

## **Hebrews Chapter 12: Stay in the Race (Part 2)**

### **Week 13**

Worldliness isn't just simply indulging in the cravings of our flesh and partaking in sinful things. Worldliness also speaks of doing what is right in one's own eyes, leaving God out.

The heart of worldliness is a person's desires over the will of God.

We have to rely on Christ's help to keep our eyes on Him and seek His will over our desires.

#### **Verses 14-17 (Resist the wrongful ways of the world)**

Worldliness is a danger. If we're not careful to guard ourselves against it, it can seep into our hearts—not only contaminating and corrupting us, but also the church.

Not everything in this world is bad. God has made good things in this world for us to enjoy. As Christians, we are called to be set apart from this world, but that doesn't mean we are not to live in it. We are to live in this world, but not conform to its ways,

We must keep the right perspective, following the pattern of Christ and hold the good things of this world in their rightful place.

#### **Point 1: Pursue peace with people and holiness with God.**

This world today is full of hate, divisiveness, and discord.

The world's view of life is about pursuing one's happiness, rather than one's holiness.

We must follow the Lord and do what pleases Him. Our lives are to revolve around God, not ourselves. Living for the Lord involves sacrifice, doing hard things not always enjoyable or easy.

Pursuing peace and holiness requires effort on our part. It doesn't just happen.

According to the world, life is about looking out for number one.

God's word tells us we must look after each other, caring for one another. As Christians, especially within the church, we are to concern ourselves with other's spiritual needs to keep the church spiritually healthy and thriving.

A healthy family knows what's going on in each other's lives and does their part to contribute and help, especially when sickness enters.

#### **Point 2: Take an interest in and care for one another's spiritual wellness.**

Life is not about living for ourselves. It's living for the Lord, and in doing so, comes helping and serving others.

Resources: The Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce; Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Hebrews by Charles Swindoll; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; Hebrews by Matthew Z. Capps; Hebrews Life Change Series; The Jeremiah Study Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).  
[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

We are to help with someone's physical needs, if we can, but more importantly are their spiritual needs.

Esau came home from a hunting trip starving. Tricked by his twin brother, he traded his birthright for a bowl of stew.

Esau didn't care anything about his birthright. He despised it.

If you despise something, you're not going to care what you give it up for, especially when you have something tangible in front of you that your flesh is craving.

Esau is an example of one who lives for the world—the here and now. Someone who's not interested in the things of God, until one day when it's too late, realizing the gravity of their mistake.

**Point 3: Don't trade the things that are eternal for the fleeting things of this world.**

Esau is prove that sometimes sin and mistakes can have consequences that last forever.

If we continue to put worldly things above God, like Esau, we may wind up in an irreversible condition, missing out on eternal blessings.

**Verses 18-24 (Receive and rely on God's grace)**

The writer brings these runners to a crossroad—one path leading to Mount Sinai, the other leading to Mount Zion. He illustrates again two opposing systems. Mount Sinai, the old covenant, is earthly, temporary, and no longer effective. Mount Zion, the new covenant, is heavenly, eternal, and complete.

The Mount Sinai system was designed to make all understand God's holiness and the importance to follow and uphold all of His laws and strict regulations. This system kept God at a fearful distance.

The Mount Sinai system had a worldly approach to worship.

This heavenly Jerusalem is God's city, and will one day be our city. Here, God welcomes us into His loving presence.

When Cain killed Abel, his blood "cried out" for judgement, because of Cain's guilt, but Christ's blood "cries out" from heaven declaring our forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt. That's why it speaks better things than Abel's blood.

**Point 4: Run with confidence and boldness, knowing you have been cleansed with the blood of Christ and can now approach God anytime—now and forever.**

Resources: The Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce; Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Hebrews by Charles Swindoll; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; Hebrews by Matthew Z. Capps; Hebrews Life Change Series; The Jeremiah Study Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).  
[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

We can trust Christ's work on the cross. He is now the mediator of the new covenant. He is the reason we can now draw near to God without fear. He is our strength to keep worldliness out of our hearts.

