

The Letter to the Hebrews
Part 7
Chapter 12

1

God Disciplines His Sons

- 1 – “Therefore” -- Goes back over the entire previous chapter – to 10:39. We are people of faith. And we are surrounded by a “great cloud of witnesses (martyrs).
- The walk of the Christian life is compared to a race where there are many obstacles, but this is a race for a lifetime. There is much that entangles us (sin) but we cannot quit.
- The goal of our race is not heaven (we already have that!), the goal is to be “good for something”!

2

God Disciplines His Sons

- 2 – As we run our race, the focus is not on the difficulties. The focus is on Jesus. He is the beginning and end of our faith.
- We run the way He did – He endured the cross for joy because through his suffering he accomplished the salvation of all. “He scorned the shame” (the cross) to take His place at the right hand of God.

3

God Disciplines His Sons

- 3 – Jesus suffered more than any of us. He is our example. Just as He endured and prevailed, so can we.
- 4 – The community of believers was being persecuted but had not yet had to shed their blood. They may have lost property and were ridiculed. Where was God in all of this? Doesn't He care about them?

4

God Disciplines His Sons

- 5-6 – Quoting Prov. 3:11-12, the author gives us a new perspective to suffering: it is the Lord's discipline. It is an evidence of His love.
- The word "punish" or "chastise" is best translated "scourge" or "whip". But this happens not to God's enemies but to His children!

5

God Disciplines His Sons

- 7 – Are you undergoing hardship? Rejoice! God is treating you as His child. Discipline is an evidence of God's love.
- 8 – If God would not discipline us, it would be evidence that we are not really his children.
- 9 – When our parents disciplined us, they were doing it out of love. How much more should we submit to our Heavenly Father. The word "discipline" means setting boundaries.

6

God Disciplines His Sons

- 10 – God disciplines us to train us, so that we do not lose out.
- 11 – In the moment, discipline is not fun. But when we look back, we see the benefit.
- 12-13 – A quote from Prov. 4:26. Don't get caught up feeling sorry for yourselves. Choose your path carefully. That way those who are "lame" (wavering) will be strengthened.

7

Warning Against Refusing God

- 14 – A call to live in peace with all. Don't be someone who leads people astray, but seek peace, not revenge.
- 15 – Don't be the stumbling block for others.
- 16 – Don't practice immorality, or be like Esau who valued his stomach more highly than his birthright. (Gen. 25:29-34)
- 17 – Esau is an example. Don't compromise your faith in order to gain temporary relief from persecution.

8

Warning Against Refusing God

- 18-21 – A reminder of the awesome occasion when the law was given to Moses on Mt Sinai (Ex. 19:10-25) The old Covenant was frightening.
- 22 – In contrast, we have come to Mt. Zion, the heavenly city of God and dwell with him in joy. The two covenants are starkly contrasted – the first one filled with fear and foreboding; the new one filled with joy and light.

9

Warning Against Refusing God

- 23 – The “Church of the firstborn.” Believers who make up the Church. The term “firstborn” implies a privileged position as heirs, together with Christ.
- 24 – Jesus is the mediator of the new Covenant. He is the one who bridges the gulf between God and mankind. The shedding of His blood was better than Abel’s. His blood cried out for retribution. Jesus’ blood brings forgiveness and reconciliation.

10

Warning Against Refusing God

- 25 – A contrast between old and new covenants. If people under the old covenant did not escape God’s wrath when they failed to heed His warning, how much more shall we, under the new covenant, lose out if we fail to heed the warning from heaven.
- 26 – When the old covenant was given the voice of God shook the earth. God will speak again on the last day. (Haggai 2:6)

11

Warning Against Refusing God

- 27 – On that last day, the earth, which can be shaken, will be replaced by God’s heavenly kingdom, which cannot be shaken.
- 28-29 – We are receiving that new kingdom (note present tense!). Our response is one of gratitude and worship.

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