

## Strive for Peace and Holiness

### Introduction and Review

- Last week we were exhorted not to grow weary in our struggle against sin, but find encouragement as we meditate on much more severe sufferings of Christ (v. 3-4)
- We were also encouraged not to forget the value of God's discipline that is reserved only for His children [Christians] to provide guidance for a godly lifestyle (v. 5-10).
- We learned that all discipline is painful & unpleasant but the end result is a peaceful relationship with God for those who willingly submit to the discipline (v. 11).

### I. Spiritual Healing (v. 12-14)

#### A. Strengthen (v. 12)

*“drooping hands” & “weak knees” is the description of a runner who has grown weary & fainthearted (v. 3). How can a weak Christian be strengthened in the race of life? **Internal** attitude or thinking & **external** encouragement are essential (10:25). Remember & remind yourself of what is true (v. 12:1-11; Ph. 4:8). Encourage yourself & others.*

#### B. Straighten (v. 13)

*The runner is also described as “lame” which is a serious problem that could cause a major injury – dislocation of a joint. Some believers were weak & in danger of dislocating or pulling away from the church. “make straight paths” means that believers should not avoid obstacles, difficulties & trials in life but rather face & resolve them biblically. Weaker members are watching & will be **encouraged to persevere** (be healed) rather than pull away (1Th. 5:14).*

#### C. Strive (v. 14)

*Peace & holiness are to be clear objectives among believers. “Strive” = intense effort... Christians are to seek peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18), but particularly with other Christians (Rom. 12:16a; 14:19). Peace means harmony in personal relationships – between strong/weak, etc. Love, forgiveness & patience are essential for peace. Holiness is*

*essential to enter into the presence of the Lord (1Jn. 3:2). It means living according to the will & word of God. Holiness proves our **love for God** & peace proves our **love for man**.*

### II. Spiritual Dangers (v. 15-17)

#### A. Failure to obtain grace (v. 15-16)

*A failure “to obtain the grace of God” means a person did not respond positively to grace & remains unsaved (Eph. 2:8). Three sins that can lead to this negative response are: defiance toward God (root of bitterness – like the pretenders in Deu. 29:18), sexual immorality (Heb. 13:4) & total worldliness (unholy – like Esau in Gen. 25:29-34; 1Jn. 2:15-16; love of money, pleasure, power, etc.). Believers are to take the responsibility of overseeing (see to it) each member to ensure that no one is **deceived** with this lifestyle of sin = **UNSAVED!***

#### B. Failure to repent (v. 17)

*Repent (**μετάνοια**) means to change one's mind & purpose leading to a changed life. Esau eventually changed his mind about the birthright (wanted it back), but retained his evil lifestyle – no repentance. The phrase “no chance to repent” means that he would not repent when he had the opportunity & then he could not. **WARNING:** A person may resist God so long that repentance becomes impossible (6:4-6).*

**ILL:** A person may injure themselves with a cut or wound & delay treatment even though pain reveals urgency. If treatment is delayed too long, the wound becomes infected, infection spreads & permanent or fatal damage can result.

**APPL:** Our conscience is like a spiritual nervous system that reveals when some correction is needed in our life. The HS & word of God brings conviction. No one should presume that you will have another opportunity or a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance to repent. This applies to unbelievers like Esau & Judas, to believers (1Co. 11:27-32) & even to a church (Rev. 2-3). We should never take God's grace, kindness & patience for granted (Rom. 6:1-2).

## CONCLUSION

So then my brothers & sisters let's consider what we have learned today. In this race of life, all Christians need to be encouraged & strengthened at times. Other Christians are affected by the way we live in times of trouble. We must diligently strive for peace & holiness among ourselves. We must never presume that we will have another opportunity to repent. Are you memorizing scripture for times when you need to encourage yourself & others? Do you seek to encourage other Christians when they are weak & hurting? Do you attempt to solve & resolve problems in life biblically knowing that others are watching? Are you willing to love, forgive & be patient with other people for the sake of peace & your love for Jesus? Are you convinced that you should repent every time God brings conviction & gives you an opportunity? The answer to these questions is between you and God, but I certainly hope your answer is YES! Yes I love Jesus; yes I submit myself to Him; yes I hide His word in my heart; yes I seek to encourage myself & others in the word of God; yes I will resolve my problems biblically; yes I will love, forgive & be patient with others; yes I will repent when given the opportunity; YES love, my soul says YES!

If you are not a Christian, I hope that you will say YES to the Lord today also. Say yes to His love for you; yes to His life for you; yes to His death for you; yes to His resurrection for you; yes to His call to you; yes to His grace given to you; and yes to this wonderful opportunity to repent & believe in Jesus today! But you must believe...

SUBJECT: [Strive for Peace and Holiness](#)

TEXT: [Heb. 12:12-17](#)

LOCATION: [Trinity Community Church](#)

DATE: [October 9, 2011](#)

OCASSION: [Sunday Morning Worship Svc](#)

SERMON INDEX NUMBER: [971](#)

FILE LOCATION: [BX4](#)

[Prepared by Willie D. Woodmore](#)