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LESSON QUARTERLY

ADULT BIBLE CLASS

A LIVING FAITH

*(PSALMS, ACTS,
1 CORINTHIANS 13,
HEBREWS)*

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UNIFORM SERIES INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS FOR CHRISTIAN TEACHING

September • October • November

A LIVING FAITH

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FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Romans 5:1-5
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10
PRINTED TEXT: Hebrews 10:19-31

HEBREWS 10:19-31

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.



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Pointing to Jesus

In the book of Hebrews, we see the role of the Son of God in creation (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Jesus is described as the “captain” of our salvation (2:10). Christ serves as both our eternal high priest (10:21) and our eternal sacrifice for sins (9:26).

The book of Hebrews is tied to the Old Testament. It quotes the Old Testament more than 30 times, sometimes at considerable length. This is done to dig into these older Scriptures and find what they have to say about Jesus and the new covenant. In particular, the author is concerned to show that the priests of Israel, their temple, and their sacrifices were all pointers to Jesus.

Faith's Boldness

10:19, 20. The phrase *the holiest* refers to the innermost chamber of the Jewish temple. However, the author of Hebrews is not speaking of an earthly holy place, but of a perfect place. In the earthly temple in Jerusalem, the Most Holy Place was protected by a large veil or curtain (Exodus 26:31-33). There is now no need for such a barrier between God and humans. We now have full access to God himself because of the work of Jesus Christ, through His body. God bridged the gap between sinful humanity and our holy God when He took on human form. Through Jesus, we have come to know our Father in Heaven in a way we never could before.

21. Jewish priests came from the tribe of Levi (Deuteronomy 17:9, 18). Hebrews 7:14 acknowledges that Jesus' genealogy does not include lineage from the priestly tribe of Levi. Even so, the author already has made a careful argument that shows

Jesus possessing a superior claim to high priesthood, for He is a priest like Melchizedek (see Genesis 14:18). The priesthood of Melchizedek is superior for two reasons. First, it was acknowledged by Abraham, the ancestor of Levi (Hebrews 7:4). Second, it has an eternal character, without beginning or end (7:3). This fits Jesus, for He has conquered death and can therefore be an eternal high priest (7:16). In describing Jesus as the *high priest over the house of God*, the author refers to the spiritual house of God, which is made up of the believers—the church (Ephesians 2:21, 22).

22. We move to an image of a temple pilgrim entering for worship. The sprinkling is a reference to the use of sacrificial blood to sprinkle the people and the implements of the temple to purge them from impurity. The Christian believer has no need for this ceremony of physical blood spattering, for he or she has been given the purifying effects of the atoning blood of Jesus, shed on the cross.

We also approach our worship with washed bodies. While the author may be using the image of Christian baptism, it is more likely that we are being given a bigger picture in which the ultimate cleansing of a believer is a spiritual cleansing, a sanctification through the gift of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:11).

Coming into the presence of God is to be done with the heart properly prepared. It must be *a true heart in full assurance of faith*. The emphasis in the Greek text is not on the assurance part, but on the full part. Our hearts are fully sincere, completely trusting and believing. We have every reason for this confident approach to God for we have the perfect high priest who has taken care of the sin that once separated us from our Creator.

23. The work of Jesus, which allows our access to God, gives us reason to *hold fast* to our hope. We can remain faithful because

KEY VERSE

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised). —Hebrews 10:23

God is faithful. The Lord God always keeps His promises.

24. If one is holding fast to an assured faith, then believers will influence one another in attitude and action. This attitude of love should work itself out in acts of good works and loving deeds as a natural expression of our salvation and the result of trust in our loving God.

25. Participation in the weekly fellowship of a church body is a way to practice love and good deeds. The author is exhorting his readers to be regular in attendance for the benefit of other believers. We need each other. We function as the body of Christ as the Lord intends when we assemble in the name of Jesus to worship, fellowship, and learn. The fact that the readers see the day approaching—most likely a reference to Judgment Day—adds a sense of urgency.

Faith's Determination

26. The text addresses the issue of ongoing sin in the life of the believer. If taken out of context, the verse seems to say that if we have made a Christian commitment and we make a knowingly sinful choice, then we fall into a state of no more sacrifice for sins (unforgiveness). However, the Bible teaches that we can be forgiven for sins if we confess them and ask for forgiveness (see 1 John 1:9). We should put the phrase *no more sacrifice for sins* in the larger context of what the author has already taught. There is one, final, ultimate sacrifice for sins: the sacrifice of Jesus through His death on the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus is the only sufficient way to cancel our sins; there is no other.

