

12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

12:2 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.

12:3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

12:4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

12:5 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;

12:6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

12:8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

12:9 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?

12:10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

12:11 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.

12:12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

12:13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

Good morning, everyone.

It has been a hot, hot, hot summer, and finally we have passed the 20th day of August.

As time changes, we wish to keep our eyes on the unchanging Word of the Lord today.

Last week we read, "Men of old were praised because of this faith." and so we saw a series of Old Testament believers.

Now, faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the confirmation of facts not yet seen. Men of old were admired for this faith.

By faith we realize that this world was made by the Word of God, and that therefore what is seen does not come from what appears.

Without faith, it is impossible to be pleasing to God. For he who comes to God must surely believe that He is and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Faith is what we cannot do without.

Today we read that in this faith we are trained and developed by the Lord, and that we are called to race through this world with perseverance.

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden and entangling sin, and let us run with endurance the race in which we must participate.

We see our predecessors who lived remarkable lives of faith, and we too desire to live in faith, but there is a force at work that tries to discourage us from doing so. There is a force that tries to discourage us. It is the presence of "all burdens and besetting sins. How can we escape the power, hindrance, and obstruction of the encumbrance of sin that drags us down and forces us to make mistakes? How can we run with endurance the race in which we must participate?

2 Let us run, looking to Jesus, the guide and finisher of our faith. He endured the cross and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, not willing to be put to shame because of the joy that was set before him.

He is the Leader, the Founder, the Pioneer, and the Finisher of our faith, the One who "endured the cross, not willing to be put to shame, because of the joy that was set before him, and came to sit at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus rejoiced for our salvation, endured the suffering of the cross, even the shame, and finally sat on the throne at the right hand of God in heaven.

For our sake, Jesus, the sinless Son, suffered and endured so much that He opened the way to glory.

3 You should consider Him who endured this rebellion of sinners so that you would not be weak and faint-hearted.

Because of all the burdens and sins that cling to us, we are weakened and discouraged by the fierce workings of the real world. But Jesus endured for our sake.

What helps us when we are about to sink into "all the burdens and besetting sins"? It is to remember the Son of God, who endured the shame and suffering of the cross for the joy of it, and endured the rebellion and hatred of sinners in order to save us from our sins.

He is the guide and the finisher of our faith. As we walk with him, we too can walk in salvation and blessing.

How many "burdens and besetting sins" affect us human beings? How much protection does a seed need to sprout and grow?

We are swept up in various environments, whether it is rocky ground, shallow soil, or thorny vegetation, and we are tossed about in "all the burdens and besetting sins."

4 When you wrestle with sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood.

When we wrestle with sin, we are wounded and some lose their lives, and that is the kind of warfare we must endure. Evil is our enemy and tries to corrupt us by slipping sin into us. It tries to make us powerless. But we must resist it to the point of shedding blood. But why must we go to such lengths for our faith? How severe is faith?

5 And as for the children, you have forgotten this word of admonition spoken to you, "My child, do not despise the training of the Lord. Do not be weak when the LORD reproves you, for the LORD is with you.

6 For He trains whom He loves, and whips every child whom He receives."

The word "training" appears seven times in this passage today.

In the midst of the devil's schemes, the way in which we struggle and cry out and endure hardship until we shed blood, driven by "every burden and entangling sin," is "My child, do not despise the training of the Lord, for it is the training of the Lord. Do not be weak when the Lord reproves you. For the Lord trains whom He loves, and whips every child whom He receives," as the words of Proverbs declare.

Proverbs 3:11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD; do not despise his commandments.

12 For the LORD chasteneth whom he loveth, as a father chasteneth his beloved son.

13 Woe to him that seeketh wisdom, and obtaineth understanding!

14 For that which is gained by wisdom is better than that which is gained by silver, and its profit is better than refined gold.

God's training to give good things, parenting, this is "training. It is parenting because of the Lord's love for His children.

7 Endure ye as a training, that ye may be able to bear it: for God loveth not the training of a man, but of a woman. For God is dealing with you as sons. For what child is there that is not trained by the Father?

