

Staying in the Race Hebrews 10

Purpose of the Lesson: To develop stronger relations with Christ and with fellow believers.

Faced with seemingly eternal years of schoolwork and a multitude of rules to obey, children get discouraged. When that happens, parents say, “Look at your great opportunities. Take advantage of what you have now. Don’t throw it away.”

GROUP DISCUSSION. Recall an opportunity you missed because it sounded too good. What did you miss by not believing the evidence?

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Confess times when you’ve wasted opportunities for spiritual growth and development. Think about possible reasons for your failure. What encouragement does Hebrews have to offer you?

The writer of Hebrews, in chapter 10, reaches the heights of Mount Everest with a picture of Jesus that offers his readers encouragement. From those lofty heights he tells them to warm up to God, hold their faith in him, and stir up one another in Christian faith and practice. His argument culminates at 10:18; it seems that he can gather no further evidence to draw them back to Jesus. Read Hebrews 10.

1. How do verses 1-4 prove that the Old Testament system was a shadow, not the real thing?
2. Contrast Jesus’ sacrifice (the reality) with the shadow (vv. 5-10). Why is his sacrifice better?
3. What did he do for us that the Old Testament sacrifices could not (vv. 10, 14)?
4. As you meditate on verses 11-18 and the awesome love and power of Jesus to take away your sins, what are the responses in your heart and mind?
5. Summarize what God wants to do for you in Christ (vv. 1-2, 4, 10-11, 14-15, 17-18).

What could you do if you don’t feel “holy” or “perfect”?

6. In light of what God has done for us in Christ (vv. 19-21), what three commands does the writer feel compelled to issue (vv. 22-24)?
7. What does the awesome privilege of coming close to God mean for us (v. 22)?
8. What role do others play in helping us to “hold unswervingly” to our faith (v. 23-25)?
9. If we fail to draw near to God, hold fast our faith and stir up one another, what is likely to happen (vv. 25-26, 38-39)?
10. How does the writer make clear that his warning of punishment applies to professing Christians (vv. 30-34)?
11. What purposes could be achieved in your life by both this strong encouragement and this stern warning?

Look at verses 11-18 again, and look for facts for which you can be thankful to God. Praise him in quietness and confidence.