

“NO RIGHT TO COMPLAIN”

Text: Hebrews 12:1-13

Subject: How The Cross Destroys All Murmurs and Complaints (or)
“The Cure for Hanging Hands and Feeble Knees”

Introduction:

- ◆ The book of Hebrews was written to the Jewish converts in Palestine.
- ◆ These Christian Jews were suffering persecution.
- ◆ They were being tempted to abandon their new-found faith (and return to the Old Testament system of law, ceremony, the priesthood and animal sacrifices).
- ◆ The word “**perfect**” is used 14 times to reveal to us that perfection could never be achieved under the law by animal sacrifices.
- ◆ The word “**better**” is used 13 times to reveal to us the superiority of Christ over the Hebrew system of law.

In chapter 1, Jesus is better than the prophets.

In chapter 2, Jesus is better than the angels.

In chapter 3, Jesus is better than Moses.

In chapter 4, Jesus is a better rest.

In chapter 5, Jesus is better than Aaron.

In chapter 6, Jesus is a better anchor.

In chapter 7, Jesus is better than Melchizedek.

In chapter 8, Jesus is a better covenant.

In chapter 9, Jesus is a better sanctuary.

In chapter 10, Jesus is a better sacrifice.

In chapter 11, Jesus is a better faith.

In chapter 12, Jesus is a better example.

In chapter 13, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever!

Hebrews 11 tells us what real faith does.

Question: What is real faith?

Answer: (v. 1) *“The substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.”*

1. The word substance means: **“To stand under and support.”**
2. The word evidence means: **“Confidence in God regardless.”**

Put the two words together and...

- ◆ Real faith is confidence in God, regardless of the circumstances or consequences that releases the sustaining grace of God; enabling you to stand and not fall. (Repeat)

Questions with Answers

1. In verse 3, what does it mean to be wearied and faint in your mind?
2. In verse 4, what does it mean that we have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin?
3. In verse 5, what does it mean to despise and faint when chastened by the Lord?
4. In verse 9, what does it mean to be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?

5. In verse 10, what does it mean to be partakers of the holiness of Jesus?
6. In verse 11, what is the peaceable fruit of righteousness?
7. In verse 12 & 13, what does it mean to lift up the hands which hang down, strengthen the feeble knees and see the lame be healed?

**This morning: “No Right to Complain” or
“The Cure for Hanging Hands and Feeble Knees”**

Question: What exactly is it that heals any heart when it is tried, tested, troubled or tempted to withdraw as a soldier of the Lord?

Question: How does the cross of Jesus protect me, preserve me and heal me when under fire?

Three Ways

I. The Cross of Jesus Brings Heartfelt Courage (vs. 1-4)

Fact: In verse 1, we are given two commands:

1. “Lay aside every weight and sin that drags us down.
2. “Run with patience the race set before us.”

Question: What gives us courage and motivation to do these things?

#1. We See The **Soldiers** (v. 1)

“Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.”

- The word witnesses means “martyr”
- It refers to the soldiers of faith in Hebrews 11.
- It means that soldiers gone on before us are witnessing to us today.

What are they saying?

- That God’s grace enabled them to stand tall and stay true until death and,
- That God’s grace will enable you to stand tall and stay true until death!

In Other Words

- ◆ The God who poured out grace upon all of those gone before us is the same God who will pour out grace today so you can stand with courage.

We see the soldiers, but

#2. We See The **Savior** (v. 2)

“Looking unto Jesus who endured the cross.” (v. 2)

(v. 3) *“Consider Him that endured such opposition of sinners against Himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds.”*

Question: How does looking at Jesus give us courage?

Question: How does it protect us from becoming wearied and faint in our minds (our thinking)?

Question: How does it keep us from becoming cynical, critical, sour, sulking, pouting and weary?

Just look at Calvary

- ◆ Jesus endured the cross and the pain connected with Calvary (for my benefit).

- ◆ Jesus despised the shame, or disregarded His own humiliation to do the Father's will and benefit me.
- ◆ Jesus took upon himself the opposition of sinners and persevered regardless of Himself (in my place)!

And remember

- ◆ Jesus never had a pity party.
- ◆ He never cried, "poor me".
- ◆ He never quit with a souring martyr's complex.

Question: How does this give me courage and protect me from becoming wearied and faint in my mind?

Answer: (Two ways)

1. Just remember that what Jesus suffered, He suffered on your account. (And)
2. Just remember that the same grace Jesus received from the Father to do His will is the same grace we receive to do the Father's will.

In Other Words

- ◆ Since Jesus received grace – you can receive grace.
- ◆ Since Jesus stayed faithful - you can stay faithful.
- ◆ Since Jesus overcame all grief - you can overcome all grief.

So much so

That if you are ever even tempted to pout, sulk, and get sour withdraw or claim "not fair",

Just Remember Verse 4

"You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."

Which Means

- ◆ No matter what pain, cross, trial betrayal or disappointments we may face in this life,
- ◆ We have never resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Or

- ◆ We've never given our blood on a cross, been crucified or died in another's place!

In Other Words

How can I ever feel like I've been cheated in life's lesser matters when I've already benefited so much in the greater matters of eternity, salvation and forgiveness and because of Jesus?

