

## Endure

Hebrews 12:7-8

Mayor Bill Shewey pulled into our driveway to visit with Rachelle and me. I asked him if he would run for another term. He said “No.” Then he said, “No is a complete sentence.” That struck me. Some words are subject, verb, adjective, tense and mood all rolled into one. The word endure is a one word sentence. It is defined as “to suffer patiently” and is based on an old French word that speaks of “hardened wood.” The Greek word is *hupomeno*, which means “to remain under.” The subject of Hebrews 12 is affliction. The word “endure” is used of Christ in vs. 2 and 3 and then it is used of us in v.7. We endure “hardship.”

“It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons” (vs. 7-8).

### I. It is for the honor of God’s instruction that you abide under any affliction.

We see this in the first phrase of v. 7. “It is for discipline that you endure (affliction).” Remember, the word “discipline” is a good word. It is the word for discipleship. It should not give to you the image of an angry father pulling off his belt and beating you; image Christ around a campfire teaching you. Discipline is God’s way of instructing. Affliction is a lesson on His divine chalkboard. We abide under. The closer you draw to Him, the less the lessons hurt. Snuggle closely and listen to Him teach.

#### A. Think twice before you pray that any affliction be removed from you.

“It was good for me to be afflicted!” (Ps. 119:71). “All affliction for the moment *seems* ...” (v. 11). Fill in the word. What does your hardship and affliction seem to you? Does it seem unfair?

#### B. The great need of us all is to be trained to see God’s lessons.

“Yet to those who have been trained by it, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (v. 11). “The wicked one flees when nobody pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion” (Pr. 28:1).

### II. The absence of a father willingly and responsibly teaching his child is a sign of reprobation.

“For what son is there whom his father does not discipline (instruct)?” Is that a serious question? Yes. There are a number of children in our day whose fathers have abdicated their responsibility to teach.

**A. In our culture ...** Rapper Shawty Lo produced a reality television show, “All My Babies’ Mamas” which featured the rapper, his girlfriend, his 11 kids and their 10 mothers.

**B. In the religious world ...** fathers hand over instruction to youth pastors or religious teachers. God intends for any person, man or woman, who brings a child into this world to instruct.

**C. This is why child abuse by a parent is so anti-Christ;** it is against God’s design.

### III. Every Christian is a partaker of God’s school of instruction through lessons in the midst of affliction.

Don’t waste your sorrows. Don’t minimize your suffering. Don’t squander the moment by fighting it.

**A. The lesson you are learning is what it means to live a selfless life.** This is the point of the lesson God is teaching. Consider Jesus. Analyze Him. Let His mind and attitude of selflessness be in you.

**B. Sometimes the lessons are repeated or even intensified.** If you find yourself in the middle of affliction and you are tired and exasperated because you are trying to remove it—relax. Take a moment to *hupomeno*. Silently suffer. Patiently ponder. Endure. God’s teaching you. Listen.

**C. The prescription against loathing your life is to think of yourself less.** Contrary to what those around you think and say, the only life worth living is that life that is concentrated on other people. Not because you NEED anything from other people, but because you love other people.