

Bellefield Presbyterian Church

Bellefield Presbyterian Church
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**God's passion
for His glory is
the measure of
His
commitment to
our joy in Jesus
Christ our Lord.**

“Looking to Jesus... Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God”—*Hebrews 12:2.*

Getting Off the Bridge to Nowhere & Onto the Bridge to Somewhere

Heb. 12: 2 gives us 2 power hopes: 1] *Our walk of faith in discipleship is not done in our own strength*; Jesus helps us. So we don't look to our own resources & say sadly, "We've tried it before. It won't work." We look to Jesus &



Jesus is our blue ribbon.

His grace; & 2] The Day of triumph in Jesus is coming for certain. So the certainty of the future reward of seeing Jesus face to face allows us to push forward today across all bridges with an undefeatable joy—we're **forever in Christ seeking our highest joy in God's greater glory shown.**

Dear BPC Members & Friends,

What's a good response to God's grace upon us today through His Word?

1. Re-read and study this passage;
2. Memorize *Hebrews 12:1-2*;
3. Fall on your knees and seek grace to lay aside the sin that's getting you;
4. Join a small group at Bellefield for growth & perseverance in grace, such as *Samson Society* that meets Saturday mornings 8 to 9 here at Bellefield;
5. Do some hard & challenging things, knowing that the strength for them will not be yours, but God's grace upon you for His great glory through you.

Much Love in Christ, Pastor Geoff

Preaching Today

Rev. R. Geoffrey Brown, B.A. & Ph.D.,
both from Pitt, Pitt Football Player,
BPC Pastor & Head of Staff

Sunday Worship
August 10, 2008

Bellefield Presbyterian Church

Today's Sermon Helps

Sermon Moves at a Glance

- Three Ongoing Discipleship Tasks from Hebrews
1. Setting Aside What Weighs Us Down;
 2. Running the Race that Lifts Us Up;
 3. Looking to Jesus So We're Up, Not Down—and there's the grace we need to do it all for His glory.

The Bridge to Nowhere

Hebrews 12:1-2a: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the foun-

der and perfecter of our faith...." Our town of Pittsburgh once had what we all called a "bridge to nowhere." For 2 years it stood unfinished; for 2 years it was leading & going nowhere fast. Construction costs had become mired in bureaucracy, and nothing was moving nowhere.



They stopped construction in Pittsburgh.

The Nowhere Bridge = A Metaphor

That bridge is a metaphor for some in this letter of faith who started the journey in Je-

sus with enthusiasm. But somewhere along the way, they got stalled.

John Piper has rejected the concept of prayer as “a household intercom.” Instead, he has likened this discipleship discipline to rather “a wartime walkie-talkie.” That’s a wartime mentality for the sake of God’s increasing glory through us in pursuing our highest joy in seeing His work.

Hebrews’ Christians Stalled

Hebrews 12:1 exhorts us to “run the race.” This means running, not meandering. Hebrews



Side by side, we run the race.

was written to a church that was settling into the

world and losing its wartime mentality. Some were starting to drift through life without focus on glorifying God, without vigilance, without energy. So here’s a call to run in the marathon of the Olympics this summer.

The late Rev. Frank Harrington would be asked as a ministerial candidate the same question every time: “Are you making any progress on your journey with Jesus Christ?”

3 Examples to Help Us Persevere

1] Gene Peterson’s book, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*; 2] John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*; and 3]

Rev. Frank Harrington was regularly asked a very good question that all of us should answer.

3 Tasks From Hebrews in Context

Almighty God challenges us this morning to make some progress on our journey of faith & discipleship in Jesus Christ, to go deeper, not to get



Follow Jesus across it.

caught on the bridge to nowhere. So: 1] lay aside the weight of sins; 2] run the race and stay in it; and 3] look always to Jesus.

#1 Set Aside What Weighs Us Down

Hebrews 12:1 is clear. We are to set aside every weight that clings, that hinders us from glorify-



What’s weighing you down?

ing God. So ask honestly, *What of my wrongs is weighing me down? What is stopping me from pressing on? What’s holding me back from being everything God wants me to be for His honor, His praise, His glory, in Jesus Christ?*

#2 Run the Race that Lifts Us Up

Hebrews 12:1 also says we are to run the race set before us with *perseverance*. The Greek word here is *hu-*

pomone. It literally means steadfastness—hanging in there no matter what.

#3 Look to Jesus So We’re Up, Not Down

Hebrews 12:2 makes clear the key to it all. It’s more & more of Jesus in our lives. He is the founder and *perfecter* of our faith. This

means Jesus is the guarantee of God’s future grace to be all we need, for all we will ever face in life’s race. Fix on Jesus.



Jesus enables us to finish.

“I’m not going to give up walking in the truth and love of God’s Word no matter what happens. Each of us has a race to run, and each of us helps other Christians run the marathon that lets God’s church have an impact in Pittsburgh for Christ’s honor & glory.”