



Something Better For Us

A Survey of Hebrews, Lesson #8

12:2 – 13:25

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Three primary audiences of the letter.

- Hebrew Christians who were struggling to let go of the old covenant systems
- Hebrews who were convinced intellectually of who Jesus was, but were uncommitted spiritually.
- Hebrews who were unconvinced intellectually and uncommitted spiritually.



Hebrews 12:4-11

Discipline

- The Hebrews that are being addressed were all suffering in one way or another because of their break with Judaism.
- Some were suffering financially, some socially, and a few were imprisoned, but none had to go through what Jesus endured for them.
- They will now be encouraged to keep on keeping on because God was at work in their circumstances.



Hebrews 12:4-11

Discipline

- God's discipline proves that we belong to Him
'Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons' NKJV
- Discipline is not necessarily punishment. In fact, punishment is only one aspect of discipline. God wants to educate us and train us and there are times when it's necessary that He punish us.
- If you are in the race, God wants you to finish and to finish strong; that will require discipline.



Hebrews 12:4-11

Discipline

- **Our earthly fathers disciplined us as seemed best to them, but they often made mistakes; too harsh here, too soft there. It had no certain end.**
- **When our heavenly Father disciplines us He always does it right and it's always for a definite purpose; that we might be 'partakers of His holiness'.**
- **One of the measures of holiness is separation from sin. So it's reasonable to conclude that God disciplines us to separate us from sin.**
- **One theme that surfaces throughout the N.T. is that God wants us to be like Jesus and He makes sure that we have every opportunity to fulfill that objective.**

Hebrews 12:11

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

NKJV

- **God's discipline (chastening) is never a pleasant thing. If it were pleasant it would not accomplish its purpose.**
- **In order to correctly view God's chastening we must trust Him and we must have a long term view of our lives. If it will be good for me in eternity it is good for me now.**
- **Our Father knows our make-up (He fashioned us) and therefore knows exactly what forms of discipline work best for us.**
- **He knows what will cause us to follow Him and imitate Him so that is exactly what He will bring about.**

Heb 12:12-13 Continue

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. NKJV

- **The race metaphor continues with the mention of 'hands that hang down', 'feeble knees' and 'straight paths for your feet'.**
- **The 'therefore'? It is there to remind us that during the race of life we may experience God's chastening, but we must see His discipline as something that ultimately aids us as opposed to something that hinders us.**
- **This is no time to let up, no time to hold back, this is the time to press on knowing that you really do belong to God as is proved by His chastening.**
- **Ps 51:8 'Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice.' NKJV**

Heb 12:14

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: NKJV

- In your race, there are (2) pursuits that ought to consume of our time and energy.
- Jesus told us that the pursuit of these (2) are all that really matter.
- Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and love others as we love ourselves. (Math 22:37-40)
- The writer is not teaching a works salvation; he is merely pointing out that if you really know God, then you really will pursue Him and what interests Him. (people)

Heb 12:15-16

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. NKJV

- The same words translated from the Greek to the English 'looking carefully' are very similar to the word that translates as 'bishop' or 'overseer'.
- We have an oversight of the gospel to the extent that we are responsible to prevent as many people as possible from 'falling short' (from missing out) of it.
- As much as is humanly possible, we are to do our best to see to that no one is left out of heaven and this includes the 'churched' that are unsaved.

Heb 12:15-16

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- Esau is cited as an example of those who have heard, but have no interest.
- Esau knew of God and His blessings, but had no time for them. He was wholly consumed with the pursuits of the world and the flesh.
- He traded being part of the Messianic line for a bowl of beans.
- He was later sorry that he missed out on something, but not sorry enough to repent.

Heb 12:15-16

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- Esau has modern day 'partners' with the same sort of temporal, worldly thinking.
- For them, it's not about what God has done for them, it's about what they can get for themselves now.
- It's not about a judgment to come, it's about what feels good now.
- They, like Esau, will one day be sorry that they missed out, but there will be no place of repentance for them either.



Hebrews 12:18-29

Law or Grace, You Choose

- When God gave the law it was a fearful experience for Moses and the Israelites.
- God made it clear that He was not to be approached lightly or casually; that He was holding His people at arms length.
- The mountain shook, there was thunder, lightning, and smoke to show how difficult it was to approach one so holy.



Hebrews 12:18-29

Law of Grace, You Choose

- However, when God came and spoke through His Son the message was no longer 'stay back', but became 'come unto Me'.
- When God gave the law there was an outward and awesome display of His power, but when He sent His Son, He came as the meek and mild Lamb of God.
- Before it was tread lightly, now it is come boldly.

