**BIBLE – THINGS THAT ENSNARE US**

***HEBREWS 12:1-2***

**INTRODUCTION** – As a Christian have you ever encountered difficulty in running the race set before us? Sometimes we think just because we are Christians every thing will be smooth sailing (no more problems), but that is just not the case. The truth is that the devil steps up his game in regard to trying to discourage us to participate in this race. It is his desire for us to become weary, discouraged and to eventually fall away from our service to God.

**HEB. 12:1-2** - ***Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

The purpose of this lesson is to search out the truth and examine some things that indeed do hinder us and often ensnare us in the tangled web of sin. So let’s open our bibles and look at some things ensnare us and that we need to lay aside.

***THINGS THAT HINDER US –***

1. **PRIDE – POWER** –
2. **1 JN. 2:15-17** – John warns us to “Do not love the world” part of that which we love that is in the world is the pride of life. How does pride present a problem for us? Nothing new under the sun look at some examples.
3. **DAN. 4:33-37** – What lesson is God trying to teach Nebuchadnezzar. That God is the one who is actually in control. God is the one with all power! Nebuchadnezzar’s pride would not allow him to acknowledge this truth until God taught him a lesson.
4. **DAN. 5:17-23** – King Belshazzar did not humble himself before God even though he knew all this.
5. **PSA. 10:4** – What is the end result when we allow the lure of pride and power to overwhelm us? ***“The wicked in his proud countenance odes not seek God, God is in none of his thoughts.”*** When pride and power ensnare us we no longer have time for God.
6. **PSA. 138:6** – How does God feel toward one who is full of pride? He knows the from afar, why? They just give token service and time to God, not true sacrifice.
7. **1 TIM. 6:3-6** – The one who is full of pride refuses to consent to wholesome words, sound doctrine, and becomes destitute of the truth.
8. **JAMES 4:6-10** – God resist the proud and gives grace to the humble. When we are full of pride we lose access to the grace of God. We cannot afford to be without the favor of God.
9. **DESIRE FOR WORLDLY SUCCESS** – All our focus is on the temporal. We begin to obtain a worldly viewpoint of success not God’s view. It is our choice whether we want to be great in God’s eyes or man’s.
10. **MARK 10:42-45** – If we desire true greatness in the eyes of God we must be a servant not a master. Some Christians have such a huge ego that it becomes a stumbling block.
11. **JN. 5:44** – Whose honor do we really seek in this life?
12. **JN. 12:42-43** – There were some in the days of Christ that would not give up their worldly status for service to Christ.
13. **JN. 13:12-17** – What example did Jesus portray for us – he washed his disciples feet.
14. **PSA. 1:1-3** – The man who is willing to put God first in his life is truly blessed and will be recognized by God as great.
15. **WORLDLY STANDARDS** – We must be careful to not fall into the trap of thinking about success according to the standards of the world. How successful was Jesus in the temporal realm?
16. **JN. 1:11-12** – ***“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:”***
17. **PHIL. 3:5-11** – Paul had it all according to the standards of the world – **1 COR. 4:11-13,** **16** – But he gave up everything that the world valued to follow Christ and he tells us to imitate him. There is a great danger in the intoxicating standards of worldly success. It always leaves you hungry for more. The more you obtain the more you desire to have. Just a little bit more and you never reach a stage of contentment.
18. **DAN. 6:1-5** – Daniel was willing to give up worldly success. He did not get caught up in his temporal accomplishments and place them above his service to God.
19. **HEB. 11:24-25** – So was Moses - ***By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,***
20. **TITUS 2:5** – Women are now getting caught up in the trap of worldly success syndrome and many have lost focus on their primary responsibility given to them by God and that is to be the manager of the home. **1 TIM. 5:14** – Uses the phrase home managers. The attitude of women of the world is I can do it all work 40-50 hours a week raise my children and manage the home.
21. **PROV**. **31: 27-28** - The virtuous woman described in this chapter was doing everything described because she was focused on taking care of her family and managing the home in a way that pleased God.

**CONCLUSION** –

How are we running the race?

Are we being hindered by pride, worldly success and standards?

We need to lay the weights and sin that hinder us!!!