27. The author points out the results of rejecting the sacrifice of Jesus. The one who rejects Christ has only the promise of judgment and punishment in his or her future. The ultimate justice of God will not be thwarted by unbelievers (*the adversaries*).

28. Drawing on the Jewish roots of his readers, the author reminds them of the harsh judgment under the Law of Moses (see Deuteronomy 17:6, 7). The Old Testament gives many examples of the necessary deaths of those whose sin was a threat to the purity and integrity of the nation of Israel, God's covenant people.

29. The author pushes hard for the reader to understand the seriousness of what he is saying. If certain sinners were judged harshly under the Law of Moses, the judgment of those who have rejected the sacrificial death of Jesus will be even harsher. Not only do unbelievers reject the salvation offered through Christ, they also reject the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, *the Spirit of grace*. *Hath done despite* translates an unusually strong Greek verb to express the author's outrage at how ungrateful unbelievers react to God's work in Christ. The idea is that of a deep, deliberate contempt.

30, 31. The author quotes Deuteronomy 32:35, 36. Jesus was not sent into the world as a judge, but as a Savior. Yet the promises of judgment on sinful people are sure. If we reject Jesus, there is nothing to keep us from receiving our deserved judgment at the hands of the living God. God's final judgment will result in a verdict of eternal life or eternal death. Only if we have Jesus as our advocate will we receive the verdict of life.

CENTRAL THOUGHT

Our faith in Christ gives us the assurance that our future is in the hands of a loving God. Because of Jesus' atoning death, we are not subject to God's condemnation and wrath. This is the life of freedom God has given us.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

Encouragement for a Bold Faith

Perseverance is the encouragement that comes from today’s study. Working with your group, we will discover wonderful encouragements for a bold faith and a new appreciation for God’s grace. When necessary, use an extra sheet of paper to write down your answers.

ACTIVITY 1: FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

Look at the following verses from today’s text and identify one or more Old Testament images for each verse. What is the author of Hebrews teaching us through that imagery?

	OLD TESTAMENT IMAGERY	INTERPRETATION OR APPLICATION
verse 19		
verse 20		
verse 21		
verse 22a		
verse 22b		

ACTIVITY 2: A BOLD FAITH

Explore these references to discover what things we are challenged to do and *not* to do through our bold faith.

verse 22 _____

verse 23 _____

verse 24 _____

verse 25a _____

verse 25b _____

ACTIVITY 3: NO SACRIFICE FOR SINS

Review Hebrews 10:26-31 and then answer the following questions.

1. How should we interpret “no more sacrifice for sins” in verse 26?
2. What are some of the words or phrases in verses 27-31 that describe the harsh judgment of God on sinners from the Law of Moses?
3. How and why do Christians have the wonderful security of the “full assurance of faith” of verse 22?

FAITH GIVES ASSURANCE



DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 27:1-6

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 11; Psalm 46

PRINTED TEXT: Hebrews 11:1-6; Psalm 46

HEBREWS 11:1-6

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

PSALM 46

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

The Enduring Nature of True Faith

The book of Hebrews is a carefully crafted argument that shows the superiority of the Christian faith over the Old Testament structure from which it comes. In making his arguments, the author always shows great respect for the earlier Scriptures. The result is a crescendo that reaches its height in chapter 11, which is sometimes called “Faith’s Hall of Fame.” There the author offers an interesting list of faithful individuals from Israel’s history and summarizes these faithful folk as “so great a cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1).

Psalm 46 is an appropriate Old Testament counterpart to Hebrews 11. It’s a “Hall of Fame” for the faithful too, but in this case there is only one member: the Lord God of Israel. Together, these two passages of Scripture help us understand the enduring nature of true faith in God.

Faith That Pleases God

10:1. The verse before us has often been seen as presenting a biblical description of faith. This description has two parts. First, *faith is the substance of things hoped for*. We don’t hope for things in the past, but for things in the present and future. If we have no faith, then we have no basis for hope. Second, *faith is the evidence of things not seen*. Faith is a trusting hope in God and His promises, even though we do not see God. We have faith in the person of God, and our faith brings forth obedient actions according to His will.

