

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 26TH–27TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

## ENDURANCE (HEBREWS 12:1–11) THE PAST ENCOURAGES THE PRESENT

The heroes of the faith in Ch. 11 are a “cloud of witnesses” who, along with God and the angels, cheer us on to complete our faith.

- **God is all about community**, and the testimonies of those before us, and even around us now, encourage us to press forward. **We need each other!**

## ENCOURAGEMENT SHOULD LEAD TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we mature in faith, we cast aside stumbling blocks that cause us to sin. All of us are called to separate from thoughts, attitudes, or actions that impede our growth in Jesus.

- Without the weight and “sin that so easily ensnares us,” we can effectively live out the life God has chosen for us.

## PAYING ATTENTION TO THE PACESETTER

Jesus showed perfect endurance through the cross. If we will keep focused on Him, we will have the strength to live according to His will.

- **We struggle with unhealthy fixations on things other than Christ.** These things may not all be evil, but they **have become distractions from our Pacesetter.**

## IN SUFFERING, WE MUST THINK ON JESUS

When turbulence comes, we must remember what Jesus went through for us.

- There is comfort in the fact that Jesus has suffered far worse than we ever will, and **we can endure if our attention is on Him and not just our circumstances.** We must cast our cares on Him (Psalm 55:22).

## DISCIPLINE BY A GOOD FATHER

God uses discipline to create holiness in us. The recipients of Hebrews had suffered, but not to “the point of shedding... blood.” This implies some had left their faith to avoid persecution.

- **On some level, all of us will be tempted to turn.** Christ was not kidding when He mentioned we bear a cross (Matthew 16:24).

## WE OFTEN TAKE DISCIPLINE FOR GRANTED

Revelation 3:19 mentions Jesus disciplines those He loves. In knowing that, we should be appreciative of the Father's attention on us and His willingness to make us better.

- There are long-term benefits of trials, and **we must trust that God is maturing us through our circumstances.**

## HOW DO WE RESPOND TO CORRECTION?

We can be so obsessed with placing blame on circumstances that we forget to ask the important question,

**“What am I to learn in this time and in these circumstances?”**

- **Believers are not “illegitimate children” but “sons” of the King, and God wants to instill something special in us.**

## DISCIPLINE FOR A GREAT REASON

Parents discipline based on “what seem[s] good to them.” God disciplines in order to “share His holiness.” In other words, it is **to make us even more in His image with our character and mindset.**

- **Grace is shown so we are able to conform to the holiness of God.**

**“NO DISCIPLINE SEEMS ENJOYABLE AT THE TIME”**

V. 11 really nails it. **It sucks to go through discipline and hard times, but when we make it through, we come out more enlightened and mature.** We also have more wisdom to offer the people around us, and we yield “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

## LIVING IT OUT (HEBREWS 12:12–17)

### TRYING TO UNDERSTAND DISCIPLINE

Vs. 12–13 give hope to those who have “tired hands and weakened knees.” If we begin to understand that Jesus disciplines those He loves for their benefit, we will be encouraged.

- Also, in the church community, some will be strong while others are weak. This is why we must walk with each other.

## WITH JESUS, WE CAN WALK A LEVEL PATH

First, we are to **“Pursue peace with everyone.”** Hard times often make us look out for ourselves more than anyone else, but Believers are called to unite, not divide.

- Second, **we are to seek holiness.** We are to hate evil and love purity (Matthew 5:8) and live in a manner that pleases God.

## LIVING ALERT (V. 15)

So people don't fall short of the grace of God, **we're to assist those who struggle in their faith and help bear their burdens** (Galatians 6:2).

- Second, we must prevent people from growing bitter. **We must identify and stop any actions that may contaminate the minds and hearts of Believers.**

## NOT BEING ALERT CAN BE CATASTROPHIC

If we are not engaged in faith and our church, we will end up like Esau, who sold his inheritance rights for quick satisfaction (Genesis 25).

- **Without a strong connection to God and church, we will become “immoral” and “irreverent” to God.** This is an extremely dangerous road to travel.

