

If you have fallen behind in our Hebrews study it might be helpful to know that once we got to [Ch. 11](#), I believe God has been speaking very directly to many of us. So if you have missed one or more of those messages, I hope you will go back and listen to those. But there is plenty of application and understanding to come away with even if you missed some of those.

- But for a quick recap of where we left off last time, the author first inspired us by the faith of those listed in [Ch. 11](#), and then called us to enter the story of greater faith with the words “*Therefore we also...*” And he continued with a call to run the course God has set before you (not someone else’s)!
- The reality is there is not one child of God for whom He hasn’t set a course to run. I hope you have taken the field and are running with passion and a sense of urgency. But not everyone is. As a matter of fact, I think it’s fair to say that many are not. And for various reasons.
- What reinforces this observation is what followed. And that is a call to get rid of *every weight* (things that are not categorically sin but are keeping you from running the course God has for you) and *the sin that so easily ensnares*. So the exhortation was given to help us do some self-examining and unloading so that we could enter our course and (if already on the track) run it well. Then he transitioned to where (or more accurately “who”) we should set our focus toward.

² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Last time we covered the first part of this verse, which is all about us looking unto Jesus standing at the finish line of faith. Because He ran and completed the course set before Him. And as promised, there is much more in this verse for us to grasp.

- For example, when we’re told Jesus is *the author and finisher of our faith*, we also know that Jesus was killed ([Acts 3:15](#))—but God raised Him from the dead. If He did not, who would finish writing your story? Well, you don’t have to think about that for too long because we know that the work God has begun in you, He will complete ([Phil. 1:6](#)). And **every story is only as good as its author**.
- At one time you were writing your own story. How’d that work out for you? In terms of earthly standards, I think we could get a lot of answers. But somehow you got to Jesus, so I’m assuming each one of us came to the awareness of our need for a different ending. Which brought about you giving your life over to Jesus. Because the reality is this life has some tough seasons.
- And He is alive and continuing to walk with you as He writes the story of your new life in Him ([11:2](#)). A life that will transfer into eternity.

But here’s a reality that is simply too much for many to grasp, because it is so incredible. That is that *for the joy that was set before Jesus, He endured the cross*.

- And I’m not just speaking about the perpetual skeptic having trouble grasping this, but maybe more toward the individual who knows just how unworthy they are due to the things they have done. They likely do not doubt what Jesus has done. They just doubt it was for them. But the logical question is what was *the joy* set before Jesus that was powerful enough to make Him willingly *endure the cross*? It was the salvation and redemption of all He created, but specifically people. Which includes you.
- Let that sink in as you add the next piece here. For when it says that for this *joy* He both *endured* and *despised the shame* of the cross, we should look at what each word is conveying. **First** of His *endurance* reminds us the cross wasn’t a 1-hour event. It started the evening before and carried on for somewhere between 15–18 hours until He breathed His last breath. At any point He could have tapped out by calling the angels down ([Matt. 26:53](#)). And had He done so, there would be no more of us. But with you on His mind, He never considered it. He was going to cross the finish line, and He did. But don’t forget

He also ran the marathon of 33 years of life amongst and with humanity. Now He is calling us to do the same.

- And **2)** when it says He *despised the shame*, this is not speaking of hatred (as I believe some suppose), but rather indifference. It's **1)** finding something useless, **2)** not worth taking the time to consider, **3)** or to disregard. When Jesus set his eyes on the finish line of the course He was set to run, He was contemplating what it would be like when not only He returned to heaven, but also of when you would join Him there. And in light of that He found the suffering and shame not worthy to consider.

Which now sets up perfectly what He says to us next.

³ *For consider Him (Jesus) who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary (meaning “to lose heart”) and discouraged in your souls.*

Consider is such a small word with so much potential power. I say potential, because if we do not consider Him (Jesus) there is little to no power being drawn from His limitless supply. If we were to *consider Him* when the weights and sins which so easily ensnare are before us, how would that impact our walk in faith with Him?

- And we are given here the few aspects of Him to consider. Mainly the way He dealt with hostility of the very ones He came to rescue. *The Bible makes it clear that although we were not alive when Jesus went to the cross, that this included us*, in that before coming to Him all were enemies of His (*Col. 1:21–22*).
- Yet if you have come to Jesus, you know that His foreknowledge of that enmity has not, would not, does not wear Him down. But *rather only strengthened His resolve to rescue everyone who will come to Him*.
- So where can you find the strength to keep moving forward for Jesus? From the endless supply of encouragement and power—which is all wrapped up in Jesus. For by Him we also have access to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (*John 14:17*) and the throne room of God (*Heb. 4:16, 10:19–22*). And let me remind you of this, that apart from God we can do nothing (*John 15:5*), but in Christ we can do all things because He strengthens us (*Phil. 4:13*).

