

Hebrews 12:12-17

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Introduction: This is a word for you, because you are droopy, feeble, hobbled, and out of joint!

1. Commands to strengthen and make straight... more on that later, but first consider the force and effort being prescribed here
 - a. We put forth this effort because it is the Lord who is training us (v11), and the Lord who is healing us (v13)
 - b. We put forth this effort as we look unto Jesus (v2), and consider Him who endured the hostility (v3)
 - c. If you try, while looking unto yourself and considering yourself, you'll just plunge yourself into despair. This passage doesn't sugarcoat the fact that we are droopy, feeble, lame, and dislocated! In reality, this is only a half-obedience, and it is to obey the less important half!
 - d. But if you are not putting forth effort in your Christian life, don't lie to yourself that this is because you are looking unto Jesus or considering Him! Because the One unto Whom we look, and Whom we consider, is the very one giving these commands. Looking unto Him entails following His direction!
2. Getting fit for heaven ... what does strengthening and making straight look like?
 - a. Pursuing peace with all... and, in particular here, with all believers (cf. Rom 12). "Second table of the law." And even "third great commandment."
 - b. Pursuing the holiness without which we will not see the Lord. Especially the "First table of the law." Holy life. Holy worship. Holy speech. Holy day.
 - c. Looking carefully. Oversee yourself. There is effort here! (cf. v1)
3. While still on earth
 - a. Worldliness... living a life by the self, of the self, and for the self... is a root whose fruit you will not find enjoyable... it is a root of bitterness.
 - b. Esau planted a root with a bowl of red stuff... and what he harvested was great bitterness indeed (cf. Gen 27:34)

Conclusion: what will you harvest from your current manner of life? Despair? Hell itself? Or the peaceful fruit of righteousness, holiness, and eternal blessedness with the Lord to Whom you now look and Whom you now consider?