

Lame Lambs

Hebrews 12:12-13

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

'Therefore' is a word that connects vs. 1-11 with these two verses. Since the Christian life is like a rugged athletic contest (v. 1) that requires patience and endurance (vs. 1-2), there will be occasions when some Christians find it too difficult to go on. God never wastes a sorrow or an affliction and He orchestrates all things for our good, but it is only *after* difficult times that the good comes our way (v. 10b). *Therefore ...*

I. Take notice of the weak and feeble believer.

The Christian race is a race where you stop and help other runners. You don't run this track alone. "Therefore strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble ... " (v. 12). Hands are for serving, knees are for walking. This is an expression used in Scripture for someone ready to quit. "Strengthen weak hands and knees that are feeble ... Say to the weak ... 'Be strong'" (Isaiah 35:3-4).

A. Pay attention to those who seem to have very little spiritual energy.

The KJV translates v. 12 - "Wherefore lift up the **hands which hang down**, and the feeble knees."

This is a picture of a runner whose arms are hanging down to the side because there is no energy.

B. Pay attention to those whose eyes have turned away from Christ.

"As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (Psalm 73:2-3). They looked away from Christ.

C. Pay attention to those who have fallen.

This could be a fall morally, a backwards journey spiritually, or a crash and burn emotionally. The Christian with weak knees could be the person whose burden is too big to carry and they collapse. Don't walk away from the believer who has fallen morally; move toward in love, grace and mercy.

II. Take time to strengthen that weary believer.

There is not one word of judgment, not one word of shame; it is only encouragement to the weary.

A. Those that are lame are in need of positive words.

Eliphaz commended Job because God's servant, Job, had been such a helper of his weak brethren. "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees" (Job 4:3-4).

B. Those that are lame are in need of a straight path.

This means that somebody who is tired of trying to measure up to religious standards, to all the meandering side roads of religious performance, need to see the path of love, grace and mercy.

C. Weary Christians can be either harmed or healed.

"... that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint." The lame limb is a lame lamb. Who is there in your life that you know is in need of positive words, expressions of love, a gentle grace?

III. Take opportunities to reflect on God's grace to you.

The well that refreshes many must have a deep supply. The gracious person must be full of grace. "I will save those who are lame. I will gather those who are the outcasts. I will turn their shame into praise and renown into all the earth" (Zeph. 3:19). "I will make the lame My remnant" (Micah 4:7). Every maladjustment you have in this life is rooted in an unawareness that God is interested in the lame. God says to you, "My strength is made perfect (complete) in your weakness" (II Cor. 12:9).