

February 1, 2009
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Hebrews 12:12-17

“Evangelizing the Church”

- I. Jesus Christ: Infinitely Better in His PERSON (1-7)
- II. Jesus Christ: Infinitely Better in His WORK (8:1-10:18)
- III. Christianity: An Infinitely Better WALK OF FAITH (10:19-13:24)**
 - A. The Confidence of Faith (10:19-39)
 - B. The Examples of Faith (11)
 - C. The **Race** of Faith (12)
 - 1. Example of Christ’s Endurance (12:1-3) [Produces Zeal]
 - 2. Exhortation to Endure God’s Chastening (12:4-24)**
 - a. Father’s Discipline – v. 4-11**
 - b. Family Directives – v. 12-17**

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever been disciplined / chastised? [Pulled over by a police officer; sent to the school Principal; fired from a job...] What was your initial reaction to it? Were you glad it happened? Did it draw you near to the person who was disciplining you? What might be some initial reactions of people when they are disciplined / chastised by God?
2. Hebrews 12:12 begins with “Therefore.” What is the therefore there for? What is the connection between the previous verses and v. 12ff? What does discipline / chastisement have to do with what the author of Hebrews says in the next section?
3. Hebrews 12:12-13 alludes to statements in Isaiah 35:3 and Prov. 4:26. What is the context of Is. 35? How does thinking about a glorious future help you with a very difficult present?
4. According to Hebrews 12, what is our responsibility toward people in the church who are struggling under the weight of persecution and/or discipline?
5. Do you believe there are people faithfully attending churches around the world who are not genuinely saved? If yes, what percentage of people attending churches would you guesstimate are truly saved? Does this concern you?
6. According to Hebrews 12, what is our responsibility toward people in the church who are not yet saved? (i.e., those who need to be healed; those who need to see the Lord; those who need to not come short of the grace of God; those that are bitter; those that are immoral or godless)
7. What is “the sanctification” that is necessary for someone to see the Lord? [See Hebrews 10:1, 10, 14 for connection between “perfect” and “sanctified”]
8. How might a person experiencing persecution “come short of the grace of God”? What can we do to encourage them not to come short?
9. According to Deuteronomy 29:18, who/what was a root of bitterness? What is the point in Hebrews 12:15? How would that kind of person cause trouble and defile many? What is our responsibility toward that kind of person? What might happen if we just ignore them?
10. Why does the author of Hebrews use Esau as an example of what he is discussing here? In what way is Esau selling his birthright for a single meal analogous to a person who walks away from Jesus because of persecution? Why is this described as “immoral or godless”?
11. Whose repentance is referred to in v. 17? Esau’s or Isaac’s? [See the story in Gen. 27:30-40] What is the point of Hebrews 12:17? Will immoral or godless people inherit the kingdom of God? If not, what is our responsibility toward them?
12. How is your testimony to people inside and outside the church? Does the way you handle persecution, difficulties, trial, discipline, etc., make people want to know the Lord? Is your attitude and good works such that people want to glorify your Father who is in heaven (Mt. 5:16)? Is your excellent behavior and good deeds (while you are being slandered & persecuted) such that people will glorify God in the day of visitation (1 Pet. 2:12)? If not, what needs to change?
13. Do you know anyone in the church who has not yet repented and come to a sincere faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation? What can you do to minister to them?