When is the last time you got alone in a quiet place to consider Jesus? The text seems to be pointing us specifically to not growing weary in the faith you have placed in Him. But when is the last time for any occasion you shut everything else down to spend at least 20 minutes **1)** *considering Jesus*, **2)** what He has endured, **3)** and why? If you can't answer that, I'm betting you have become either *weary* or *discouraged in your soul*?

⁴ *You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*

When it speaks of their *striving against sin*, this means to be “diligently working”. So, not just resisting sin, but putting it to death (*Col. 3:5 & Rom. 8:12–13*). I know there is a battle raging on as the old nature wants you to resurrect it and its desires. But I also know everything we need for life and godliness has been supplied to us (*2 Pet. 1:3–4*). When we fail to consider Jesus in the midst of the hour of difficulty and decision, we are choosing to not access the pathway to victory. Because we are choosing to break our connection with Him (even if momentarily). And who here, in this room, has never done that?

- But there is more here than meets the eye, if we do not go back and consider the reason this letter was written in the first place. And that's because *they were considering turning back from Jesus because of the persecution they were encountering from their own countrymen and families*. But in that persecution, there was little to none of their blood being shed for standing in their faith—yet.

- In a few years from the writing of this letter that would change. **Nero** would come into power, and many would both bleed and die for their faith. Now add this to what we know has been presented to them in **Ch. 10** as the thing they must not turn back from, which was **their faith**. To do so was sin they could not recover from, because apart from Jesus there is no other way to be saved (see 2:1–4, 3:7 – 4:13 & 10:26–39).
- And one of the encouragements this letter did cause was for them to keep their eyes on Jesus when that persecution did come. For many did then die for their faith. Now that might sound strange to you, but what it means is they did not turn back, even when it cost them their lives. You see, they did receive the exhortation and correction. And because they did, they too were willing to let go of not just the things in this life, but of their own physical lives, as they kept their eyes on Jesus.

Is that the result this letter is having for you? If you were called to resist denying Him, how far would you be willing to go? That answer has everything to do with where your real faith and focus is.

⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.” ⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Honestly, I think quite a few get lost here because they feel like we are almost entering a different conversation. But I assure you we have not. When we go back to **Ch. 11** we know those listed there didn’t sprint to victory. **They ran a marathon of life, as each one of us will do also.** And along the way God the Father (our Father) was helping guide them to maturity (because that’s what a good father does). And on occasion, He had to correct, push, and even discipline them (we find that in the pages of the OT). So, this is all perfectly in keeping with this call for us to run the course set before each one of us.

- And **verses 5–6** are quoted from Prov. 3:11–12, which is entirely instruction for the children of God to learn, grow, and submit to God our Father. And since He calls them **sons** (including you ladies) six times in these verses, **He is speaking to those who have put their faith in Him as their Father.**
- And **verse 5** here does not say, “In case you have forgotten,” but rather states that they (the Hebrews of that time who had put their faith in Jesus) had forgotten this encouragement or instruction given to them way back then. What is the reason behind this?
- It seems to me that after dealing with the chapter of faith (**Ch. 11**), and right before it (**Ch. 10**) being given the exhortation to not turn back from their faith in Jesus, **he is now dealing with their misunderstanding of why difficult or hard experiences come upon God’s people at times.** Which would be very necessary based on what God knew was coming for them within a few short years. And also, because they were losing faith during times of far less persecution in the present yet still considering turning back.

I wonder if they were doing the same thing so many have done since, which is **questioning if God really loved them because of the difficulties they were going through.** How many times have you heard someone say something like, “God doesn’t hear my prayers,” or, “If God loves me, why did He let such-and- such happen?”

- So out of love and compassion for His children, He gave them a reminder of **1)** who they are to Him, **2)** the endurance He told them they would need to live victoriously upon the earth, and **3)** that Jesus also suffered and yet finished His course.

So let's dive deeper into the meaning of the three words used to describe the exhortation given here which we're told to **not *despise*** (or consider worthless or not worthy to even consider). And let's acknowledge the first word is focal as it is mentioned seven times, while the other two are only mentioned once each. I bring this up because as you get a clear understanding of what each word truly means, **you will understand His heart more clearly.**

- The **first** is **chasten**—which means child-training, education, or corrective discipline. It comes from the idea of training a child, including instruction, guidance, and correction to build character. I think that should give us a lot of insight behind the motive of God's chastening of His legitimate children. **It's never random but purposeful, like a parent guiding a child away from harm.**

When I was a kid we heated our house with wood stoves. One day I came home from school and thought I would clean out the stove before building a fire. So I scooped the ashes into paper bags and put them on the floor in the garage. About an hour later my stepdad (who was a fireman) came rushing through the door with the guys on his shift. I asked him what he was doing home and he looked at me like "Really?" Then said, "Don't you see the smoke in here?" It all came together for me in that instant. But there was no beating or grounding, only chastening. I still heat my house with wood to this day. Because I grew up a little that day. And I'm thankful for it.

