

An underwater photograph of a vibrant coral reef. In the foreground, a large, weathered metal anchor is partially buried in the sand, with a chain extending from it towards the top right. The reef is covered in various types of coral in shades of pink, red, orange, and yellow. Several small fish, including a clownfish, are visible swimming in the clear blue water.

Anchored

a study of Hebrews

Anchored in We

Sunday, June 28, 2026 - Hebrews chapter 12

Hebrews 12:12–17 (NIV) *12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. 13 “Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed. 14 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. 16 See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. 17 Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.*

Hebrews has been a refrain over and over: Don't quit. Keep going.

- The motive to stay faithful in chapter 11 is all the people of faith who have come before. They held on to their faith.
- In chapter 12, Hebrews wraps all of those examples together and says, “Since we are surrounded by all of these great examples of faith, keep running.”
- It's like they're cheering for you. You can do it.
- He points to Jesus on the cross. The thing that kept him there was the joy set before him. That's you! He endured the punishment required by all sin over all time for the joy of you.
- That should be motive enough for you to finish the race marked out for you.
- Fix your eyes on what he has done and run.
- How do we do that?

- The answer Hebrews will give us: **We help each other.**
- Every time you hear the word “you” or “your” here, it’s plural. What that means is that it’s not one “you” out there...it’s **all y’all** out there. **All y’all** are to do these things.

1. Be strong and go straight (12:12–13)

- Feeble arms and weak knees. This is the posture of someone who thought they’d win the championship, but came up short.
- You’re not that. Because of Jesus, you’ve won! All who are in him *win*.
- Make straight paths. Smooth the path out for each other so that a twisted ankle doesn’t become a broken ankle.
- Make a path for the sinner to repent and heal so a bruised foot doesn’t become a broken one.
- *This instruction is for: All y’all.*

2. Pursue peace and holiness (12:14)

- Peace isn’t about the circumstances in your life going right. Peace is something you can have no matter what the circumstances.
- Biblical peace is having confidence and trust in God’s wise control of your life.
- You don’t drift into it. We have to pursue peace.
- Think of a police dog. Imagine that it’s unleashed and set loose to chase down a criminal. That’s the phrase “*make very effort*” We doggedly chase after peace.
- And, with the very same energy, we also run down holiness in our lives.
- If we are in Christ, we have been sanctified (made holy/righteous/perfect) in the eyes of God because of the work of Jesus on the cross.
- We’re seen as holy, but we’re not holy yet, are we? Nope. So we strive to become what God already sees us to be in Jesus. I pursue becoming what I already am.
- *This instruction is for: All y’all.*

3. Bring all the grace in. (12:15)

- The phrase “see to it” is like there’s a guy in a watchtower on the wall of a city. And he knows that a King from another country is coming to the city bringing with him all the treasures of his land.
- So the watchman scours the horizon, looking. When he sees the King with all the gifts and wealth approaching the city, he says to his people: *Open the gates! Let him in!*
- That’s what we get to do when it comes to God’s gift of grace. We let it in. We make sure everyone has access to the treasure.
- When you see the grace of God in this life, open the gates. Let everyone you know in on the gift.
- *This instruction is for All y’all.*

4. Keep all the evil out (16–17)

- In the OT, someone who turned away from God and began to worship other gods was called a bad root that produced bitter and poisonous fruit.
- The picture Hebrews gives us is of Esau. He's the example of what damage a bitter root can cause.
- Isaac's sons are Jacob and Esau. Esau is the older brother. Jacob is the younger. Esau will inherit his father's estate.
- Esau out hunting. When he comes in from his hunt, and he's famished.
- He sits down and eyes his brother's stew. He smells it. *He says, give me some of your stew Jacob.*
- Jacob seizes the moment. He was a cheat. So he says, *Brother, I'll trade you. I'll give you stew, if you give me your inheritance rights.*
- It's a terrible trade. And he makes it. He's only focused on what's in front of him.
- Hebrews is telling you that there's going to be a time in your life when you feel like you can't take another step of faithfulness.
- In that moment the devil will have a plate of food for you. You're going to be tempted to give everything that Christ has done for you and throw it all away for the equivalent of a Twinkie.
- Hebrews says: *No no...keep the evil out.*
- Here's how you do it. You remember your inheritance. Fix your eyes on Jesus. The riches of heaven are yours in Jesus.
- Understand what you have, and why it's the most foolish thing in the world to trade it away.

Four batons, four commands - given to us to run the race so that we finish the race

1. Be strong and go straight.
2. Pursue peace and holiness.
3. Bring all the grace in.
4. Keep all the evil out.

*These instructions are for...*All 'y'all. You and Me, somehow, someway, we can finish the race together. The key, is we.