The Cross of Jesus Brings Courage

II. The Cross of Jesus Brings Needed Correction (vs. 5-8)

Question: How many of you have ever needed the Lord to correct you once since you've been saved?

Question: How many of you think (that if Jesus tarries) the Lord might correct you one or two more times?

Remember Luke 9:23

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

Fact: The word for cross is "STAUROS".

Fact: It means; "any hardship you encounter in doing the will of God; take it up without complaint".

Question: What's the danger in this life when you have to carry a cross of some kind?

(V. 5) The First Eight Words

“And you have forgotten that word of encouragement.”

Question: What’s the danger when carrying a cross?

Question: What do many forget when tested by fire?

Question: What did the Hebrews forget along the way?

- ◆ That the motive behind every cross is the love of God for you; (v. 6) “For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveith.”

Here it is

- ◆ The word “**chasteneth**”: Greek word PAIDEIA means:
1. To train 2. To teach 3. To nurture 4. To instruct
- ◆ The word “**scourgeth**” Greek word MASTIGOO means:
1. To correct (and) 2. To squeeze, to bring out something good.

In Other Words

- ◆ God will take the things that could naturally discourage you and use them to deepen you (with our cooperation and response of humility).

It’s a guarantee from God

(Vs. 9, 10) “Our parents corrected us and we gave them reverence.” (v. 10) “**But God for our profit.**”

“For our profit” Means:”

- ◆ What the devil wants to use to discourage and detour you, God will use to profit you!
- ◆ What you think is loss, God will use as a ladder to higher ground in His Kingdom.
- ◆ What you think is a backward step, God will use bring out something good.

Never forget the motive

- ◆ “For whom the Lord loveth” means: God’s not against you!
- ◆ He may correct you, but His underlying motive is love bent towards you!
- ◆ He is after something that will benefit you now and for all eternity!”

#1 – The Cross Brings Heartfelt Courage

#2 – The Cross Brings Needed Correction

III. The Cross of Jesus Brings Lasting Change (Vs. 9-13)

Question: What’s the one great danger when the Lord corrects us?

Answer: Responding the wrong way!

God gives us three dangers to avoid.

(In v. 5) #1. We can despise God’s chastening (which means):

- ◆ To disregard correction and take it lightly.

(In v. 5) #2 We can faint when we are chastened (which means):

- ◆ To withdraw, slip back and fall away.

(In v. 9) #3. We can rebel when we are chastened (which means):

- ◆ To resist, become bitter and hinder God’s purpose in you.

These three dangers; despising, fainting and rebelling are disastrous

1. They will produce murmuring and complaining.
2. They will produce self-pity and a martyr's complex.
3. They will steal your focus and a Godward perspective.
4. They will render us useless and ineffective.
5. They will keep us from reaching our fullest potential in God.

But look at the lasting change of a spiritual response.

Question: What's the reward, the fruit of taking up the cross without complaint?

Answer: Permanent and lasting change.

1. There will be "character of heart" (v. 10):

"That we might be partakers of His holiness."

- ◆ This is the nature of Christ being formed in our hearts.
- ◆ It is the life of Christ being imparted to your life.

2. There will be "peace and tranquility" (v. 11)

"Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

- ◆ This is the fruit of peace which is opposite of strife and contention.
- ◆ This fruit of peace is the result of yielding completely to God (which means):
- ◆ Someone with strife and contention reveals that they are not 100% submitted to God.
- ◆ That's why I teach believers to never contend with a contentious person. Why not?
- ◆ Because contention is the symptom that reveals there is rebellion in the heart.
- ◆ Submission produces the fruit of peace, rebellion produces the fruit of strife.

3. There will be "power over sin":

(v. 11) "The peaceable fruit of righteousness."

- ◆ This means that yielding to God will result in righteous living (or power over sin).
- ◆ This means that the more we submit our wills to God, the greater our power over temptation to sin.
- ◆ This means that carnal and fleshly living is telling us that our will is not fully submitted to God.

The Good News Is

The power of the cross can change our wills so that habitual sins of the present become historical sins of the past.

4. There will be "healing from within"

(v. 12) "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees."

(v. 13) "Make straight paths for your feet so that the lame will be healed".

Question: What is God still healing?

- ◆ **“Hands which hang down.”**
- ◆ Or, hands that are down because of weariness in battle.

Question: Are you battle weary because of something?

- ◆ **“Feeble Knees”** (v. 12)
- ◆ This refers to a heavy load that causes your knees to be weakened.

Question: Are you carrying a heavy burden, affliction or trial?

- ◆ **“Make straight paths for your feet”** (v. 13)
- ◆ This means remove any stones, sticks or debris in the way that could cause you to stumble.

Question: Is there anything at all in your life that needs to be removed? (Why?)

(v. 13) “Let it rather be healed” (Which means):

- ◆ Let God restore you with new hope and fresh optimism.
- ◆ Let God revive you with contagious enthusiasm and new perspective.

Conclusion

What is God saying in Hebrews 12?

- ◆ The cross of Jesus brings **heartfelt courage, needed correction and lasting change!**

AMEN
Bill Kirk