

### ***Jesus' Perseverance and Our Perseverance***

The difficulties we face in life at times can cause us to lose heart and want to give up. In some cases, life can seem so unfair that we are tempted to even give up on God. The original recipients of Hebrews were on the verge of such reactions. They were Jews who came to believe in Jesus as the promised Messiah. They had started well. But because they were suffering for their faith, they were tempted to quit following Jesus. In our passage today, the author issues a challenge for his readers to persevere until the end. This challenge is just as relevant to us. We too face opposition at times. We too can get weary and wonder if going back to our old way of life would be better. And so, let's consider Jesus' perseverance and what it means for our perseverance.

#### **Read Hebrews 12:1-3**

1. The author makes a connection to the previous passage using the term, "Therefore." What's the connection?
2. To whom does "cloud of witnesses" refer? How does this cloud of witnesses provide a source of encouragement for our perseverance?

Steve said:

The author mentions every "**encumbrance**" or weight. That refers to anything that slows you down whether it's inherently sinful or not. In our context, an encumbrance could be anything from our habits of eating, drinking, and sleeping to our choices in entertainment and recreation. Each of us needs to be honest with ourselves about the encumbrances that slow us down in the race we're running.

3. What things come to mind as "encumbrances" that hinder your ability to run the Christian life with perseverance? What might it mean to lay them aside?
4. The author also says that we are to lay aside "the sin" (singular) which easily entangles us. Do you think he is addressing a specific sin? Why or why not?

5. If we are going to live with perseverance, we need to keep our focus on Jesus. What does it mean to fix our eyes on Jesus (v. 2)?
  
6. Jesus endured by looking to the joy that lay ahead. What was that joy? And how can we imitate Jesus in having this same focus?
  
7. There is a very real risk of growing weary and losing heart in this life at times otherwise the author wouldn't make this point (v. 3). What can tempt you at times to grow weary and lose heart? Where are you in need of endurance?
  
8. What is your main application from this study?

### Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted this Week

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**Daily Devotion:** Use the Scripture readings and video meditations that will be provided via email every day this week to help you focus on Jesus. Make sure you are signed up for the eBlast.