2. By *the elders* the author of Hebrews means the ancestors of the faith whose lives are recorded in the Old Testament. The au-

thor is convinced that the Old Testament has much to teach us about faith. As important as anything is that these ancestors *obtained a good report* because of their faith. The commendation itself is from God. God gives His positive witness to the effective faith of these men and women.

3. The author now fills out his definition of faith by giving an example. The Christian’s understanding of the origins of the universe is based on faith that the Creator God designed and made the worlds through His powerful word (see John 1:1-3). Those who deny the existence of a Creator God prefer a materialistic explanation. But science will never be able to prove or disprove that God created the universe, for it is a matter for faith.

4. Jesus spoke of “righteous Abel” (Matthew 23:35). What made this rather obscure Old Testament figure “righteous”? We have the answer here. Abel was righteous because he trusted God and gave him a sacrifice of the very best of his flocks (Genesis 4:4). He believed in God, and this resulted in action.

5. The author’s second faith hero, Enoch, is also from the book of Genesis. Enoch was a man who “walked with God” (Genesis 5:22). This indicates a very close relationship with the Lord, a faith relationship. One day Enoch was gone, taken by God (5:24). Those who knew Enoch believed this was an act of God. The fact that Enoch did not see death testifies to his faithfulness.

6. The author gives a more dynamic, working description of faith. Two things must undergird the life of a person of faith. First, we cannot have a faith relationship with God if we do not acknowledge His existence. Second, we must accept certain things about God. One such thing is that He is a rewarder. This pictures a personal God, a God with standards and expectations. Earnest attempts to do God’s will do

KEY VERSE

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. —Hebrews 11:1

not go unnoticed. While we cannot earn God's favor, He does care that we are living to serve and please Him. As we move to a consideration of Psalm 46, we learn other things about our personal God.

Faith That Recognizes God

46:1. The psalmist begins his great statement of faith by highlighting three attributes of God. First, *God is our refuge*. This word pictures a place of safety, a protected shelter. *God is our . . . strength* has the sense of unquestioned authority. This is the kind of power you want to have on your side. It is strength through righteousness. Third, God is present and ready in trouble. He is ready to help us at all times.

2, 3. The psalmist gives examples of where these attributes are needed. He tells of natural disasters, but he is speaking figuratively also. God is our refuge and strength when our personal world is shaken, when we are flooded with misery and hardship. We do not stand alone in these times, so we need not fear. God is greater and more powerful than anything that threatens or bedevils us. Faith in God dispels fear.

4. Cities in the ancient world are sited with three requirements in mind: availability of water, defensibility, and access to trade routes. Two of the three are stressed here. The picture of a river flowing through *the city of God* is one of great plenty and blessing, truly a cause to be glad. The psalmist compares this bounty with the presence of God in the city. A city's defensible position is enhanced by elevation, since this puts an attacking army at a disadvantage. The psalmist speaks of the presence of *God . . . the most High*, and you can't get any more elevation than that!

5. The ultimate provision is to have God in the city. Having God's presence in our lives has similar, confident results: gladness and security. Faith says that God's help will come in a timely manner.

6. *The heathen* are those peoples other than Israel. They are enemies of God and therefore enemies of God's people. For these foreign nations to fall means they will be defeated in battle. The people of Israel find ultimate security in God's protection.

7. The phrase *the Lord of hosts* means "Lord of armies" or "master of the heavenly armies." This is a military idea to indicate the invincible power of the God of Israel. The psalmist's faith in God's power gives him the confidence to envision the Lord himself as Israel's refuge.

8, 9. The *desolations* in mind here are the ruins of a defeated army after a battle, such as broken bows and spears and burning shields. Israel can look back on her history to the many times when God's hand was evident in military successes. Those opposing God come to a bad end. This is a lesson learned very painfully by Israel herself when she abandons her covenant with the Lord. The result: exile in foreign lands.

10. The psalmist now moves to the Lord himself. In the end, God always will be exalted—recognized as having the highest possible position. Our response is to *be still* in our understanding of the power and provision of God. Being still and quiet is an act of faith.

11. This is a bold statement of the Lord as the commander of invincible armies and as an impregnable fortress. This is the center of faith. Our God has the power and mercy to see us through any trial of life.

CENTRAL THOUGHT

By simply having faith in God's strength, we can be rescued from any trial of life. And through our earnest attempts to do God's will, we can please God.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

FAITH GIVES ASSURANCE

Team Up!

