

Hebrews Chapter 12 Continued

Verses 7-8: "Sons": Because all are imperfect and need discipline and training, all true children of God are chastened at one time or another, in one way or another.

Hebrews 12:7 "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

There are so many who fall away from God at the very first sign of problems. They are like the ones in the parable of the seed planting which sprang up and then died away at the very first sign of trouble.

Matthew 13:18-23 "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower." "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side." "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;" "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Notice in this, that there is no difference in the seed (Word of God), that was sown. The difference is not even in the fact that all listened and received the Word. The difference is when trials came; most did not endure the chastening. They fell away. Only the one who fights the battle to the end (endures), will be able to keep the Word given and produce with it.

All Christians are God's sons. We are adopted into the family of God. We are the bride of Christ. If we are His, he trains us every day. We must do the will of the Father. He teaches us what that will is. The chastening comes because He is training us.

Hebrews 12:8 "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

"Bastards": The word is found only here in the New Testament, but is used elsewhere in Greek literature of those born to slaves or concubines. There could be in this an implied reference to Hagar and Ishmael (Gen. 16), Abraham's concubine and illegitimate son.

We moved into the country and built a church. The neighbors in the community did not know us and just assumed we were a cult. You guessed it, rumors starting flying everywhere. I shared this with a Christian friend, who thought I should be thrilled. He said, well, Louise, you could be like the majority of the churches who are having no trouble with the devil.

I got really excited when he said this. Sure the devil did not want another church who taught the truth to be opened. If you are attempting to do great things for God, you will have trouble. That

makes very good sense. If you are not winning anyone to Christ, the devil will not bother with you. God allows the devil to do these things, to see if you are real.

Just as God gave the devil permission to test Job, He sometimes allows the devil to test us. He would not be interested in us learning how to fight for right, if we were not His. If God is not training you, you are not His.

1 Peter 5:9-10 "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle [you]."

Hebrews 12:9 "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected [us], and we gave [them] reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"

“Be in subjection”: Respect for God equals submission to His will and law, and those who willingly receive the Lord’s chastening will have a richer, more abundant life (Psalm 119:165).

“Father of spirits”: Probably best translated as “Father of our spirits,” it is in contrast to “human fathers” (literally “fathers of our flesh”).

I can only speak for myself, but my father had a razor strap, that drove a few lessons home. Those lessons were not soon forgotten. Children in those days respected and obeyed their parents. God the Father wants only the best for us. When He punishes us, it is to help us. The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord. Another word for fear is reverence.

The flesh desires cause us to sin. We said in the lesson before this that we must put the spirit in rule over the flesh, to live godly lives.

John 3:6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Our loving heavenly Father helps us put the flesh under the spirit.

Peter 5:6 "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

Hebrews 12:10 For they verily for a few days chastened [us] after their own pleasure; but he for [our] profit, that [we] might be partakers of his holiness.

“Our profit”: Imperfect human fathers discipline imperfectly; but God is perfect and therefore His discipline is perfect and always for the spiritual good of His children.

Nothing is more pleasing to a parent than to have a well behaved child. We are a reflection of our parents in many ways. The parent relives their life through their child. A parent tries to help their

child not to make the same mistakes he made growing up. Sometimes the parent spanking a child for a wrong doing is to keep them from making the same mistakes he made.

God the Father is a loving parent. He wants us to be perfect. As we said in the verses above, His punishment of us is to make us perfect. We are instructed to be Holy as He is Holy.

1 Peter 1:15-16 "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;" "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Hebrews 12:11 "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Looking back on the punishment that I received as a child, I can thank my parents that they cared for me enough to correct me. It is strange how quickly the pain of the punishment is gone, but the lesson learned is forever. Even the chastening of God is not a pleasant experience while it is happening, but the fruit that it bears is forever.

James 3:17-18 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

Verses 12-17: This passage exhorts believers to act on the divine truths laid out in the previous passages. Truth that is known but not obeyed becomes a judgment rather than a benefit (13:22).

Verses 12-13: The author returns to the race metaphor begun (in verses 1-3; Prov. 4:25-27), and incorporates language (taken from Isa. 35:3), to describe the disciplined individual's condition life a weary runner whose arms drop and knees wobble. When experiencing trials in his life, the believer must not allow the circumstance to get the best of him. Instead, he must endure and get his second wind so as to be renewed to continue the race.

Some of the runners (of verse 1), have grown so weary that they have become stooped and need spiritual strength to be straightened up again. They must be given help, yet they themselves also must straighten their "paths", by avoiding obstacles that would spiritually trip them up.

Hebrews 12:12-13 "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;" "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

In my weakness, God within me is strong.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Not only will God strengthen us when we are weak, but we are instructed to strengthen our weaker brothers and sisters.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all [men]."

Jude 1:22-23 "And of some have compassion, making a difference:" "And others save with fear, pulling [them] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

Hebrews 12:14 "Follow peace with all [men], and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:"

“Follow ... Holiness”: In this epistle, it is explained as

- (1) A drawing near to God with full faith and a cleansed conscience (10:14, 22); and
- (2) A genuine acceptance of Christ as the Savior and sacrifice for sin, bringing the sinner into fellowship with God.

Believers will not be drawn to accept Christ if believers' lives do not demonstrate the qualities God desires, including peace and holiness (1 Peter 1:16).

Matthew 5:8-9 "Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "Blessed [are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

We see from the next verse that God wants us to be at peace with our fellow man.

Romans 12:18 "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

If we are living for God, He will cause even our enemies to be at peace with us.

Proverbs 16:7 "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Hebrews Chapter 12 Continued Questions

1. If we are God's sons, He will _____ us.
2. What is the parable of the sower all about?
3. Was there a difference in the seed planted?
4. Why did it bring different results?
5. We must do the _____ of the Father.

6. What are we, if God does not chasten us?
7. Why should we be pleased to be persecuted when we are doing good?
8. Who in the Old Testament did God allow to be tried by the devil?
9. In first Peter 5:10, we learn that after we suffer a while, God will do what for us?
10. Who did we give reverence on the earth?
11. What is God called in Hebrews 12:9?
12. What is the beginning of wisdom?
13. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the _____ is _____.
14. What must we do that God might exalt us?
15. God chastened us for our profit that we might be partakers of what?
16. Where do we find, Be ye holy, for He is holy?
17. Chastening yields the fruit of what?
18. The wisdom that is from above is first _____, then _____, _____.
19. It is full of what 2 things?
20. What are we instructed to do in Hebrews 12:12-13?
21. In my weakness, _____ is strong.
22. What does Jude 1:23 tell us to do for the lost?
23. _____ are the pure in heart.
24. Who is at peace with those who please God?