We used to think that sin, evil, was pressing down on us. But this was training by God. It was a meaningful and beneficial opportunity for God to love, protect, and nurture His children. It was suffering because I was truly being treated as God's child.

Without knowing God, it might have been an unbearable suffering. Even if we had asked the meaning of the suffering, we might have been petrified because we did not understand the meaning of the numerous sufferings that came our way, and we had no way to overcome them. But now, through faith in God, we can know that all suffering has meaning, that "all burdens and entangling sins" have been turned into opportunities for nurturing and training by the One who, in God's hands, takes them in reverse and calls them "My Son" for us.

Jesus endured shame, He endured the cross, and He willingly endured it because of our salvation. We want to consider His love and prayers for us and go forward believing that our tribulation will be transformed into hope.

Romans 5:1 Thus we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, because we have been justified by faith.

5:2 By him also we have been brought by faith into this grace in which we now stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

5:3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in tribulation, for tribulation is patience. 5:3 Not only so, but they also rejoice in tribulation, for tribulation produces patience,

5:4 For he knows that patience produces endurance, and endurance produces discipline, and discipline produces hope.

5:5 And hope does not end in disappointment. 5:5 And hope does not end in disappointment, for the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been

given to us.

5:6 For when we were weak, Christ died for the ungodly in due time.

12:8 For if the training which any man receiveth not is not given unto you, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 If the father of our flesh should train us, and yet we should still begrudge him, even more should we not submit ourselves to the Father of our souls and truly live?

10 For the carnal Father gives training according to his own thoughts for a while, but the Father of the soul does so for our good, that we may be partakers of his grace.

Today we have been considering the "training" that God gives us.

Training is an essential part of our growth. The temptations of "all burdens and besetting sins," all the difficulties, conflicts, and fears of the real world that torment and disempower us, that we must resist to the point of bloodshed in a state of war, are not so tragic, because we have already gone through them. We must resist it to the point of war and bloodshed, but there is no sadness in it, because Jesus has already passed through it. He has already passed through it, and He has won the victory.

John 16:33 I have told you these things so that you may have peace in me. You have sorrows in this world, but take courage. But take courage. I have already overcome the world.

The Father of our souls gives us training far more precious and powerful than the Father in the flesh, guiding us always to live vibrantly, to return to life, giving us precious training for our good and to bring us into His own holiness.

11 All training does not seem pleasant at the moment, but rather sad. But later on, it will bring forth the fruit of peaceful righteousness in those who are trained by it.

12 Therefore straighten up your limp hands and your weak knees.

13 And make straight paths for your feet, that they may not stumble, but rather be healed.

In the Lord, stretch out your shriveled hands, and your legs, which are crooked and have no strength, and have not been able to walk, so that you may live in health.

In the Lord, crooked paths and steep hills will be made into straight paths.

Remembering daily Jesus who loved the Lord's parenting training and became the path for us,

we ask the One who opens the way for us to live by faith, leads us, and leads us to perfection, to go forward this week as well.

12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded like a cloud by such a multitude of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden and entangling sin, and let us run with endurance the race in which we must participate.

12:2 Let us run, looking to Jesus, the guide and finisher of our faith. He endured the cross, not willing to be put to shame, because of the joy that was set before him, and came to sit at the right hand of the throne of God.

12:3 And ye should consider him that endured such rebellion of sinners, lest ye be faint-hearted and despondent.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for today's worship. We thank you for the blessing of being able to call God our Heavenly Father through salvation. And thank you Heavenly Father for treating us as your children, training us, and making us grow strong because you are a loving Father. We look to Jesus, the Founder and Finisher of our faith, who forsook the joy that was before Him, who endured the death of the cross without shame, and who sits at the right hand of the throne of God, and we go forward to grow. He said, "Those who put their hope in the Lord will gain new strength and go up on wings like eagles. He runs and does not grow weak, he walks and does not grow weary." Thank you for these words. Bless our families and the people in our community. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.