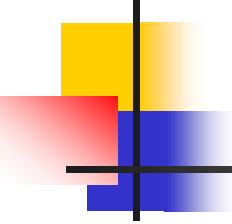


Hebrews 12:18-29

Law of Grace, You Choose

- We will all be judged; but the basis of our judgment is up to us.
- We can choose the law and be judged by our works, or we can choose grace and be judged by Christ's works.
- The chapter ends with a stern warning that our God is a God of judgment. Try to please Him at Sinai, or to trust Him at Zion ... choose for yourself.

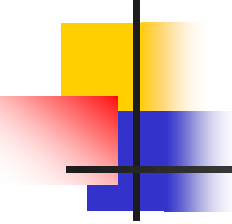
Heb 13:1-3



Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. 3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them — those who are mistreated — since you yourselves are in the body also.

- **How we conduct ourselves in the church matters.**
- **We dare not take our Christian brothers and sisters for granted by thinking that they have to put up with whatever we dish out.**
- **There is a world of people watching us to see if we really believe what we say we do.**
- **The world is hungry to see a group of people who genuinely love, support, and prefer each other.**

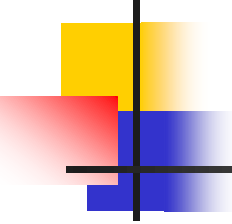
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- How we conduct ourselves when we are out in the world matters.
- Those who claim to follow a man who was the ultimate lover of the outcast and downtrodden should at least occasionally do likewise.
- It is even possible that we have missed some very spiritual experiences (meeting an angel) by not seeing the needs around us.

Heb 13:1-3



Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. 3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them — those who are mistreated — since you yourselves are in the body also.

- How we conduct ourselves with respect to the suffering believers in the world matters.
- So how do we 'remember' those among us who are hurting because of their faith?
 - Be there
 - Give whatever direct help is appropriate
 - Pray for them



Hebrews 13:4-9

Guard Your Testimony

- Purity is the expectation; loose living brings judgment.
- Do not covet; covetousness is not ***having*** a lot of things, it's ***wanting*** a lot of things. When we set our affections on 'things' we covet and show an attachment to the world that discredits our faith.
- Jesus promised to never leave us or forsake us; show the world that He is enough to satisfy us whether we have a few possessions or a lot of possessions.



Hebrews 13:4-9

Guard Your Testimony

- Consistency is the hallmark of Jesus; He stays the same yesterday, today, and forever.
- Let consistency be our signature as well; showing that when you have the truth and know the Truth you do not trade it for something else. You do not need to and you do not want to.
- Fall in love with Jesus, stay in love with Jesus; Today, tomorrow, and forever.



Hebrews 13:4-9

Guard Your Testimony

- Pay careful attention to what you believe. Jesus said, 'you will know the truth and the truth will set you free'.
- Do not fall for the 'flavor of the month teaching'; if it's new to you we usually call that growth, but if it's new to everyone we usually call that heresy.
- One of the devil's oldest tricks (Gen 3) is to mix a little truth with a little error to trip us up.

Hebrews 13:10-21

Separation, Sacrifice, Submission, Supplication

- Jesus, our perfect sacrifice, was not offered in the temple on the alter; he suffered outside the gate.
- Jesus was separate from the 'system' and we too are called to separate ourselves from a system and embrace a person.
- Systems do not save, saviors save. That is not a popular viewpoint in all churches, but I believe it to be accurate.

Hebrews 13:10-21

Separation, Sacrifice, Submission, Supplication

- The audience for this letter was people who were accustomed to offering sacrifices; what sacrifices are appropriate for the Christian under the new covenant?
 - Praise and thanks to God;
 - Caring for and sharing with people.

Hebrews 13:10-21

Separation, Sacrifice, Submission, Supplication

- Submission is definitely out of step with our culture. Do it your way, be your own person, etc ...
- However, in the church God has called and equipped men to watch out for our souls.
- Our pastors are accountable for how they watch over the flock, let's be wise enough to listen to them.
- They are accountable to watch, we are accountable to listen.

Hebrews 13:10-21

Separation, Sacrifice, Submission, Supplication

- The author was a church leader and stood in need of prayer and was wise enough to ask for it.
- Do not fall into the trap that pastors, elders, and deacons are such super spiritual people that they have no needs.
- Not only are our pastors made of the same stuff as we are, but they are sometimes tested even more severely than the rest of us. After all, each time a Christian leader stumbles the devil has additional ammunition.

Hebrews 13:20-25

Benediction

- The O.T. system sacrificed sheep, under the new covenant the Shepherd guards His sheep.
- If I could have any prayer of mine answered for the people that I love it would be this one; 'May God make you into that which pleases Him'. (13:21)



Truths that Transform

- If you are in the race, God wants you to finish and to finish strong; that will require discipline.
- God's discipline (chastening) is never a pleasant thing. If it were pleasant it would not accomplish its purpose.
- We have an oversight of the gospel to the extent that we are responsible to prevent as many people as possible from 'falling short' (from missing out) of it.
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