

**HEBREWS -12: 12-14**  
**Peace and Holiness**

This comes after the section on divine Fatherly discipline...

God's discipline is designed to enable us to get back on our feet.

One reason for our own restoration and perseverance is to help take care of those around us  
EX Soldiers in battle endure for the sake of those around them

**12**Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so that *the limb* which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

**14**Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

Application from v11-12

There is an oversight aspect to this as well as an individual aspect.

The Christian life is not a solitary life, or at least it shouldn't be.

Our growth is typically not a straight line

- Take care of yourself spiritually and seek the spiritual well-being of others.
- Practically we need some sort of corporate structure for this – our way of doing this is through election of Elders. Not a perfect system, but it is better than nothing, and better than mob rule.

Help those who are weak: either because of youth or because of spiritual decline, or perhaps sin.

- **It is assumed that the church will be made of those who are at various places in their spiritual walk. Some will be weak and feeble and others will be there to help them.**
- There is a certain mystery to this difference in growth.
- J. Edwards sermon: Some have seen the light and tasted the good things of God, enjoyed the comfort of the Word but for some reason their hands and knees became weak and their paths were no longer straight. . Why this happens is a mystery to us.
- True Christians can be brought into such distress

Donald Guthrie says this: “The words here are vivid with encouragement. Drooping hands and weak knees are typical of people with low spirits. They portray persons who have become incapable of action through sheer exhaustion.”

The AOH is saying to look around at the brethren and if you see brethren who are in that condition, then do your best to strengthen them. You should be concerned that they go on in the faith and get through their trials.

This is an US issue, not a command ONLY for paid professionals.

**The text speaks to how WE are to live in light of God's loving discipline?**

**v. 14 Pursue peace with all.**

(Today's SS series is on Peace Making- opportunity for immediate application of this text)

This requires humility on our part. It means that you don't wait for the other person to make the first move, but that you move first. This means that we must trust in the sovereign working of God in the midst of the situation. **Moving out in peace will often involve forgiveness, just as God has forgiven us.**

We must trust that in the end God will make things square so that we don't have to.

**BEWARE** the mindset of “Vengeance is mine says the Lord”, and “I just want to be about the Lord's business.”

Pursuing peace means that we will promote the peace of others, i.e “shalom” – well-being in the lives of others.

- V. 14 Pursue peace with all men- This is a command and it is intentional. Pursue = strive after, often translated “persecute’.
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**Verse 14 calls for two things that are hard to hold together:**

**-Be at peace with all & pursue holiness.**

Do you see the internal tension?

If we try to be at peace with all and avoid conflict then we may end up compromising our holiness. It is hard to be at peace with all and wage war against sin at the same time. To do so requires a strong grasp of the grace of God. It means that we must not find our worth and security by pleasing others.

We call this resisting peer pressure, and it is real for adults as well as for children.

Here’s some pastoral counsel....**We must not compromise ourselves or biblical truth for the sake of what will be a false peace.** If we compromise ourselves for the sake of peace or for being liked, then it’s not a real peace with ourselves, with God or with others.

After being told to stop preaching Christ, Peter and the apostles responded in faith..

Acts 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men

**Eph 5: 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them**

**1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

That is the ideal – that our good deeds will cause people to glorify God in the day of visitation. As Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men that they will see your good works and glorify the father who is in heaven.” Matt 5:16

**1 Peter 4 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. 4 In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you;**

**EXL: people will get upset when you stop running with them into “unsavedness”**

**Romans 12:18 gives a good guide to follow, “If at all possible, insofar as it has to do with you, be at peace with all men.”**

**Guthrie – “This peace is only possible within the limits of what is right.”**

While peace with all is to be pursued, it is especially true for peace with believers for we are one body, united by one Holy Spirit.

**Eph 4:1-6 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.**

**\*\*\* Are you a peacemaker or a contentious person?**

What would your spouse, kids, or colleagues say in their more honest moments?

- **Pursue holiness without which NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD**

Very SOBERING

Let that wash over us...feel the significance of it.

