

EPISODE NO. 348

Heb. 12:1-29

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus

1 We are surrounded by such a large number of witnesses! We must put aside anything that might slow us down. Sin can easily tie us up. Let us run with endurance the race that is ahead of us. 2 Jesus endured when he had to suffer shame and die on a cross. Why? Because of the happiness that lay ahead for him. He didn't mind the way he had to die.

Keep your eyes on Jesus. He is the beginning and the goal of the faith. Now he sits at the right side of God's throne. 3 Think about what Jesus had to endure from sinners — they were all against him. Then you will not get too tired and give up.

Love = Discipline

4 In your fight against sin, you have not fought so hard that you had to die. 5 You have forgotten these words of encouragement which speak to you as sons:

“My son, when the Lord disciplines you, don't take it lightly.

Don't be discouraged when God corrects you,

6 because the Lord God disciplines the one He loves.

He whips every person He accepts as a son.” (*Proverbs 3:11-12*)

7 So, endure discipline; God is treating you like sons. Every father disciplines his son. 8 Everyone has to go through that. If you didn't, then you would not be true sons. You would be illegitimate. 9 All of us had human fathers. They disciplined us, and we respected them for doing it. So, we should put ourselves under the Father of spirits even more. Then we will live. 10 For a short time, our fathers disciplined us, whenever they thought they should, but God disciplines us for our own good. He wants us to share His holiness. 11 All discipline seems terrible at the time. It is painful. But, for people who have been trained by it, it pays off with a peaceful crop of righteousness.

Be Holy

12 Lift up your sagging arms and make your weak knees strong! 13 Walk only on flat roads. Then your lame foot won't hurt so much. It will get well.

14 Try to be at peace with everyone. Try to be holy. If you are not holy, you will never see the Lord! 15 Be sure that no one leaves God's gracious love. Don't let anyone become like a bitter root that grows up to make trouble and pollute many people. 16 Don't let anyone become a sexual sinner or an ungodly person like Esau. Although he was the oldest son, he sold his inheritance rights for just one meal! 17 Later, you know, he wanted to receive the blessing, but he was turned away. Even though he cried, trying to find a way to change it, he could not.

18 Unlike the people of Israel, you have not come to a Mount Sinai which can be touched. It was on fire. There were storms. It was dark and gloomy. 19 You have not come to the blast of a trumpet and a Voice speaking words. The people who heard this Voice begged Moses that nothing more be said to them. 20 They could not stand what was ordered:

“Even if an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death!”

(Exodus 19:12-13)

21 This was such a terrible sight that even Moses said:

“I am so afraid that I'm trembling!” *(Deuteronomy 9:19)*

22 No, you have come to Mount Zion; to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels gathered together. 23 You have come to the congregation of the firstborn ones. Their names have been written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all persons. You have come to the spirits of good people who have been made perfect. 24 You have come to Jesus. He made a new covenant between God and man. And, you have come to blood for sprinkling. It is saying better things than Abel's blood.

What can be Shaken will be Shaken

25 Be careful! Be sure you listen to the One who is talking to you. God warned the Jewish people, but they didn't listen. They did not escape on earth. If we turn away

from God who speaks from heaven, then we will be punished even more! 26 At that time, God's voice shook the earth, but now He has promised this:

“Once again, I will shake not only the earth, but also heaven!” (*Haggai 2:6*)

27 The words, “once again,” clearly show that things which can be shaken will be taken away. (This means things that were made.) Then what cannot be shaken will remain.

28 Therefore, we should be thankful, because we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken. We must worship God in a way that will please Him — with reverence and fear — 29 because our God is like a fire which destroys everything.