



Word on Wednesday Bible Study

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September 3, 2025

IT TAKES DISCIPLINE

The book of Hebrews was written to Jews who were newly converted into the Christian faith. They faced tremendous hardship from the Jewish community by excepting Christ as their Lord and Savior. They were ostracized by family members and leaders in the synagogue. If they held any position of honor within the community it was now gone. They were under great persecution not only from their community but from the Roman who hated Jew and Christian alike because they would not assimilate to the polytheism, multiple gods structure of the Romans belief system. This created a lot of difficulty for those new believers. This caused many converts to consider whether it is worth sticking to their new faith or reverting back to Judaism. If they just give up on Jesus, then maybe their lives would go back to the way it used to be. So, the author of Hebrews set forth Christ as superior to all previous revelation. He encourages them to keep the faith by keeping their eyes on Jesus. He reminds them if they turn away from Jesus, there is no sacrifice of sins. And if they turn away, there is no life outside Christ Jesus. So, they need to learn how to endure hardship will, through a Spiritually discipline life, like those before them.

Hebrews 12: 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*

Hebrews 12: 2-3. *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

Hebrews 12: 4-5 *In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,*

Hebrews 12: 8-10 *If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. 9Moreover, 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 spirits and live! 10They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.*

I go through life as a transient on his way to eternity, made in the image of God but with that image debased, needing to be taught how to meditate, to worship, to think.

-DONALD COGGAN

Spiritual Disciplines don't produce the change in us; it only puts us on the path where change can accrue. God is the only one who can produce lasting, sustainable, genuine authentic transforming change in us.