### **Verses 25-29 (Respect and regard God's holiness)**

Even though, because of Christ, our sins have been removed that doesn't mean God's holiness has.

He is a holy God. He is a devouring fire. We are to respect and regard His holiness.

#### **Point 5: Listen and obey God when He speaks.**

If the people of Mount Sinai shook and trembled with fear and suffered judgement when they refused to listen, how much more responsible are we who refuse to listen today, having received the benefits of the new covenant.

We, as Christians, will not have to face judgement, but we will, one day, have to stand before God and give an account.

Worldliness hinders us from hearing God's voice. Because, our focus is not on hearing God and doing His will, but listening to our heart's desires.

One day God will shake not only the earth, but the heavens also. And only those things that are unshakable will remain.

#### **Point 6: Build your life on what's unshakable.**

Worldliness keeps us from building on what's unshakable.

When God comes to shake the heavens and the earth again, everything worldly will fall away.

Christ is our firm foundation. If we build our lives on Him, we have nothing to worry about. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, the writer tells us to be thankful and please God by worshiping Him with holy fear and awe.

#### **Point 7: Serve and worship God with reverence and a holy fear.**

Fear that doesn't speak of terror and trembling, but rather of reverence and adoration. We are to serve God out of gratitude for making us a part of His unshakable Kingdom, Mount Zion.

Christ is our everlasting King and has an everlasting Kingdom.

He is worthy of our praise, our hearts, and our service. May all our desires be reversed to keep to keep Him first.

Resources: The Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce; Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Hebrews by Charles Swindoll; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; Hebrews by Matthew Z. Capps; Hebrews Life Change Series; The Jeremiah Study Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).  
[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

## Homework Questions

1. Do you agree that worldliness boils down to a person's desires over the will of God? Why or why not?
2. What are some songs that have been an anthem for you in your faith? If possible, listen to them this week and write the lyrics that speak to you and encourage you the most. Let them remind you to keep running with patience and perseverance.
3. Why is worldliness a danger to us and the church? In what ways can it cause damage?
4. Read Romans 12: 2. Why is our refusal to conform to the world's views have to be firmly planted in our minds, and not just our behavior and customs?
5. What are some practical ways to pursue peace with people and holiness with God?
6. What are some things we can do to care for other's spiritual needs?
7. Why does living for the Lord involve helping and serving others?
8. Why is the example of Esau so important for us to guard ourselves against worldliness?
9. How were these believers tempted to be like Esau?
10. In your own words describe the differences between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion.
11. Who are some of the OT and NT saints you're most looking forward to fellowshiping with in heaven and why?

Resources: The Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce; Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Hebrews by Charles Swindoll; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; Hebrews by Matthew Z. Capps; Hebrews Life Change Series; The Jeremiah Study Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).  
[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

12. What is the significance in knowing that God's holiness remains, even though our sins have been removed?
13. Why is important to listen to God and obey when He speaks.
14. What are some things that are unshakable in this world?
15. Read Psalm 103. List the many ways David praises God for. This week, spend time pondering and praising God for all the wonderful things He has done and continues to do for you.
16. Look up the following verses: 1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 95:6, 96:9; Matthew 4:10; John 4: 19-24; Romans 12:1; Rev. 14:7, 15:4. What do these verses say about how to worship God?

### Personal Questions

How have you seen worldliness seep into you own heart?

Are you currently struggling with worldliness? If so, pray and ask God for His help and guidance to help you put His will above your desires.

How often do you think of the spiritual needs of others? Pray and ask God for help to show you how you can help someone's spiritual needs this week.

Do you view your service to God as an act of worship? Why or why not?

Does knowing one day you will have to give account before God affect the way you live today? Why or why not?

In light of question #16, does your personal worship of the Lord reflect these verses? If not, commit some, if not all, of these verses to memory to help you worship God in a way that honors and pleases Him.

Resources: The Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce; Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Hebrews by Charles Swindoll; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; Hebrews by Matthew Z. Capps; Hebrews Life Change Series; The Jeremiah Study Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).  
[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)