Lesson Seventeen: **Hebrews 12:1-29** Discipline and Commitment

*(extracted from Hebrews (Life Change) by The Navigators)*

From Abel to Zechariah, the Old Testament saints testified to their faith in hardship, persecution, and death (see 11:1-40). How should this “cloud of witnesses” affect what we do now? Read 12:1-29, looking for the overall point of the chapter.

**Run the race (12:1-4)**

1. “Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses” (12:1), what two exhortations does the author give us?

a.

b.

1. What are some of the things that might be included in “everything that hinders” (12:1)?
2. What should be our inspiration in running the race with perseverance (see 12:2-3)?
3. Practically speaking, what do you think “fixing our eyes on Jesus” (12:2) means?
4. Jesus’ motivation for enduring the cross and its shame was “the joy set before him” (12:2). What joy is set before you that can motivate you to endure and persevere? (*Optional:* See Romans 8:18-23; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 3:20-21.)

**God disciplines His children (12:5-11)**

1. Why shouldn’t we lose heart when the Lord rebukes or disciplines us (see 12:5-9)?
2. For what purposes does the Father chasten believers? What does discipline produce in the life of a believer (see 12:12:10-11)?

**Spiritual commitment (12:12-17)**

1. Practically speaking, what would be involved in putting the exhortations of 12:12-13 into practice?
2. In a situation where some of the believers were lapsing away from active faith, others were struggling to hold on, and all were under pressure from neighbors and coworkers, why would an exhortation to “live in peace with everyone” (2:14) be appropriate?
3. How were the Hebrew recipients of this letter tempted to be like Esau (see 12:16-17)?

**A final warning (12:18-28)**

1. Contrast what the author says about the old covenant (see 12:18-21) and the new (see 12:22-24). What are the primary differences?

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| old | new |
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1. In view of the wonders and privileges of the new covenant, what warning does the author give his readers (see 12:25)?
2. After this future shaking occurs, what will remain? What is it that “cannot be shaken” (12:27-28)?
3. How should we respond to this assurance (see 12:28)?
4. Why do you think the author brings this section to a close with the quotation from Deuteronomy 4:24, “Our ‘God is a consuming fire’” (12:29)?
5. Summarize 12:1-29 in your own words.

**Your response**

1. What one truth from chapter 12 seems most personally significant to you today?
2. How would you like this truth to affect your life in a deeper way?
3. What can you do to act on this truth this week?
4. List any questions you have about 12:1-29.