

Gathering

DIRECTION

We all know people who say they have 'no sense of direction' because they have great difficulty getting back on track when they get lost. God's direction for us is that we move towards His purpose for our lives. The beginning of a year is a good check point for us to examine where we are on the path He has for us and where we need to be going. Hebrews 12:1 says:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

We are called by God to be prepared for the race set before us, focused on Him as he guides our steps. Thinking we have what it takes on our own can lead us to great dissapointments. In seventh grade I was asked to try out for my schools' track team. Coach had seen me racing my friends around the track as we waited for the school bus one day and asked me to come to practice. I knew nothing about competitive running but was excited to be singled out and quickly agreed. I showed up for the first practice in sneakers, jeans, and a t-shirt ready to go. Coach chuckled when he saw me. He pointed to two guys on the track who were getting ready to start a run. He told me to stay as close as possible to them while they ran the mile. I said, "Sure. No problem." Coach chuckled again. I approached the two guys and saw that they were both wearing running shorts, tank tops, and the brightest running shoes I had ever seen. I thought they looked a little silly. We began running the mile, and immediately I could tell these guys were much better runners than I was. I was competitive though, and was determined to match their strides. I focused hard on the pace and rhythm of our steps and was able to stay with them...for about half a lap. The longer we ran, the heavier my jeans became. My feet seemed to slide around inside of my giant sneakers. The cotton t-shirt that normally would have been a good choice to stay cool became damp with sweat and cumbersome as it flopped around my neck and shoulders at every step. I began to focus on how uncomfortable I was. Soon the gap that existed between us due to my inferior ability, widened due to my inferior preparation and equipment. I somehow finished the mile but was well behind the two guys. I also puked from exhaustion. I never joined the team.

Hebrews 12:1

Gathering

DIRECTION continued

As we embark on this year's race of life and ministry, let's not make the same mistakes I made in seventh grade track. Let's be intentional in preparing spiritually and following His direction. His path always leads to holy living.

After reading the scripture, consider these questions:

- How was the lack of preparedness evident in today's story? How is it evident in our spiritual life?
- Who were the witnesses of today's story? Who are the "great cloud of witnesses" in your spiritual life?
- What is hindering you from efficiently and effectively witnessing? Are there sins you have not been forgiven for or temptations that could trip you up?
- What path has the Lord marked out for you this year? Where are you headed in Holiness?

Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.

January Leader's Page

Hebrews 12:1



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An important aspect of moving towards God's purpose for us is having examples and mentors in our life to help guide us and encourage us along the way.



We also need to be intentional about being an example to others. If we want to start the year focused on God, we need to ensure that we are being disciplined and that we are discipling others. When we are in a discipling relationship, we have accountability to keep ourselves free from sin and hindrance. We also have accountability for the path God has laid out for us. Explore the following verses:

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1

- Is someone discipling you? Who is helping you to daily see the path you should be running this year?
- Who are you discipling? Who are you asking to follow you as you follow Christ?

READ HEBREWS 12:2

- What does it look like to fix your eyes on Jesus?
- What other things fight for your focus?
- What can happen in our lives and relationships when we lose our focus on Christ?



*Written by Mr. John Copeland, Camp Director –
New Jersey Division*

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