Let's discover how we can define faith and ways to live by faith every day. Complete the following assignment that was given to your team. You will need to write your answers on an extra sheet of paper.

TEAM A:

Paraphrase Hebrews 11:1 and 11:6. The paraphrase should help describe faith. Be ready to tell how or why Abel and Enoch are good examples of faith.

TEAM B:

Give an example of someone you know who has discovered the truth of Psalm 46:1, 11 as he or she experienced extreme difficulty in life (do not use real names).

What are some of the blessings of Psalm 46:10, and how can we practice this "be still" discipline?

Using all of Psalm 46, what encouragement would you share with a person who has been laid off? How do you do this without being flippant or Pollyannaish?

TEAM C:

Examine the words of the hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," which is based on Psalm 46. Read this psalm and find lines in the hymn that portray faith. How is each significant for life today?

Pass It Along

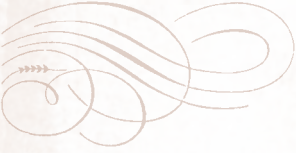
Realizing that faith is always one generation from extinction, what are some ways we can pass our faith along to succeeding generations that will help them become lifelong believers?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

In the space below, write a three-part prayer. This prayer will be kept personal. The first part of the prayer should thank God for the assurance He offers through today's texts. The second part is a confession of weak faith. In the third part, express a commitment to practice one or more faith disciplines, citing one of "Faith's Hall of Fame" individuals as a model.

PERSONAL PRAYER OF FAITH

FAITH EMPOWERS ENDURANCE



DEVOTIONAL READING: James 5:7-11

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 12:1-13

PRINTED TEXT: Hebrews 12:1-11

HEBREWS 12:1-11

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.



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Practical Matters of Faith

The first 10 chapters of Hebrews lay out a strong case for understanding Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the prophecies and expectations of the Old Testament. Hebrews 11 reminds us of the many faithful men and women of the Old Testament era who could only look forward to the salvation effected through Jesus Christ. Beginning with chapter 12, the author becomes more focused on practical matters. Here the author is writing to folks he knows, with an awareness of specific issues that are troubling their church or churches.

Running with Endurance

12:1. The *cloud of witnesses* is made up of the faithful men and women of chapter 11. The author uses the figure of things that hinder us and the general category of sin. We can readily understand the conflict between sin and faithful living, for yielding to sin is the opposite of living by faith. The hindrances are the relationships and commitments we may have that deter us from faithful obedience. For the original readers, these hindrances may be their continuing ties to the Jewish synagogue. But if their love for the synagogue and its people draws them away from Christ, then those ties must be severed.

The life of the Christian is compared with a footrace. The Greek word the author uses for *race* comes across in English as our word *agony*. This is not a pleasant little jog in the park. It is a lifelong run,

KEY VERSE

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.
—Hebrews 12:1 2

slogging through nasty weather and over rough terrain.

2. Hebrews continues the description of the faithful life as a race by applying it to Jesus himself. Jesus sets the course for us to live by the example of His life. Three aspects of Jesus' race-life are mentioned. First, the fact that He *endured the cross* compares Jesus with a runner who continues the race despite great physical pain. Second, Jesus did not let the shame of His road to the cross keep Him from finishing. The cross in the first century signifies the shameful way in which criminals are executed. While Jesus was aware of the manner of His death long before His final journey to Jerusalem, He did not try to avoid it. Third, Jesus reached His goal. His final place is to be seated at God's right hand, sharing in His judgment throne.

3. The painful yet faithful life-race of Jesus is held up as an encouragement for the readers, especially those who are ready to call it quits. Jesus not only endured pain but also *contradiction of sinners*—the hostility of evil people. Hebrews calls the readers to persevere even though they may be weary of this continuing hostility. Perseverance happens only when we keep our spiritual eyes focused on the goal: eternal life in fellowship with Jesus.

Growing by Correction

4. The author now shifts to show a contrast between Jesus and His readers: they *have not yet resisted unto blood*. If Hebrews is intended for a church or churches in or around Jerusalem (as many believe), then there are several memories of martyrdom. Stephen (Acts 7:59, 60) and James the brother of John (12:1, 2) were put to death in the city. Those reading the message of Hebrews in the first century obviously are not dead. The author is not saying that their sufferings for the faith have been minor,

but that they still do not compare with Jesus or others who have been faithful to the point of death in their striving against sin (see Revelation 2:10).

