

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for January 6, 2019

Finishing Together
Hebrews 12:15-17

The author in Hebrews 12:15-17 exhorted his readers “see to it” that no one among them would come short of the grace of God.

The expression “see to it” translates a single Greek word (EPISKOPEO), which is closely related to “EPISKOPOS” usually translated either “overseer” or “bishop” and is synonymous with the term “elder.”

When the author chose to use the Greek word EPISKOPEO he certainly was not calling his readers to assume the office of overseer, but he was calling his readers to engage in the work of spiritually caring for one another.

“The grace of God” that the author was fearful that some of them might come short of, if they did not spiritually care for one another, was heaven (Hebrews 6:13-19; 11:13-16).

The author of the Book of Hebrews has repeatedly made it clear that if a professing believer does not persevere in their faith until the end they will come short of heaven (Hebrews 2:1-4; 3:7-4:11; 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 12:14-29).

If we see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God, we will also be seeing to it “that no root of bitterness springing up, causes trouble and defiles many” according to Hebrews 12:15.

In Deuteronomy 29:18, Moses described the sin of turning away from God to serve other gods as “a root.”

In Deuteronomy 29:18, Moses described the fruit that would be produced from that “root” as “poisonous” and “wormwood.”

Based on Deuteronomy 29:18 the “root” in Hebrews 12:15 is the sin of apostasy or in other words the sin of turning away from Christ to someone or something else.

The author in Hebrews 12:15 described the root of apostasy as a “root of bitterness” because, if it did in fact spring up it would produce bitter fruit or in other words the defilement of many.

If we see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God we will also be seeing to it that “no immoral or godless person like Esau” would arise among us (Hebrews 12:16-17).

The word “godless” (BEBELOS) refers to a profane person who has exalted the things of this world above God and the interests of God.

If, after professing faith in Christ, a believer chooses to turn away from Christ and the blessings of Christ in order to elevate the things of this world above Christ, they could easily end up like Esau.

May God give us the grace to spiritually care for one another in such a way that none of us will fall short of the grace of God but all of us would finish our race of faith and receive the prize.