week 15

Studying

THE CHURCHAAA

Together

[a weekly study of the Church as a church]

Day 1

Reading – HEBREWS 12:1-17

Keep in Mind

The word translated “discipline” in verses 5-11 means “training” as you would a child toward maturity. While it can certainly include punishment, it is more generally to be understood in terms of all that is done to train for maturity.

Did You Notice?

1. As we run our race, we are to fix our eyes on Jesus, who is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? (12:2)

2. When God disciplines us, He is treated us as\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . (12:7)

3. What are the intended outcomes of God’s discipline in our lives? (12:10-11)

4. What are the things our church family must “make every effort” to do and “see to it” that we do? (12:14-16)

What Do You Think?

What do you/we need to “throw off” in order to run our race well? Are there specific mindsets or sins that are holding us back or slowing us down?

Day 2

Reading – HEBREWS 12:18-29

Keep in Mind

This passage is another expression of the writer’s theme that the new covenant in Jesus is greater than the one given through Moses. The “mountain” experience described in verses 18-21 was the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai.

Did You Notice?

1. List the many wonderful things that are a part of coming to “Mount Zion”? (12:22-24)

2. What are the two descriptions in that list of the humans who belong to Christ? (12:23)

3. What has God promised to permanently remove by one more shaking? (12:27)

4. How shall we live as those who are receiving an unshakable kingdom? (3:8-9)

What Do You Think?

We are promised an unshakable kingdom as our inheritance, not the things of the present “shakable” creation. Are there any ways in which you, or we as a church family, are holding too tightly to things in this present creation?

Day 3

Reading – HEBREWS 13:1-14

Keep in Mind

The last chapter of Hebrews is full of striking and varied commands for the church. We’ll look at them in two parts so we can think on them more fully.

Did You Notice?

1. Write out each of the commands given in these verses. (13:1-)

2. What should our attitude be toward our fellow disciples who are imprisoned or suffering for their faith? (13:3)

3. What has God promised that can liberate us from the love of money? (13:5)

4. We don’t have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ here, so we are looking forward to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? (13:14)

What Do You Think?

1. Are there any commands given here that you realize you have not been obeying?
2. How does each of the commands relate to the first one to “keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters”?

Day 4

Reading – HEBREWS 13:15-25

Keep in Mind

We continue to look at the series of striking commands given at the conclusion of this letter to the Hebrews. Also notice the blessing/prayer for the church written out in verses 20-21 (it’s a good one to offer today!).

Did You Notice?

1. What kinds of sacrifice should we be offering to God through Jesus? (13:15-16)

2. What attitude should the church have toward its leaders? (13:7,17)

3. Who is the “great Shepherd of the sheep” – the ultimate leader of the church? (13:20)

4. How did the writer describe himself as a servant of God? (13:18)

What Do You Think?

As in any household, there are those who lead and those who are meant to submit to leadership within the church. How well are we doing in our roles – the leaders in “watching over” the members and the members in submitting to their leadership?

Day 5

Reading – JAMES 1:1-27

Keep in Mind

James, the half-brother of Jesus, was a key leader in the very first church – the church in Jerusalem. He wrote a very practical letter from a very Jewish point of view. He was known as “camel-knees” because of his tremendous prayer life.

Did You Notice?

1. What is the ultimate benefit for disciples of enduring hardships? (1:4)

2. When dealing with one another, we should be quick to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , and slow to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1:19)

3. Listening to the Word of God is not enough; we must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . (1:22)

4. To be religious in a way that pleases God, we must do what three things? (1:26-27)

What Do You Think?

What church problems, conflicts, crises, or even splits have you witnessed that might have been avoided by doing what James instructed in 1:19?