**Hebrews 12 – Enduring In Christ**

1. **Introduction:**
   1. The first half of the chapter exhorts all to endure in faith though facing God’s chastening, presenting Christ as our example of God’s Son who also experienced God’s chastening through persecution and trials.
   2. The second half of the chapter contrasts the Old and New Covenants, showing the superiority of the New through Israel’s encounter with God at Mt. Sinai and Zion.
2. **(12:1-4)** Christians must endure as did Christ and finish the race set before us.
   1. (1-2) Because we are surrounded by such a great “cloud of witnesses,” what are we called upon to do?
      1. The writer presents these people of faith as though they were *spectators* watching our lives to see if we will do what is necessary to finish our race of faith in Christ.
      2. Our motivation for enduring is Jesus who suffered as the *author* (one who takes the lead, sets the example) and *finisher* (perfecter, sees a thing through to completion) of our faith.
   2. (3-4) What would looking to Christ help them overcome, and to what extent does God expect us to go in striving against sin?
3. **(12:5-11)** We are encouraged to remember the purpose of God’s chastening.
   1. (5-6) We must not despise or be discouraged by difficulty and heartache, seeing God disciplines and even scourges (whips) His children whom He loves through these (Prov. 3:11-12).
   2. (7-8) What must we do for God to accept us as his son (child), and what is true of those who are never chastened?
   3. (9-11) If we love and respect our earthly fathers who corrected us as they saw best, we should respect and submit to the very Father of our spirits who chastens for our profit, never arbitrarily, and does so that we might partake of His holiness and be righteous.
4. **(12:12-17)** Exhortations to encourage one another and pursue faithfulness.
   1. (12-13) This exhortation to encourage each other is taken from Isaiah 35:3, which has Messianic references and exhorts fearful Israel to strengthen themselves and stand up in faithfulness because the Lord will deliver them.
   2. (14-17) What do these exhortations and warnings tell us about our part in salvation and the truthfulness of the doctrine of “once saved, always saved”?
      1. (17) Note how Esau’s decision was irrevocable, which warns us that if we despise the blessings of Christ and turn back, we can forever lose our inheritance, or salvation, in Christ.
5. **(12:18-24)** The Old and New Covenant systems are contrasted in hopes of convincing the readers that the only choice they have concerning salvation is Jesus Christ and His covenant.
   1. (18-21) How do these verses describe Israel’s encounter with God at Mt. Sinai when they were receiving the Old Covenant, and what does it say about their ability to approach God?
   2. (22-24) To what mountain have Christians come, and how do these verses show that our ability to approach God under the New Covenant is far better than what was true under the Old?
6. **(12:25-27)** We must not, therefore, refuse Christ who *speaks from Heaven*.
   1. (25) Who is the one who spoke on earth, and who is the one who speaks from heaven?
      1. If the law spoken on earth could not be ignored without severe punishment, how much greater punishment should be expected if we ignore the law spoken from heaven.
   2. (26-27) The *shaking* and *removal* of all things made.
      1. God has promised to “yet once more” shake both the earth and heaven. When He does this, what will be removed and what will remain?
      2. To what do the *things shaken* and the *things which cannot be shaken* refer?
7. **(12:28)** What is the kingdom we are receiving which cannot be shaken?
   1. We receive this kingdom through coming into Christ and enduring faithfully in service to Him.
   2. What are we encouraged to seek in order to serve God acceptably in reverence and godly fear?
8. **(12:29)** What is God presented as here, and what is the point of this description?