

With Hebrews 12.1-3, we move toward some implications of what it means for us to live grounded in the faith described in Hebrews 11: stripping off everything that hinders us as disciples, running the marathon race of faith, and keeping a life-long focus on Jesus Christ in a "long obedience in the same direction."

- 1. Anytime a verse begins "therefore," you're supposed to examine the previous verses "so you can see what the 'therefore' is there for." How does the "therefore" that starts off Hebrews 12.1 point us back to in Hebrews? How does Clay sum up this "therefore"?
- 2. In Hebrews 12:1a, the writer states, "we are surrounded by such a huge cloud of witnesses to the life of faith" (NLT). The visual is sitting in a large, sold-out stadium, cheering your team to victory. How does being cheered on by the community of faith—past, present, and future—encourage us as we attempt to follow Jesus?
- 3. In Hebrews 12.1b, we are encouraged to "strip off every weight that slows us down" (NLT). While obviously our sin trips us up, the passage also implies the good things in our lives can slow us down too. What are some examples of the good that can get in the way of God's best for us?
- 4. In Hebrews 12.1c, we are exhorted to "run with endurance the race God has set before us" (NLT). Clay mentions that the word translated "race" is agon, the Greek word often used for "contest" or "struggle." What does this word say about the nature and quality of the race we run by faith in Christ?
- 5. In light of the total message of Hebrews 12.1, react to and reflect upon this quote from Eugene Peterson's *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*:
  - "We assume that if something can be done at all, it can be done quickly and efficiently. Our attention spans have been conditioned by thirty-second commercials... It is not difficult in such a world to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; it is terrifically difficult to sustain the interest. Millions of people in our culture make decisions for Christ, but there is a dreadful attrition rate. Many claim to have been born again, but the evidence for mature Christian discipleship is slim."
- 6. Hebrews 12.2-3 helps us immensely. How do we know what to strip off? Where to run? "We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith" (NLT), and then it describes in detail how Jesus is better than any alternative (see 11:40). The verb translated as "keeping our eyes on" is a rare word that means "to view with undivided attention by looking away from every other object" (Bill Mounce Online Greek Dictionary). What examples does Clay give for this kind of seeing? How does focusing on Jesus provide the clarity, insight, and motivation we need?
- 7. Clay takes a lot of time to unfold a first-order, primary way we keep our eyes on Jesus. What does he say this way is? What does he say that this way is not? What particular examples does Clay provide for how we may keep our eyes on Christ at MDPC? How will you participate?
- 8. The passage concludes, "Think of all the hostility he [Jesus] endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up" (NLT). How will you practice "a long obedience in the same direction" in your discipleship for Jesus and not give up?

Financial Update as of Jul 27, 2025

2025 Annual Budget \$ 14,203,292 Actual Income to Date 6,770,770 Needed to Meet 2025 Budget 7,432,522 Grab a Ministry Partner booklet to discover how others are serving as the hands and feet of Christ here in the city and around the globe!









It's amazing how masterfully Jesus used certain kinds of questions to teach vital spiritual truths. Questions can challenge your thinking, strengthen faith, and spark deep conversations.

Join us Tuesday mornings for an all-new Men's Life Fall Series as we dive into this subject.

Starts Tue, Sep 9 | 6:30am ml.mdpc.org



Get away for a fun and intentional weekend together to focus on your marriage! This special experience will include a comfortable atmosphere, excellent food, a one-on-one date night with your spouse, as well as expert teaching from marriage experts, Brett and Kellie Hurst.

Sat-Sun, Oct 4-5 Moody Gardens in Galveston



# MAM Back to School

Help students in need have a great school year with new uniforms and shoes. Visit the website to learn more and to donate, mambts.mdpc.org

MINISTRYHIGHLIGHTS

# Perspectives Course Tue Nights | 6:30-9:30 | Aug 19-Dec9

MDPC is partnering with other Houston-area churches to promote the Perspectives course—a dynamic study that explores God's global purpose and how each of us can play a part in His mission to reach the nations with the Gospel. The course will be hosted this fall at Bayou City Fellowship – Spring Branch. Contact Kelsi McCormack at kmccormack@mdpc.org.