**HOLINESS IS SOMEONE WE MEET BEFORE IT IS SOMETHING WE CAN PURSUE**

Without the holiness of Christ credited to our account by faith, we would NEVER be fit to see the Lord.

EX: WIZARD OF OZ "Nobody gets in to see the Great Oz. Not Nobody, not no how."

God is not like that.

IN the movie, Dorothy and her crew had to do a feat of great daring and danger – bring back the broomstick of the WWotW. They had to EARN it.

The Good News OF THE Gospel is that Jesus conquered Satan and death itself. He did battle with the "wicked witch" so that we might have the holiness we need to see the Lord.

This is the uniqueness of the Biblical method of grace. All human religions are ignorant of this gracious salvation.

Ask a Jew, a Moslem, a Rationalist, anyone but a Christian, "What do you mean by your righteousness, or your holiness?" His reply is, "I mean my integrity, my kindness, my purity, my benevolence, my good thoughts, feelings, and works." It is always "my or mine."

Ask a Christian, "What is your righteousness?" His answer is, "The Lord—Christ is my righteousness." "What is your holiness?" "My holiness is in heaven—Christ." "What is your life?" "My life is hid with Christ in God, and Christ lives in me."

How do we know that we've been united to Christ?

We desire to pursue holiness.

If our spiritual quest is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, or glorify God BY enjoying Him, then it will be hard to enjoy Him if we are not pursuing and enjoying holiness because God is HOLY, HOLY, HOLY.

I believe Isaiah 6 is the only place where an attribute of God is given a threefold declaration. Repeating is for emphasis, but a tripling is beyond emphasis.

If we aren't pursuing holiness then why would we even want to claim a relationship with God? If we've remade God to fit our own image and our own definition of holiness, then we're not worshipping the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

In Christ we are 'sanctified' by His death, but there is in this life a pursuit of holiness that we are to strive for.

**1 Peter 1:14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."**

**17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;**

The pursuit of holiness is a relational issue. It's a FATHER – CHILD issue:

EX: Zach in the Mr. Moody High School event; the other guys were be inappropriate in front of the crowd but he wasn't. when asked "why not?" his response was, "Because I knew my father was there."

Pursuing holiness always means pursuing Christ first and foremost – fixing our eyes on Christ. Looking to Him in times of trial and temptation. When we look at him we remember His love for us and in beholding Him we are changed. He's not ashamed to call us brothers.

It is important to note that justification and Sanctification are by faith – We aren't saved by faith only to be sanctified and changed by the Law. No it is by the Holy Spirit taking the Word and applying it to our hearts as we believe.

This makes sense given the context of the focus on faith in Hebrews

**What is the one thing we need to do more of to grow in Holiness? John 6:28**

**BELIEVE THE GOSPEL; behold Christ 2 Cor 3:17- 18**

**17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**

### **Beholding is Becoming**

If that sounds too easy or ephemeral, just TRY IT.

- Behold the glory of God as revealed in Christ. Behold the Lamb who gave Himself for those who hate Him.
- Behold Him who did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped but laid it all aside to humble Himself as a man to the point of obedience, even to death on a cross.
- Look to Him so that you may not lose heart.
- Look to Him who is your sympathetic high priest.
- Fix your eyes on Him who sits at the right hand of the throne of God to make intercession for us, for you.
- Set your mind on things above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- Seek FIRST THE kingdom of God and His righteousness
- Say with the Psalmist - 27

**4 One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of the LORD  
And to meditate in His temple.**

TRY IT intently and then tell me if it doesn't make a difference in your life. (This address where we fix our hearts, and they ARE fixed on something.)

As we are called to pursue peace and pursue holiness we need to remember that God, in His grace has and is pursuing us.

Holiness is what happens when we walk in the love that God has for us in Christ. Sin is what we do when we forget or aren't satisfied with all that God is for us in Christ.

God loves us as a Father; He loves us as His Bride.

When we forget this then we slip into sin, perhaps a form of immorality and become bitter like Esau. (next week)

Holiness is always the result of faith.

**The fight of faith, the fight of holiness is a fight to remember the Good News of the Gospel.**

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