

Hebrews 12

1 This form of 'therefore' is only used in 1Thessalonians 4:8 and implies that because of this argument then... It is the climax of the argument that began in 10:19 that pleads with us to not lose faith in Christ. The picture here is of an arena with clouds of spectators that have fought the battle we are in and made it. They are yelling down to us that God is faithful and keeps His promises. They made it. Like the naked Greek runners, we must put away anything that interferes with THE RACE. That race is the race Paul refers to in 1Corinthians 9:24f. It tells us to run with perseverance. What are implied ways we should not run? In what way is the race marked out?

2 Look in someone's eyes. What do you see? Matthew 6:22-24 Our eyes reflect what we look at. If we look at Jesus the windows of our souls will reflect Him. To fix our eyes in the Greek is to look away from other things and stare at this one thing. Author is archeagos. Do you remember the meaning? Who will bring our faith to completion? Philippians 1:6 The One who authored it, the One who began a good work in us. 1Thessalonians 5:23,24 What joy was set before Jesus that would cause him to endure the cross? Hebrews 5:9, John 12:24 Endured - at any time of the agony of the cross, He could of said "enough" and stopped the agony. Shame - only low life slaves and worst of criminals were crucified. To be hung on a tree was a curse by Jewish law. The right hand is a place of power, Philippians 2:8-11

3 "Think about Jesus' example. (Our eyes aren't on some mystical vision but the actual example of Jesus) He held on while wicked people were doing evil things to him. So do not get tired and stop trying." Hebrews 12:3 (NCV) When the wicked oppose us we need to think about Jesus' amazing example. What kind of an example did he leave us with?

4 As we look at Jesus' example we realize we don't have it so tough.

5-6 Proverbs 3:11-12 Like any loving Father, He will let His heart be broken to cause you the pain you need to turn in the right direction. I cried with my children when I had to discipline them. I hope they could see the loving heart of God the Father that must inflict the pain He dearly wishes He did not have to inflict. No wonder today so many are teaching not to touch a child in discipline. Parents today are not willing to suffer the pain with their children to turn them in the right direction.

7-11 Hardship in life can be a form of discipline. We are not to run from it but endure it in the same way a faithful runner endures training. Hardship is a fact of life. If you have it too easy you may wonder if you are really a true son. Discipline does not cause loss of respect as some teach, but loving respect. Our spirits have a Father and we should submit to His discipline. That brings life! Earthly fathers may let anger get in the way or discipline in error, but God is always operating for our good and with the goal of sharing in His holiness. That is another truth that should bring us to our knees in adoration. Can you recall this type of discipline that hurt at first but later you saw good fruit? Can you trust God that whatever hardship He takes you through is for your good?