

**A RACE TO RUN**  
[jkroberts\\_us@yahoo.com](mailto:jkroberts_us@yahoo.com)  
[www.pacolethillsbaptist.org](http://www.pacolethillsbaptist.org)  
June 12,2022

Hebrews 12:1-17

1. Hebrews was written to encourage persecuted believers to persevere in their faith and to trust God in every circumstance.
2. The writer wanted his readers to be numbered with those who “gained approval (obtained a testimony) through their faith.” 11:39
3. Those mentioned in chapter 11 were to serve as examples and sources of encouragement to those currently being tested. 12:1
4. Here we are told that there is a race to be run; the race that is set before us.
5. We are to:
  - a. Lay aside every encumbrance (hindrance).
  - b. Lay aside the sin which so easily entangles us.
  - c. Run the race with endurance.
  - d. Focus on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, and how He ran His race; trusting Him to enable us to run ours.
6. God not only tells us to run, but He also coaches, counsels, confronts and conforms us so that we will be able to run in a way that honors Him.

**I. The Reality. 5-8**

- A. The reality is that:
  1. “...those whom the Lord loves He disciplines (chastens, scourges).”
  2. “...if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”
- B. Verse 5 could be in the form of a question: “And have you forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons?”
- C. The writer is referring to Proverbs 3:11-12.

My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord or loathe His reproof, 12 for whom the Lord loves He reproves, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.
- D. The phrase “It is for discipline you endure” is translated...
  1. “If you endure chastening...” NKJV
  2. “Endure hardship as discipline...” NIV
  3. You must submit to and endure correction for discipline...” AMP
- E. Our attitude toward and acceptance of discipline is vitally important.
  1. James 1:2-3 states,

“Consider it all joy, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance (patience, perseverance).”
  2. Note Paul’s words in Romans 5:1-5.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God

has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

F. The word “discipline” means to train up and educate a child by reproof, correction, discipline and punishment (if necessary) (To cause one to learn).

G. Discipline can be a painful experience because God scourges (flogs) every son whom He receives.

**NOTE: It is interesting and sad to me that so many professing Christians seem to believe that they can, because of God’s grace, sin with impunity. We need to understand that God is not a permissive and indulgent parent.**

## **II. The Reason. 9-11**

A. “(God) disciplines us for our good (**profit**), so that we share (**be partakers of**) His holiness.” Romans 8:28-30

And we know that God causes all things to work together **for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

B. Verse 11 points out that God disciplines us so that our lives might yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

“For the time being no discipline brings joy, but seems grievous and painful, but afterwards it yields a peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (a harvest of fruit which consists in righteousness—in conformity to God’s will in purpose, thought, and action, resulting in right living and right standing with God).” (AMP)

C. God’s discipline produces humility. Proverbs 11:2 (AMP)

“When swelling and pride come, then emptiness and shame come also, but with the humble (those who are lowly, who have been pruned and chiseled by trial, and renounce self) are skillful and godly Wisdom and soundness.”

## **III. The Response. 12-15a**

A. If I were to paraphrase verses 12-13 they would read as follows:

“Therefore quit slouching and moping around, and get with the program in order that God’s purposes might be fully realized in your lives.”

B. A failure to respond positively to God’s discipline only leads to additional discipline.

C. We make straight paths for our feet by:

1. Pursuing peace with all people.

2. Pursuing the sanctification (growth in Christlikeness) without which no one will see the Lord.

NOTE: The grace that saves also sanctifies. If we are in Christ, He is in us, and our lives will give visible testimony to the fact that He is.

3. Seeing to it that we do not fail to appropriate the grace of God that is available to us. 1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

#### IV. The Reproof. 15b-17

A. See to it:

1. "...that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled."
2. "...that you do not sell your Christian birthright for temporary gratification or to escape discipline."

B. Esau regretted selling his birthright to Jacob, but no amount of pleading or tears could restore the lost birthright or blessing pronounced on Jacob by Isaac. Genesis 27:34-38

C. A wrong response to God's discipline can lead to bitterness and heartbreak.

**NOTE: God's discipline is designed to make us better and not bitter. A negative response to the trials, tests, and temptations of life is evidence that we have not properly responded to our Heavenly Father's discipline, nor have we appropriated His promised grace. One obvious, negative response is anything that causes us to break fellowship with our church and other Christians. God has so designed the church that we need each other. See Hebrews 10:24-25**

#### APPLICATION

1. God's discipline is an ongoing process in the life of a true follower of Jesus Christ, so, in light of that reality, we might want to ask ourselves the following questions.

2. Are you aware of God's ongoing discipline in your life? (**Yes** or **no**?)

NOTE: Anyone who is not aware of God's ongoing discipline in their life needs to be concerned about the genuineness of their relationship with Him.

3. Do you want to be the person God wants you to be; more and more like Christ? (**Yes** or **no**?)

4. Are you content to think you have a home in heaven while showing little or no concern about your walk with the Lord in this life? (**Yes** or **no**?)

5. A genuine encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ changes our relationship to God and the whole course of our lives.

6. **At the closing stages of our lives, which we may or may not be aware of, may we all be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future (for Paul the near future) there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7-8**