5, 6. The author now uses Scripture to illustrate the nature of God's discipline for believers, specifically Proverbs 3:11, 12. In Proverbs, the chastening of the Lord is presented in the context of a father who corrects his son. The good father recognizes the goal of chastening: encouragement for the child not to repeat disobedience. From a biblical perspective, the loving parents are those who discipline their children consistently.

We should not be surprised, then, that our loving Father disciplines us (Deuteronomy 8:5; 2 Samuel 7:14). This is not to say that every bad thing that happens in our lives is punishing discipline from the Lord. It is to say that hardship may be for our benefit in the long run as we become stronger and more disciplined in our walk with Jesus.

7. If God's chastening is a sign of God's loving concern, then we should see it as a sign that God is truly our Father. God is not a distant Father who visits only occasionally to bestow gifts and pleasures. God is an active, ever-present Father who watches over us continually.

8. The author gives a warning to those who seek to avoid suffering for the faith. We should question our relationship with God if we never undergo the Lord's chastening. A good father will discipline his children; God will do so as well. Anyone who does not have this type of relationship with the heavenly Father should question his or her legitimacy as God's child.

Flourishing from Discipline

9. The wise child understands the discipline of a godly father as an act of love. Such a child therefore gains respect for the parent who is consistent and timely in corrective discipline. The discipline we receive from the Lord should not result in resentment on our part. Instead, it should help us love and respect God even more, for we know He cares for us.

10. In speaking of parents who *chastened us after their own pleasure*, the author is referring to parents disciplining according to their own ideas of what is appropriate. Parents make mistakes, and their role as disciplinarians does not extend throughout a child's life. By contrast, the discipline of God is always perfect and extends throughout our lives. This means the 90-year-old Christian veteran is just as much subject to God's discipline as the teenager who has become a believer only recently. God's fatherhood is an eternal promise, not a temporary situation.

11. The author sums up this section by pointing out that we can endure great hardships in our Christian journey if we take the long view of faithful living. The Christian life is a long-distance run to the end of our lives. We gain strength by enduring trials. We are rewarded with *the peaceable fruit of righteousness* along the way (compare James 3:17, 18). As we follow the course of Christ—a path of sometimes painful obedience—we become more like Him and more submitted to His will. We seek to reflect the words of Paul, who at the end of his life was able to say that he had finished his life-race and had remained faithful (2 Timothy 4:7).

CENTRAL THOUGHT

When we become Christians, we begin the race of faith immediately. Our race course has already been marked by Jesus. And we are not alone: God is with us, even disciplining us along the way, so that we will grow in faith and endurance.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

FAITH EMPOWERS ENDURANCE

The Christian Life-Race: Part I

Today's text from Hebrews 12:1-11 focuses on the disciplines necessary to live the Christian life. It uses two illustrations. One illustration comes from a father's loving discipline. The other illustration is of the endurance runner. Let's take a closer look at the life-race that we are all on as Christians. Complete the following assignment that was given to your team using the supplies that your leader provided.

TEAM 1:

Read Hebrews 12:1-3. List the expressed and implied disciplines needed for completing the Christian life-race. Write these on the runner's footprints, tape them to the poster board, and be ready to explain to the class how or why each of these is significant in the Christian life.

TEAM 2:

Read Hebrews 12:4-11. Create an acrostic of the word *DISCIPLINE*, using key words or phrases from this text. Be ready to explain why each word or phrase is significant for shaping the Christian's faithful life. Begin or conclude your presentation by telling the class why you think God's chastening is important and beneficial.

TEAM 3:

Read Hebrews 12:1-11. Create two columns on your poster board with the headings "Costs of Discipleship" and "Rewards of Discipleship." List key words and phrases from the text under each column; be ready to explain their significance to the class.

The Christian Life-Race: Part II

Working with the same team, complete this next assignment and be prepared to share what you did with the rest of the class.

TEAM 1:

Prepare a skit illustrating endurance in the Christian life. Use the metaphor of the race that the class explored.

TEAM 2:

Write a prayer of thanksgiving for God's discipline.

TEAM 3:

Identify deceased members of your church who are now part of the "cloud of witnesses." Be ready to tell why you think the faithful lives of these individuals still serve as examples of faithful Christian living and endurance.