## DIRECTION (HEBREWS 12:18–24)

### WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN A NEW PROMISE (V. 18)

The author reminds us that we have not come to a mountain that couldn't be touched, “a blazing fire, to darkness...the blast of a trumpet, and the sound of words.”

- This is referring to the Exodus. In that time, the people's unworthiness was evident by their inability to get close to God.

## THE NEW CONTRASTS THE OLD

The separation of God's people under the law is contrasted by the accessibility under the gospel. We can now approach the throne with confidence (4:16) because of what Jesus did on the cross.

- The downside is **if we reject such an invitation, the consequences are severe.**

## A DIFFERENT MOUNTAIN

Mt. Sinai is where the Law was given. When Moses received them, it scared onlookers at the base of the mountain. Verse 22 alludes to the shift from the dread of that event to the new approach we have after the cross.

- Zion represents heaven and the calmness of God's grace under the new promise.

## MT. ZION REFERS TO MORE THAN JUST HEAVEN

When we become devoted followers of Christ we experience a taste of heaven now. **We can receive contentment and grace to meet our daily needs.**

- Fulfillment begins at conversion, but the full consummation of being in community with God is received in “Zion” or heaven.

## TRUE CITIZENS HAVE A HEALTHY FEAR OF GOD

Even though we are the “firstborn,” or born again into God's family, we are to approach God as the “Judge...of all.”

- This means that we should **respect God and be aware of the dangers of turning from the truth. We must be not only hearers of the Word, but doers** (James 1:22).

## BETTER THAN THE BLOOD OF ABEL

Jesus is the “mediator of a new covenant,” that is better than the promise Abel (the murdered brother of Cain) lived under.

- Jesus enables us to be reconciled with the Father. **The blood of Jesus proclaims forgiveness, reconciliation, and spiritual power to all who believe.**

## UNSHAKEN (HEBREWS 12:25–29)

### REJECTING THE WARNINGS

The exodus Jews, for the most part, rejected the warnings of God given through the Law and blatant miracles.

- Presently, God speaks to us “from heaven” through the work that Christ did through the cross, the written Word, and the conviction/prompting of His Spirit.

## A PROMISE TO SHAKE IT ALL (VS. 26–27)

God once shook the earth to get the attention of His people, but in time, God will shake all things to reveal what truly stands. This refers to the final judgment of Christ on humanity.

- **If we are not distracted or lured away, we can firmly stand on the only Kingdom that will never pass away.**

## HOW DO WE ACCEPT SUCH A KINGDOM?

First, **we respond to the cross with thankfulness and humility.** Do we meditate on the enormity of what Jesus has done?

- Second, **we respond in worship.** We show reverence, joy, hard work, praise, and servitude to Christ. Worship is more than singing, it is **how we live out our lives.**

## OUR GOD IS A “CONSUMING FIRE”

We should revere God because He is **a consuming fire that refines all things.** We celebrate grace, but God's character is balanced by His righteousness as well.

- We cannot expect mercy if we willingly turn to sin and rebellion. **We must show our faith by trust and obedience to God.**

## ENDURANCE AND DISCIPLINE

- In Christianity, Jesus, the angels, those who have come before us, and the church encourage us to endure in our faith.
- Though not always fun, **we also grow in endurance through Jesus' discipline.** This matures us in **holiness and strength** so we can live in a way that honors God.

## LIVING ENGAGED AND ALERT

- Living out faith means we are **engaged, obedient, and alert.** These three things take **intentionality and effort.**
- We are to seek peace and holiness (living Christlike) while also being aware of the things that can trip us up (1 Peter 5:8). **A lack of awareness can have tragic results.**

## WE ARE ABLE THROUGH HIS WORK

- We are capable of holy lives because of **the cross**, the clarity of **the Word of God**, the **example Jesus demonstrated** on earth, and **the Spirit** God has given us.
- A life of holiness, wisdom, freedom, and power begins with a **healthy fear of the Lord** (Proverbs 9:10).

## CITIZENS OF AN UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM

- Throughout life, the things we place value in are tested to reveal their effectiveness. **God will eventually “shake” all things to reveal He is the only stable source.**
- **Have we been distracted or lured away from what is truly solid?** What “shaking” must take place to get us to wake up?