- **2) Rebuke**—restorative conviction that should lead to humble acceptance of the correction being given. As we have discussed in this book so far, we have seen God use **1)** trials, **2)** His Word, **3)** conscience, and **4)** circumstances to confront and convince His children. Which includes us.
- **3) Scourge**—this speaks of more severe correction. It highlights that discipline can be painful and severe at times, but always from love, not anger.

Honestly, how many of us have read these passages and came away thinking God was talking about beating or bringing harm upon us (see [Isa. 29:11](#))? For sure the mention of **scourging** here does tell us if it requires more severe discipline to get our attention, God loves us enough to administer it. **But isn't it most often that God simply *chastens* us** (giving us something to hear, consider, and grow up through)?

- Certainly the Bible shows us this pattern of His speaking to His children, this way, and Him being longsuffering in doing so. **But there is a point where talking is not getting the job done.** And due to the severity of the issue, if the correction is not received, how it might bring that child or others to ruin. In which case the only loving thing to do is get their attention in hopes of redirecting them.
- God loves you enough to do that when other attempts have failed. Yet remember [1 Cor. 11:31–32](#) tells us *"If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."* So if you don't want chastening to potentially turn to a spanking, **hear the voice of God and deal with your stuff before He has to.**

⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them (and that can get quite creative), but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 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.

This one can be a tripping point for some based on the kind of father they might or might not have had. When God speaks here, He is obviously not ignoring or overlooking the difficulties some have experienced by bad or absentee fathers. **What He is doing is speaking about what the role of a good father (not perfect) should have looked like.** If you didn't have that, God the Father is inviting you into an entirely different relationship, with an entirely different Father—Himself (Ps. 103:13, Isa. 64:8). **Rom. 8:15** conveys this reality in saying, *“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba (meaning something like “daddy” or “papa”), Father.”*

- This is why in this one place (and this place only in all of the Bible) He very specifically identifies Himself as **the Father of spirits**. It's to show the contrast between **1)** the natural world, natural fathers, manmade homes (all things which will come to an end), **2)** with our eternal heritage, heavenly Father, and our forever home.
- The question for you is will you willingly subject yourself to the Father—the eternal One? **This is where healing and the rewriting of your story is found.** And when He corrects you, it is never for your harm or some type of selfish (or even twisted) pleasure. It's for **our profit**.
- And the net result He desires for us is greater maturity. The kind of maturity which encourages us to keep growing so we can get through this marathon of life in this fallen world. **And as we are approaching the finish line, to not just be able to cross it, but as we draw closer with every hour, that we might be looking more like Jesus.** The very One who both demonstrated the life we want to live and is standing for us at the finish line.

Folks, it's not always easy now. And because of the fallen state of the world, it wouldn't be beneficial for us if it was. I look at all the ways the experts are making people emotional marshmallows and am greatly concerned. **How will those individuals so many have labeled as “snowflakes” endure and mature in this life when they have been coddled when they needed to be encouraged to face things head on?** How will the child who didn't get disciplined survive in a world that won't tolerate their attitude, their being offended, and their self-entitlement?

- These are things people (especially conservatives) have rightly been questioning for years. And if that is right thinking, **then would it not also be right for the Father to encourage, push, and correct us when we are going down a dead-end road?**
- Our trials do not mean that God doesn't love us, but rather that He absolutely does. For if you are His, He is committed to your maturity, just as every good earthly father is committed to the same for their own children.
- And in the midst of such events or seasons, consider Jesus! Because as you talk through these things with Him, He will speak to you from a place of personal understanding. Therefore, He can truly minister to us in that place (Heb. 5:7-10).

CROSS REFERENCES

Act 3:15 NKJV - "and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

Phl 1:6 NKJV - being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Heb 11:2 NKJV - For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

Mat 26:53 NKJV - "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"

Col 1:21–22 NKJV (21) And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled (22) in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—

Jhn 14:17 NKJV - "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Heb 4:16 NKJV - Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb 10:19–22 NKJV (19) Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, (21) and having a High Priest over the house of God, (22) let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Jhn 15:5 NKJV - "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Phl 4:13 NKJV - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Col 3:5 NKJV - Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Rom 8:12–13 NKJV - (12) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. (13) For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

2Pe 1:3–4 NKJV - (3) as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, (4) by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Pro 3:11–12 NKJV - (11) My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; (12) For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Isa 29:11 NKJV - The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one who is literate, saying, "Read this, please." And he says, "I cannot, for it is sealed."

Psa 103:13 NKJV - As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Isa 64:8 NKJV - But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

Heb 5:7–10 NKJV - (7) who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, (8) though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (9) And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, (10) called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek,"