

STUDYING THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 20 - God Disciplines His Sons - Hebrews 12:1-13

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.

HEB 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. [2] Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [3] Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

HEB 12:4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. [5] And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,

HEB 12:6 because the Lord disciplines those he loves,
and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

HEB 12:7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? [8] If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. [9] Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! [10] Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. [11] No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

HEB 12:12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. [13] "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 20 - God Disciplines His Sons - Hebrews 12:1-13

228. What should motivate followers of Christ to live for Him? (12:1)

229. What kind of athletic imagery did the writer of Hebrews use in this passage? (12:1)
230. What warning is given to those who would run the race of the Christian life? (12:1)
231. What should be the focus of those who would live for Christ? (12:2)
232. How is Jesus described in this passage? (12:2)
233. What is the benefit of remembering what Christ has done? (12:3)
234. What measures does the Lord sometimes take toward those who are His "sons"? Why? (12:5-6)
235. What do we learn about God from the fact that He disciplines us? (12:6-7)
236. What sobering truth can be inferred by those who never experience the discipline of God? (12:8)
237. Why does God discipline His children? (12:9-10)
238. In what sense does discipline have two sides? (12:11)
239. What are some specific ways God disciplines us?
240. What state might your life be in if God neglected to discipline you when you went astray?

Lesson 21 - Warning Against Refusing God - Hebrews 12:14-29

HEB 12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. [15] See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. [16] See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. [17] Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.

HEB 12:18 You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; [19] to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, [20] because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned." [21] The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."

HEB 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, [23] to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, [24] to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

HEB 12:25 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? [26] At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." [27] The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken--that is, created things--so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

HEB 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, [29] for our "God is a consuming fire."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 21 - Warning Against Refusing God - Hebrews 12:14-29

241. To what extent are Christians to try to resolve conflicts? Why? (12:14)
242. In what way should believers pursue holiness? Why? (12:14)
243. Why is holiness important? (12:14)
244. What wrong attitude should we watch out for? (12:15)
245. What kinds of things do Christians need to watch out for? Why? (12:15-17, 25-27)
246. What did Esau do that is described as godless? (12:16)
247. What did Esau's godless behavior cost him? (12:17)
248. In what ways was the old covenant intimidating or frightening? (12:18-21)
249. How is Mount Sinai described—the place where the old covenant was revealed? (12:18)
250. How did the author describe the new covenant? (12:22-24)
251. In what way were God's thunderous pronouncements from Sinai only a foreshadowing of what is to come? (12:26-27)

252. Of what kind of kingdom are Christians a part? (12:28)

253. How should God's promises and glorious kingdom affect believers? (12:28)

254. How should we worship God? Why? (12:28-29)