

Jesus' Present Ministry: Implications for Our Perseverance

Most of us have known people who have become so disappointed with God that they've experienced a crisis of faith. Some have abandoned their faith altogether, while others have scaled back their expectations of God so drastically that they can never be disappointed by Him again. The Bible encourages us to do the opposite of this. The Bible tells us to persevere and to live by faith until the day we die. As we continue to look at Jesus' present ministry at the right hand of God, today's passage provides a valuable perspective on persevering.

Opening Question: Have you ever gone through a time where your faith was deeply challenged and you were tempted to give up on God in some sense?

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

1. The author makes a connection to the previous passage here using the term, "Therefore" (v. 1). What's the connection?
2. How does the "cloud of witnesses" (v. 1) provide a source of encouragement for our perseverance?
3. What kinds of things come to your mind as possible "encumbrances" (v. 1) that can hinder a believer's ability to run the Christian life with perseverance? What might it mean to lay them aside?
4. What sins are you easily entangled in (v. 1)? What might it look like to lay these aside?
5. What does this passage teach about Jesus?

6. What does it mean to fix our eyes on Jesus (v. 2)?

Steve said:

The third detail we're told about Jesus' race is that He has "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." This was the plan all along. The fact that He is **sitting** signifies that His work is finished; the fact that He is sitting **at the right hand of the throne of God** signifies that He occupies a place of honor, power, and authority. He is now experiencing "the joy [that was] set before Him" while on earth. Jesus' experience confirms that God can be trusted to deliver what He's promised. Here we see the connection between Jesus' present ministry and our perseverance in a couple of ways. First, the fact that Jesus is seated at God's right hand should give us confidence that we too can live by faith throughout this life. He is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Second, the fact that Jesus is seated at God's right hand should remind us that as our great high priest, He can and will give us everything we need to persevere.

7. Jesus is our great high priest who is seated at God's right hand! Practically, how can we allow this truth to give us what we need to persevere?
8. There is a very real risk of growing weary and losing heart (v. 3) in this life at times otherwise that author wouldn't make this point. Honestly, are you feeling any of that these days?