



Sermon-Based Discussion Guide for Home Groups

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Persistence: Don't give up on the Gospel

April 3, 2011

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SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 4:1-12

A Sabbath-Rest for the People of God

¹ Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. ² For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.^[a] ³ Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,

"So I declared on oath in my anger,
'They shall never enter my rest.'"^[b]

And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world. ⁴ For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "On the seventh day God rested from all his works."^[c] ⁵ And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest."

⁶ Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience, ⁷ God again set a certain day, calling it "Today." This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage already quoted:

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."^[d]

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. ⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰ for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works,^[e] just as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

¹² For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

ENGAGE

When was the last time you were challenged or told you couldn't do something, but your persistence paid off. Was that a rewarding time in your life?

DISCUSS

1. We sometimes have events in our lives that cause us to question our faith and even give up on religion or the church. Have you ever thought about giving up on the Gospel or the church? Discuss the events and how you got to that point.
2. There are times in most of our lives where we have failed to persevere and decide to "give-up" on church. What are some excuses one might use to justify leaving the church or "religion" in general?
3. Just as when Moses was given the promised land but saw giants and refused to trust in God, have you ever had a time when you felt God's call to act, but you saw the giants and chose the safer road?

4. We should all have a healthy fear in God. Does your fear stem more from what might happen if you obey the call of God, or more from what would happen if you don't?

Discuss these ways the Gospel helps us to be persistent and persevere?

- Peace
- Promises of God in His word
- Community
- A great High Priest
- Mercy
- Grace
- Help in our time of need

YOUR NEXT STEP

Be honest with God:

Have a healthy fear: not only in what may happen if you obey God's will, but also if you choose not to obey Him.

If you have fallen, get up: even though things may not happen our way, God's plan is perfect and we must keep our eyes on the prize.

Sometimes you have to wait: Its not our timing thats perfect, it's God's.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Review the passage above and discuss.

Ask the kids to share a time when they wanted something so badly that no matter what they would not take NO for an answer. Did their persistence help them get what they wanted? If not, did they learn why their request was denied?

Have the kids share a time when things may not have been going their way (sports, friends, school). Did they give up, or did they keep trying to find a way to make it better? Discuss how pushing through the difficult times in life can be used to make us stronger and how during those times we should be looking to God for help and peace-of-mind no matter the out come and not ignoring or blaming Him.

OTHER PASSAGES

Hebrews 3:5-19

Deuteronomy 5:15

Isaiah 40:31