy was a terror at church and for whoever watched him since he never received any form of consistent discipline at home. Before she left our house, with her boy listening & squirming, I asked if I had her permission to be able to spank her son like one of my own kids – hard, fast, and continuously. If her answer was no, she could take her boy and go home. She said yes. Well, that boy was mindful and courteous for us the whole time.
12:12-17	<p>We Have Work To Do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v12. How do we strengthen those who are weak spiritually? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We may have to come along side for a time and help out till they are able to stand on their own..... Galatians 6:1-2 ◆ Sometimes we need to SHOW people how to manage their households, how to talk civilly w/ their loved ones, & how to properly discipline their kids – And not just tell them • v13. How do we make straight paths for spiritual healing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We should be intentional in our efforts to help the weak ◆ Throwing a lot of words out hoping that some might be caught; or throwing money or food at a situation may fall short of true help. People need true friends who have the time to minister to the whole person – body, soul & spirit ◆ Other: _____ • v14. How do we "pursue peace"? Is peace at all costs? – Recall Romans 12:18 <i>If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We, being in the know, are responsible to take the initiative • v15. How do we prevent people coming up short on Grace? And what is this defiling "root of bitterness"? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There must have been some squabbling going on, and a possible church split ◆ The loss of grace indicates there's sin in the camp ◆ Note: We cannot move forward with God till we confess, repent and restore • vv16-17. The challenge to prevent someone like Esau (who was immoral and godless with no chance of repentance) from becoming evident, conveys the serious situation these Hebrew Christians were possibly facing, & the author was saying take the steps necessary to prevent that. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ WHAT ARE THOSE STEPS?

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / BENEFITS

- As one Christian said, "Life's goal is not to finish without a scratch, but to slide in sideways totally used up for the Lord, and loudly proclaiming "WOW, What a ride!" – Anonymous

NEXT WEEK: Hebrews 12:18-29. Our New Covenant with God is based on Mt Zion and not Mt Sinai, which means we have a Kingdom which cannot be shaken – So let's show our gratitude