#### The Bible for Life (Sun am & Wed pm) Sun: 9:45 & 11:15am | life.mdpc.org

Adult Discipleship is launching dynamic new studies, including deep dives into John and Genesis, plus *The Big Story* series: *The Bible's Big Story, Theology's Big Story*, and the new *Christianity's Big Story*. Explore key themes and narratives that shape the Christian faith. **life.mdpc.org** 

# Transforming Grief Weds, Aug 13-Oct 1 | 3:30-5pm

If you've been grieving the loss of a loved one, you are not alone. Come join others in an 8-week program based on Walking the Mourner's Path: Transforming Grief into Joyful Living. Group size is limited to 10. grief.mdpc.org



## 8:30 BLENDED SERVICE

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Call to Worship Rachel Poysky

\*Worship Songs Joyful Medley

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

\*Confession & Assurance | Prayers of the People Brett Hurst

\*Worship Songs Because He Lives
Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

**HEARING THE WORD** -

Sermon The Hall of Fame | 12:1-3 (NRSV & NLT) Clay Brown

**RESPONDING** 

Offertory Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me

Communion Clay Brown

Same God

SENDING -

\*Doxology Old 100th

\*Charge & Benediction Clay Brown

### 9:45 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

## **GATHERING**

Call to Worship Rachel Poysky

\*Worship Songs Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

**Great Things** 

\*Confession & Assurance | Prayers of the People Sally Henien

\*Worship Song Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

# HEARING THE WORD —

Sermon The Hall of Fame | 12:1-3 (NRSV & NLT) Clay Brown

# **RESPONDING** –

Offertory Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me

Communion Clay Brown

Same God Because He Lives

### **SENDING**

\*Doxology Old 100th

\*Charge & Benediction Clay Brown

Musicians: Asher Pudlo, drums; Chris Parrott, guitar; Uvaldo Callejas, bass; JJ Blanco, keys; Michael Middleton & Meliza Gómez, worship leaders.

As you enter worship, we kindly ask that you silence your cell phones.

### 11:15 TRADITIONAL SERVICE

#### **GATHERING**

Prelude Benedictus Max Reger (1873-1916)

Call to Worship Rachel Poysky

\*Hymn of Praise Praise Ye The Lord | vs 1, 2, 3 #482 | Lobe Den Herren \*Confession and Assurance of Pardon Brett Hurst

\*Affirmation of Faith from Heidelburg Catechism

\*Congregational Response Glory Be to the Father #579 | GLORIA PATRI

## **HEARING THE WORD** -

Anthem of Preparation Clouds of Witnesses Surround Us Robert Hobby (b. 1962)
Sermon The Hall of Fame | 12:1-3 (NRSV & NLT) Clay Brown

# **RESPONDING** —

Prayers of the People | The Lord's Prayer Rachel Poysky

Offertory Guide My Feet Clayton White (b. 1942-2022)
Communion Clay Brown

Sicut cervus Giovanni da Palestrina (1525-1594)

Meditation on *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* Lani Smith (1934-2015)

# SENDING -

\*Doxology Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow #592 | Old 100тн \*Charge & Benediction Clay Brown

Postlude Menuet Gothique Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)

Music: Priscilla Salisbury, Kelli Estes, Su-Jin Cho, Cassandra Black, Riley Vagis, Christine Oakes, Chris Childress, John-Alan Gourdine, Esteban, Antoine Griggs,

John Bond, Chris Love, MDPC Summer Choir; Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director | Kathryn White, Organist

\*Please stand, if comfortable.



# Like to get in touch with one of our Pastors?

Feel free to reach out! Visit **staff.mdpc.org** for contact information and ministry areas.