

HOLY TRAINING

Hebrews 12:3-13

Introduction: Since the beginning of the "Church age" people have come and gone within the Church. Some never had a life changing experience with the Lord, some did but drifted back into the ways of the world, then some thought that there was just too much happening, too much change, too much challenge to being an active Christian. The believer is told that the Christian life is like "running a race" and that effort, energy and concentration will be needed to live as God wants. Every Christian is "running the same race" so to speak and will have similar difficulties and troubles.

I. OUR DIFFICULTIES ARE MOSTLY CORRECTIVE MEASURES FROM THE LORD (vv3-6)

1. If one looks at his/her Christian life as being in a race as mentioned by the writer of Hebrews, then hardships, difficulties and trials might be better handled.
 - We are reminded that Jesus went through some very difficult times and none of us will ever go through as much as He did.
2. Sometimes Christians blame their difficulties and hardships in life on the fact that they are just that, "Christians" and that's why they are having troubles.
3. Again, think about what the Lord went through and now consider what you are calling difficulties in your life - is there any comparison?
4. Just what has running the Christian race cost you so far? What have you given up? Your business? Some habit? A friend? A family member? Money?
5. When we quit, when we give up, when we call it quits in running the Christian race, haven't we forgotten the promises of God, haven't we given up on the Lord Jesus? Haven't we forgotten that sometimes we NEED to be given difficult times in order to "train" us? To correct us?

II. MOST OFTEN TROUBLES/DIFFICULTIES ARE ACTUALLY DISCIPLINE FROM GOD (vv7-8)

1. "Chastisement" - paideia = child training.
 - The end result of discipline is to bring about change - NOT punishment.
 - As we "chastise" our children, and were "chastised" ourselves as children, the purpose is/was to train, to teach.
2. Somehow we have attached the idea of being punished to "chastisement." Hurt, harm, revenge from the Lord when troubles/difficulties come.
3. The fact of God's hand in your life means that you belong to Him - you are a member of His family.
 - We often question why others are not having the same problems we are - they're not of God's family as we are.

4. God does love all people, but He will only discipline, train and guide those who are of His family, those who are Christians, true believers in His Son, Jesus.
5. Christian, when troubles, woes, difficulties come, it is God chastening you to train you and to make you as effective as you can be.

III. CHRISTIANS RECEIVE TWO KINDS OF DISCIPLINE FROM THE LORD (vv9-11)

1. Christians receive earthly parental discipline when growing up at home.
 - Usually for a short time, according to the feelings/emotions of the parents.
 - The purpose sometimes is unclear and the method often wrong, YET, it brings respect, fear and obedience to the parents.
2. Christians receive heavenly discipline.
 - God's purpose and methods are exact and bring desired results which are always for the Christian's own good.
 - Eternity is in God's mind as He works at fitting us for heaven.
3. Attitudes toward discipline differ.
 - As a child when discipline came from one's parents, one's attitude was such and such.
 - As a Christian when discipline comes from God, one's attitude is different.
 - No discipline is pleasant at the time of occurrence, but when from God, there is always a goal, a purpose in God's mind for our betterment.

IV. THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TO HAVE DURING TROUBLES/DISCIPLINE (vv12-13)

1. Christians are going to be disciplined by God and need to have the right attitude.
 - We need to find God's reason for being disciplined and make the proper changes where needed.
 - We need to share with others our difficulties and help strengthen them with what we are going through, for they are also being disciplined in some form.
2. If you have an attitude of "give up", then GET UP instead, get busy, become a good example for others. STOP being a baby, a complainer! Find the reason you are being disciplined and correct whatever is not right.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christian! There is a race to be run and you are in the middle of it.
2. God sends discipline, NOT punishment to train, to guide, to equip you for His service.
3. Your attitude determines the effectiveness of God's discipline in your life.
4. So, Christian, how are you running?