



Date: Nov. 4th, 2012

Theme: "Look carefully lest..."

#15 in the Series on the Book of Hebrews

1. Our race of faith
 - a. Surrounded by a cloud of witnesses
 - b. Lay aside burdens and sin; James 4:1-3, *"Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."*
 - c. Run with endurance looking towards Jesus
 - i. His encouragement; 2 Cor. 1:4-5, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."*
 - ii. His example; Jn. 14:26, *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*
 - d. Jesus is the author and the finisher of our faith;
 - i. Eph. 2:8-9, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."*
 - ii. Mark 9:23-24, *"Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'"*
 - iii. Col. 3:2, *"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."*
2. God's discipline is not punishment; rather we must look to God's correction of our lives as a discipline.
 - a. It begins by *"considering"* Him who endured hostility; He sets the standard.
 - i. Jer. 29:11, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*
 - ii. Eph. 4:11-12, *"...for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;"*
 - iii. Amos. 7:7-8, *"Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. And the LORD said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb line.' Then the Lord said: 'Behold, I am setting a plumb line In the midst of My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore.'"*
 - b. Fathers discipline their beloved children for good reasons; we can only discipline our own children. Similar to being sculpted; God has the finished product in sight and removes that which hinders.
 - i. Sculpture is considered the finest art form because it mimics divine creation: The sculptural image is found within the block of stone much as the human soul is found within the physical body. The white marble

statue is 17 feet high and shows David ready to fight Goliath, the Philistine giant. David's hands do look big, but Michelangelo made them that way possibly because Michelangelo was of Tuscan origins whose original inhabitants were known as the Etruscans. This ethnic group exhibited larger hands when compared to other ethnic groups in Italy, in fact, many inhabitants of modern Tuscany still display this distinct ethnic feature of large hands. So in essence David is anatomically correct in respect to the modern Tuscan male. David was created to stand outside a palace, rather than in an art gallery. At age 24 Michelangelo began visiting morgues. He would cut up unclaimed corpses and study their anatomy. He was as well-trained as any physician in the body's structure. Two other artists had rejected the piece of marble Michelangelo used for David, because they claimed it lacked perfection and was too difficult to work with. The five meter (17ft) block of marble was actually quarried 40 years before and was of a porous quality that deteriorates quickly. Michelangelo worked on his masterpiece between 1501 and 1504. Michelangelo was able to create something beautiful despite the flawed material he had been given. David has a determined, focused look in his eye. You can see the veins in his hands and the clear outline of his rib cage. His elbows appear calloused and rough and his feet are crusty and cracked. His cheeks are smooth and his upper lip is just a little bigger than the lower one. His nostrils are slightly flared, his brow mildly furrowed and his hair classically curly.

- c. Graham Cook's story.
- 3. Strengthen hands which hang down.
 - a. Fight the good fight.
 - i. 1 Tim. 6:12, *"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."*
 - ii. 1 Cor. 9:26-27, *"Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*
 - b. Fight the right fight.
 - i. Self; Luke 9:22, *"Then He said to them all, ***If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.***"*
 - ii. Satan; Eph. 6:12, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."*
 - c. Soulical y Spiritual Christians; Gal. 2:20, *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*
 - i. Legalistic attitude, Impure thoughts, Jealousy, Guilt, Lack of self control, Idolatry, Outbursts of anger, Worry, Discouragement, Critical spirit, Frustration, Aimlessness, Fear, Ignorance of spiritual heritage, Unbelief, Disobedience, Loss of love for God and for others, Poor prayer life, & No desire for Bible study.
 - ii. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Faithfulness, Goodness, Gentle, Self-control, Denies self, Prefers others over self, Life is Christ centered, Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Seeks to introduce others to Christ, Has an effective prayer life, Wants to grow in understanding of God's Word, Trusts God, & Obeys God.
 - iii. Many of us are willing to make Jesus king, provided we are prime minister with the real government on our own hands.
 - d. Therefore, fight the right fight with all of our might. Letting go of self is the rub; the most important religious act is self-surrender.

- i. *"All evil is only a symptom; the real disease lies in the fact that we have another god. This other god is called 'I'."*
 - ii. *"God was at the center of my theology, but I was at the center of my life. Exploding ideas, I talked too much. I wanted to be accepted, but the more I tried to prove myself worthy of belonging the less welcome I was."*
 - iii. *"Wherever I go, I go too, and spoil everything."*
 - iv. Bernard de Clairvaux, *"He who will not be sweetly ruled by divine will is penally governed by himself; and he who casts off the easy yoke and the light burden of love, must suffer the intolerable load of self-will."*
 - v. *"Surrender is a surrender of as much of myself as I know today, to as much of Christ as I know today."*
 - i. Conversion is conversion of our love. We in our blindness and stupidity and willfulness have loved the wrong things with the wrong love.
- 4. Make straight paths; don't make life any harder than it ought to be.
 - a. Pursue peace; 1 Cor. 14:33, *"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."*
 - b. Pursue holiness
 - c. Don't fall short of the grace of God
 - d. Don't let any root of bitterness spring up
 - e. Do not be profane, choosing the provisional instead of the eternal.
- 5. Lest...
 - a. Heb. 12:17, *"For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears."*
 - b. 1 Cor. 9:26-27, *"Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*
 - c. Gal. 5:19, 22, *"Now the works of the flesh are evident... But the fruit of the Spirit is..."*
- 6. Summary
 - a. God knows what He wants us to become, He has good thoughts towards us.
 - b. Therefore, we should trust Him to correct and discipline us.
 - c. Run with endurance.
 - d. Die to self daily.