

Hebrews 12:1-15

Topic: This is one of the most neglected books of the bible. We don't know who the author is, but we do know it was written for the instruction of the temple before 70 A.D. It is to the Jews what the book of Romans is to the Gentiles. Hebrews tells of sacrifices and rituals and exalts the sovereignty of Christ. It tells of Christ's relation to Moses and Abraham and all their people. This is why the Book of Hebrews is so great. The message of Hebrews is this: go on to spiritual maturity. Don't sit back on your laurels; get up and do something for the Lord, spread the word, help someone who doesn't ask but you see the need. Jesus Christ is our mediator to God. If you read only one book of the entire bible, this should be the one.

Heb 12:1: Men put the breaks in the books and chapters of the bible, not God. So Hebrews Ch 12 is really a continuation of Chapter 11. When you see the word "wherefore", look back to what was just said, so, speaking of what was just said, looking back at Chapter 11 which deals with people who have gone before and are heroes: Moses, Isaiah, Jacob, etc. Because of the record they have left of serving God on earth, we need to look to them as examples for our own life. They show us how to deal with challenges and serve God to the best of our ability at the same time. You can get through any obstacle that comes your way. God will still use you. So many people know what they did, and they dealt with their troubles and served God at the same time. We are running a race of life, and those who went before us are watching us from a grandstand in heaven, seeing how we deal with troubles and serve God. In ancient Greece, they "took it all off" so nothing would hinder them in a physical foot race. But we don't take that as a physical example, but rather a spiritual example. Take off all troubles that hinder your service to God: habits, life style changes, addictions...anything you think is hindering your Christian life. Don't let anything hinder you whatsoever. Race means agony here, so there's a bit of agony laid out before us and we need to deal with it as a Christian. Racing requires training, study, and total discipline on your part to reach your full potential in any race you run, in this case, the race for Jesus Christ. Every person that is called to Jesus Christ, He has a mission for you, a race laid out for you to run, challenges for you to overcome, missions for you to complete. We will fail sometimes, but we are not to give up. Persevere in your race, don't ever give up.

Vs2: Author means leader or originator. Everything depends upon Jesus Christ. Jesus looked forward in time and saw what He was to endure, and it was not a pleasant path. But He could see beyond the cross, and it is better than anything we can imagine. It was totally worth it. We can't see what we will have to endure. As a human, we couldn't handle it. He went through all of that, but He is now at the right hand of the throne of God.

Vs3: When you think you got it tough and you start your pity party, think about what Jesus Christ went through. If you get discouraged and feel like quitting, remember what Jesus Christ went through. It will put things into perspective for you. Things are not that bad. Compare your situation to Christ's and you will see there is no comparison. Nobody dragged you up a hill and crucified you.

Vs4: things happen in our life that we don't like because of our life style and choices, and God will chastise us because of it.



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- Vs 5:** As a Christian, be careful how you behave, for He will discipline you like a father disciplines a child.
- Vs6:** Good dads chasten their beloved children. But He doesn't do anything to those who are not His children.
- Vs7:** Good dads chasten their beloved children.
- Vs8:** You don't take care of your neighbor's children. Those children are your neighbor's business. When your own child misbehaves, it is your business to bring that child back in line. It disrupts the whole family when your child misbehaves.
- Vs9:** God chastises us for our spiritual well-being.
- Vs10:** God wants us to partake of His holiness.
- Vs11:** Nobody enjoys getting punished and brought back in line. Chastening is hard and tough, but God does it for our spiritual good and growth. Just as we exercise our body at the gym, we must also exercise our spirit as a Christian.
- Vs12:** Get out of your rocking chair and go do something for the Lord! That's what it's all about. Once you give your life to Christ, it is not yours anymore.
- Vs13:** Let Him do with your life what He wants, and you will be really truly happy. When you try to do your own will, misery and frustration and heartbreak will ensue.
- Vs14:** this doesn't mean you will be perfect or have perfect peace or be trouble free or never commit sin. That just won't happen in this life. If you die, you lie. The wages of sin is death.
- Vs15:** there are people today who are forming groups wanting to reinstate all the old Jewish laws and ceremonies and sacrifices, but the book of Hebrews was written just for this: all you need is Jesus Christ. You will be going against God is you reinstate any of the old ways.

