

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 27TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

ENDURANCE (HEBREWS 12:1-3) CLOUD OF WITNESSES

After a chapter of testimonies of what faith can do, the author talks about this large cloud of witnesses. Some believe that they are looking down and watching. In context, it seems more like they are still giving testimony of what God has done, and what God can still do. Like Abel in 11:4, they still speak through their faith.

- **What will we do with their encouragement?**

LAY ASIDE HINDRANCE AND SIN

The writer knows that some are distracted by, and focused on, things that are not necessarily sinful, but it slows down their ability to see what they need to see. And of course, they were being tripped up by sin.

- **Our spiritual immaturity and unwillingness to grow through living by faith will be one of the biggest challenges to following Christ in this life. How can we succeed?**

ENDURE AND KEEP OUR EYES ON JESUS

The only way to run with endurance is to keep our eyes on Jesus, the creator and completer of faith.

- **This is not with our physical eyes. This is remembering that He is God and man, His obedience, suffering and death, His work of sacrifice and redemption, and His resurrection to the right hand of the Father. What we have read, we remember.**

JOY, ENDURANCE, SHAME, AND POWER

Jesus saw the joy that lay before Him and chose a shameful death so we could have salvation. He endured the worst that humanity could do, and the judgment of God, for us.

- **We know that Jesus suffered and endured, and we identify with Him in our weakness. We must remember that He is now at a place of supreme power and authority.**

CONSIDER HIM

Because of where He is, Jesus can help us now in our time of need.

- **"Keeping our eyes on Jesus" is not escaping from the world; it is an encouragement to continue living in it, persevering through the Holy Spirit's help. This is the only way we will endure, not grow weary, or give up.**

DISCIPLINE (HEBREWS 12:4-11) NOT RESISTED BUT HAVE FORGOTTEN

The writer reminds them of two things. They had difficulties but were still alive, and they had forgotten that God called them His children and gave them Fatherly instruction.

- **If we are here, God is not finished with us! Our problem is, when things go wrong, we start to think that God is angry with us or just plain neglecting us.**

IGNORING DISCIPLINE AND GIVING UP

They were guilty of misunderstanding God's role as Father. They were taking His discipline lightly and giving up when God convicted them of their sin.

- **Discipline includes instruction and correction. As a good parent, the end goal is development. God is a perfect parent who disciplines His children perfectly.**

ENDURE SUFFERING

Discipline is valuable but not fun. The writer says that godly discipline is a sign of love, acceptance, and relationship.

- **As parents, we try to discipline well. God's discipline always trains, grows, strengthens, and results in the peaceful fruit of righteousness. This is the next level of relationship with our Father.**

PURSUIT (HEBREWS 12:12-17) TIRED HANDS AND WEAK KNEES

It seems this writer is realistic when it comes to the pain of discipline and understanding the weakness and fear we may experience as God changes us.

- **As with any kind of training, regular submission to godly discipline leads to increased strength and righteousness, especially when we have surrendered our weaknesses and fears.**

FALLING SHORT OF THE GRACE OF GOD

Some believe "falling short of the grace of God" is about missing salvation. In this context, it seems that the church community is to watch over one another, from the weakest to the strongest, so that all would grow in holiness and live in the grace of God.

- **We worship, grow, and serve—together.**

BITTERNESS, IMMORALITY, AND IRREVERENCE

The warning here is that some things can contaminate the whole community. Bitterness is a path to sin, not righteousness. Immorality is giving in to temporary pleasure and irreverence is intentional unfaithfulness.

- **This is not about the world culture, this is about church culture. What are we pursuing?**

SINAI & ZION (HEBREWS 12:18-24) TWO MOUNTAINS = TWO COVENANTS

The writer returns to making a comparison between the old and new covenants. This time he contrasts the fear and terror that was experienced with the giving of the law at Mount Sinai and the grace and kindness of God seen in Jesus with His new covenant and His sprinkled blood.

MOUNT SINAI

Untouchable, fire, darkness, gloom, storms, ear piercing sounds, terrifying, trembling, fear, death.

- **Life under the old covenant included strict laws and terrible penalties, which struck terror into the hearts of people. They understood that the law brought condemnation.**
- **We have NOT come to that mountain!**

MOUNT ZION

Living God, heavenly, angels, festive, assembly, perfected people, Jesus.

- **This is not Jerusalem in Israel. This is our future and what we look forward to. It is heaven; where we see angels, every old covenant Believer, every martyr, every new covenant Believer, God the Father, and Jesus who gave His life (blood) for everyone who would follow Him.**

BETTER THAN THE BLOOD OF ABEL

The writer flashes back to the story of Abel in Genesis and Hebrews 11. Abel was commanded by God to bring a blood sacrifice and he faithfully fulfilled his responsibility. But, it did not save him.

- **Christ's blood is better because Jesus' blood saves! It completely washes away our sin and satisfies God's wrath once and for all.**

UNSHAKEN (HEBREWS 12:25-29) DO NOT REJECT THE ONE WHO SPEAKS

This is God's voice that shook the earth at Mount Sinai. They were judged because they rejected His covenant.

- **The new covenant is better and complete because of Christ. But, the penalty for rejecting it is still the same: judgment.**
- **Judgment is still coming and everything will suffer the "shaking" except God's Kingdom.**

LET US BE THANKFUL

This is a sign that we belong to God's Kingdom: gratitude.

- **Followers are thankful for God's mercy shown through His gift to us of His Son and High Priest and of Christ's sacrifice "once for all." We are serving God, knowing His power and holiness.**
- **We do not have to live a life of insecurity and fear.**

REVERENCE

- **Reverence is showing respect with awe.**
- **We tend to confuse reverence with fear for our lives.**
- **Too many times, life (and people) put us in a place of insecurity, hopelessness, and fear. We believed they had power over us and we surrendered to the pressure. Who do we turn to for strength and hope?**

FATHER

- **This should be a good word.**
- **Earthly parents should be examples of godly parents.**
- **For all that we may have wished our parents would have been, God is the superior, perfect Father. His discipline is REAL LOVE and is for our good.**

SHAKING

- **Sometimes, our life gets shaken.**
- **If it is right now, God is talking.**
- **We tend to focus our attention on our circumstances but God wants us to keep our eyes on Him. He is correcting us and teaching us. He might be shaking us loose from what's holding us down in fear. Will we trust Him? Will we be thankful? Are we living in fear, or in REVERENCE and AWE?**