

A STUDY IN HEBREWS

week 10: Hebrews 10:19-11:40

Have you ever participated in a contest or competition? Maybe it was academic, maybe it was athletic. Maybe it was as simple as playing Monopoly with the family on vacation, or maybe you ran a marathon. Have you ever undertaken a massive project at school or at work? Have you ever taken on some DIY project at home? Whatever you have participated in, do you remember how it challenged you? Do you remember moments where you felt like you wanted to give up? This week, we see how the author of Hebrews was writing to a discouraged band of believers. The text helps us to remember what it looks like to persevere in the faith, both individually and as a community.

Think back to a time where you took on some big goal and felt like giving up. If you are with a group, share this time with the group.

DIGGING INTO THE TEXT:

READ: HEBREWS 10:19-25

In the text, the author speaks of the curtain being opened. What idea is the author getting across? Why does the curtain matter? What did it represent?

How did people under the Law "draw near" to God? What is different today?

In 10:22-23, the 'Let us' encouragements contain the three cardinal Christian values of faith, hope and love. How are these three tied to the work of Jesus?

In 10:24-25, we see the author tie perseverance in the faith to being part of Christian community. In what way does Christian community help us persevere?

In what ways do your unique, God-given giftings enable you to spur other believers on to love and good deeds (v. 24)?

READ: HEBREWS 10:26-31

What do you think the author is saying here?

Why does this come across as harsh? Think back to earlier weeks- what warning is the author trying to get across? Why does it matter?

Some argue that because the author tells us earlier in chapter 10 that the sacrifice of Jesus covers all sin for all people for all time, that this passage feels contradictory. Yet, the author is stating that since Jesus died once, and animal sacrifice can no longer pass as atoning work for our sins, that there is no sacrifice left for those who continue to willfully sin. Sometimes, it helps to look at other passages of Scripture to gain a broader understanding.

SCRIPTURE LINK: READ ROMANS 5:20-6:14

How do the words of the Apostle Paul resonate with the warning from the author of Hebrews?

Those who live by faith, by definition, can be free from the slavery that comes from sin. The author of Hebrews then goes on to talk to us about why faith matters. We also are told of those who set an example of faith for the readers of Hebrews.

What does it look like to live by faith? How do we do this?

What does it mean to shrink back?

At this point in your spiritual journey, do you tend to shrink back or to live by faith?

READ: HEBREWS 11:1-2

According to this very well-known passage, what differentiates faith from other methods of becoming certain of something?

Read through the rest of Hebrews 11 individually.

Everyone share one example of faith that you find particularly encouraging. Why? What resonates with you? (If you are going through this sheet on your own, do the same exercise, and talk to God about why that particular story sticks out to you).

As we read through Hebrews 11, we are struck by the fact that these great people of faith only experienced a glimpse of things to come. According to Hebrews 11:39-40, what is the greater reality that they (and we) all await?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

What are personal implications for how these passages encourage us to live as believers?

As you move into the rest of your week, think on this:

- What does it look like to draw nearer to God? What are some ways we can draw nearer as believers?

- What is one practice you will consistently follow for the next 2 weeks to help you seek God more?