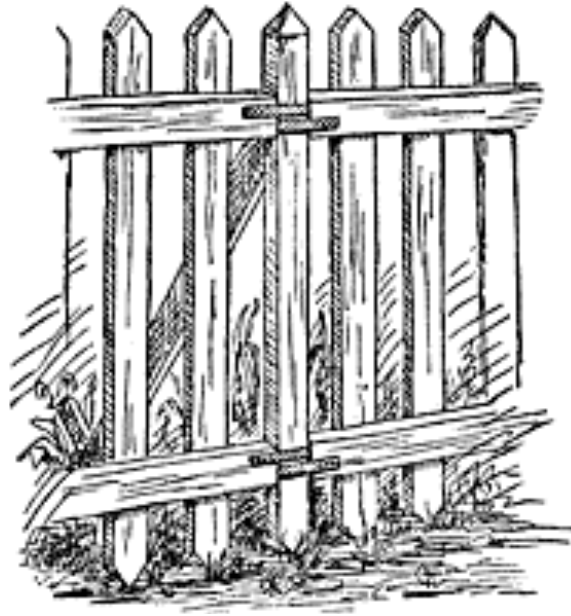


Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Studies

Hebrews



"Jump Off The Fence!!!"

Bible Studies

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"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Hebrews 12:1

"Jump Off the Fence!"
A Chapter-by-Chapter Study of the Book of Hebrews

Jump Off The Fence!!!! - Be Courageous
Hebrews Chapter 12

Let's use chapter 12 as an exercise in personal Bible study.

The following verses in chapter 12 have been grouped in sections. Read each section and then come up with either:

- 1) **A question** you would suggest in a group meeting to get the participants to discuss that section. The question could either be **factual** – for instance – something you don't understand or don't know about the verses. Or it could be **rhetorical** – in other words – a question you already know the answer to, but it could stimulate discussion amongst your group.

- or -

- 2) **An illustration** from your own life or someone else's of what the passage is saying.

I'll start us out with verse 1 and give you an example:

:1 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.."

Factual Question: What "great cloud of witnesses" is he talking about?

Rhetorical Question: In what way does sin "entangle" us? What sins might do that?

Illustration: In December of 1978 we lived in a little farmhouse in Ft. Morgan, Colorado. We were starting a church there and struggling to survive. The house was heated with propane. It was winter, and the wind blew like crazy. It was 20 below one night – and we knew that the propane was about to run out. We hadn't had the money to get the tank refilled that day – we were hoping against hope that the propane would last through the night so that we could figure out a way to take care of it the next day. All we had to do was get through that night. We weren't really worried – we had seen so many miracles in those months in Ft. Morgan – we figured we'd have a wonderful story to tell some day about the propane lasting through the night. We put the kids to bed upstairs and then Ken and I stayed up and prayed together. I remember us sitting on the couch with our arms around each other. We prayed that we would trust our Lord, Jesus, and praise Him, and we thanked Him that He had put us in this situation for whatever purpose He had in mind. Then we just sat there and fell asleep.

About 2:00 in the morning we heard the propane run out. It made a sort of popping noise. Suddenly we felt like the loneliest 2 people on the face of the earth. Nobody anywhere knew what we were going through. It was 20 below outside, the wind was howling across our little farm field, and with no heat in the house we didn't know what was going to happen. The kids were still sleeping upstairs. Ken said, "Honey, just go back to sleep and

Jesus is Better

I'll stay awake – and somehow, something will happen. We'll make it through the night." I was terrified. I started thinking that in the morning my kids would be frozen. We both finally fell asleep, arms around each other, on the couch.

The miracle was not that the propane lasted. The miracle was that the house didn't get cold. That drafty old farmhouse never got below 65 degrees. We woke up alive and warm, got a check in the mail the next day, filled our tank, and life went on again.

I tell you this story because that night when we sat on the couch and prayed together and heard the propane run out and felt that loneliness, like there was no one who knew what we were going through, the truth is that there was. Jesus was there, of course. But also there was (I think) a whole cloud of witnesses sitting around us in our living room. There were some believers from Old Testament times. Some of them had been sawed in half for their faith. And there were some missionaries who had given up all in order to serve God on the mission field in Bolivia and Indonesia. There were people of God from all through history who knew what it was to make a sacrifice for God. They were watching us. They wanted us to make it by faith. They had lived by faith themselves, and because of that, they had kept the truth alive, and we were getting our chance to live for God, too.

Now, try coming up with your own questions and/or illustrations for the rest of this chapter:

:2&3 "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

Question or Illustration:

*:4-6 "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:
"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
because the Lord disciplines those he loves,
and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."*

Question or Illustration:

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:7-11 "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Question or Illustration:

:12&13 "Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. Make level paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed."

Question or Illustration:

:14&15 "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."

Question or Illustration:

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:16&17 “ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.”

Question or Illustration:

:18-24 “You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: ‘If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.’ The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, ‘I am trembling with fear.’ But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.”

Question or Illustration:

:25 “See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from his who warns us from heaven?”

Question or Illustration:

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:26-28 "At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, 'Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.' The words 'once more' indicate the removing of what can be shaken – that is, created things – so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe."

Question or Illustration:

:29 "...for our God is a consuming fire."

Question or Illustration:

You can use this method to study any passage in the Bible on your own. Why not choose a book of the Bible today, and decide to work your way through it, a few verses at a time, day after day, coming up with either questions or illustrations? You will learn a lot as you see to answer those questions for yourself, you will see how practical it is as you think of ways it applies in your life, and it will give you quality time to listen to God through His Word.

Are you reading or studying the Bible every day? Why not? What is keeping you from doing it?

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Hebrews 12: