

# Faith, hope, love ... and Grace

## Week 3

### Love

**We are talking about love here. Well not about love but about how we express that. Here's a question:**

1. Why did the greats mentioned in Hebrews endure such a tough time, why did they obey or act in obedience? – Was it a love for God or just a duty or basic fear of God? V3

**Heb 12:1** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

**Heb 12:2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

A couple of things here:

- a. This is all visible. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, People see how we live, react etc.
- b. Put aside what hinders. let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, OK, what's that – anything that stops our ministry for God. Move it to the side.
- c. Doing what we get. and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Cope with what is thrown at us and keep going  
How?????
- d. looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, Focus on Jesus, focus on his work, focus on what he desires for us.

Then we can cope with what is difficult in life.

A friend of mine says: When the going gets tough – worship.  
In other words when stress happens – look to God.  
Great advice that.  
The passage goes on in v 3

2. **Heb 12:3** Think about the one who endured such hostility from sinners, so that you may not become tired and give up.

Think about what Jesus did for you. Not just the gorey easter bits, but the maintenance of your life, the salvation aspect, the future in heaven bit. When the going gets tough....

I want that on a T shirt@!!!!

But get this.

3. **The process of faith and hope leads to love. V5**

But hey we can forget that can't we. Notice what the writer says to the Hebrews,

**Heb 12:5** You have forgotten the encouragement that is addressed to you as sons: "My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline or give up when you are corrected by him."

We have forgotten God's love. How easy is that? We focus on the issues and forget what God is doing. Sometimes we see God as the great grace giver, you know, we sin but hey God'll forgive that, and forget that there are other characteristics in who He is.

Let us be realistic here. God loves us so much He will teach us lessons.

**My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline or give up when you are corrected by him.**

Is that what is happening in the life of our church? Is the tough time financially because God is teaching us stuff? What do you think?

The passage goes on: and get this. God's expression of love is to teach us. The term here is discipline but its about learning the stuff God wants us to know. Before we read the next bit lets have a look at a definition.

παιδεύω

paideuō

to *train* up a child, that is, *educate*, or (by implication) *discipline* (by punishment): - chasten (-ise), instruct, learn, teach.

We see here a much greater range of teaching process than just discipline as we see it. The word discipline is another of those words that has been changed over the years and it has a much more negative connotation now than in the past. It is about training, instructing, teaching and yes when necessary putting the breaks on and disciplining as we perceive it. Let's look at that next verse.

#### 4. Preparing a son for leadership v6

Heb 12:6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he punishes every son he accepts."

We've looked at discipline as a word now what about the rest of the verse. Notice, "every son he accepts" He trains, teaches, instructs and puts boundaries around those He loves. Yep.

Ok that is God's expression of love toward us. And let's be realistic there is a lot of other passages which add to this. But we are looking at what Hebrews adds to the picture here.

But what of our response. Listen to this:

#### 5. Our response v7

Heb 12:7 What you endure disciplines you: God is

treating you as sons. Is there a son whom his father does not discipline?

Remember the definition difference: Read discipline as train, educate, teach.

So read it:

What you endures trains and teaches you. IS there a son whom His father doesn't educate him?

Does it feel a bit different now? It is not about the good old fashioned smack it is about constructive teaching processes. And as the next verse says: It is for our benefit.

#### 6. For our good v10-11

Heb 12:10 For a short time they disciplined us as they thought best, but God does it for our good, so that we may share in his holiness.

Heb 12:11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, for those who have been trained by it, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace.

Ok, get that one!! It is for our good. So the homework you have to do is awkward sometimes but it helps the learning process (Sorry Flynn!) Extra study is not convenient sometimes but it works. And we see the benefits down the track. Now, that is just a simple school related example but hey we get it.

I love how the bible always seems to find a practicality for us. Listen to what is next.

#### 7. Apply the lesson - v12-13

Heb 12:12 Therefore, strengthen your tired arms and your weak knees,

Heb 12:13 and straighten the paths of your life, so that your lameness may not become worse, but instead may be healed.

Just do it. Do the discipline, do the learning, educating, training and let it be part of your process of following God,