

# Have You Resisted Unto Blood, Striving Against Sin?

by Sandra Hooper

So often we hear that if we are not under the chastisement of the Lord for our sin(s), then we are not one of God's children. Can you imagine? If we really give this some thought, what it really boils down to is that one should be *living in sin* in order to prove one is a child of God! Of course this would make sense since everyone is taught that we sin every day in thought, word and deed. This leads me to wonder, *what chastisement* is one receiving everyday since they claim to sin daily? How did God chastise them? What method did God use? And if we really think about it, their whole life would only be about sinning and chastisement. Will there ever come a day when the sin will stop so the chastisement will stop? Don't they teach that chastisement is supposed to teach us a lesson? What lesson is learned for that day concerning the sin or sins they have committed? If they stop sinning, the chastisement must stop, correct? But if you are not under chastisement, then you are accused of not being a child of God! Does this mean I must make sure I am sinning everyday just to confirm God does love me because He will chastise me for sinning against Him?

And what is more confusing is that Once Saved, Always Saved advocates will say Jesus *paid it all*, as in all our past, present, and **future sins**. In other words, all our *future sins*, yet to be committed, are forgiven in advance. It is taught that if you fail to confess your sins you will certainly be chastised (using Heb. 12:6) over your disobedience and consequently run the risk of being killed by God prematurely for shaming His Holy name. What I don't understand is, why did Paul, whom they call the chief of sinners, never face being killed by God for his supposed willful and defiant behavior since he is considered the chief of sinners even after conversion? If all your FUTURE sins are really "paid for in advance" by the sacrifice of Christ and guarantees you eternal salvation regardless how you live afterwards, then isn't confession of ongoing sin really purposeless since God is now morally blind to any future sins you may commit?

For that matter, how could God possibly KILL (chastise) you over sins that are ALREADY under the blood? If your sins were "paid for" by provision of Calvary, then how can your sins be **recharged** against you again? It would be absurd that God would kill you over sins He has already forgiven.

Back to basic truth.

From Genesis to Revelation it is clearly taught to **"forsake"** your wickedness, **"purge"** your heart of evil and **"seek"** the mercy of God. (Isa. 55:7; Jer. 26:13; Pro. 28:13; Jonah 3:8-10; Matt. 12:41; Lk. 15:11-32; Acts 3:19; 2 Co. 7:10-11; 2 Tim. 2:19; Jas. 3:7-10; 1 Pe. 4:1; Rev. 2:5; 2:16; 2:20-22; 3:3; 3:19). Would not living and encouraging holy living, as instructed in Scripture, be a better option? This certainly means the difference between life and death.

When people look at the word “chastisement,” they automatically think “punishment”. There are two meanings in Scripture for this word:

1. *punishment, chastening*
2. *to discipline, to correct, to chasten..,*

When we look at the passage in Isaiah where he says, "*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him,*" people automatically read it as, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, **the punishment** of our peace was upon him." □

Discipline is not punishment. Discipline has to do with training and correction. Punishment has to do with **retribution**.

Chastening has as its objective the welfare of the person being disciplined and is a positive thing! Imagine a parent who totally ignores their child by not training correctly. Can we really say a parent loves their children if they do not care for their welfare?

It is for certain that chastisement is for believers.

***"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? (Heb. 12:7)."***

However, is it over sin? No believer should be living in deliberate rebellion. If one is living in willful, blatant sin (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8) they can no longer be considered a child of God. Sin has a non-negotiable penalty, which is death, not chastisement.

There is a passage of Scripture that says, "***Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin***" (Heb. 12:4). Notice that the passage does **not** say, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against your sin." Should striving against *our own sin* come to a point of drawing blood? Has anyone ever reached that point?

Let's look at the context and draw its meaning:

***1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied***

***and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Hebrews 12:1-4***



The verse is not talking about our own sin, for we shouldn't have any in our life. It has to do with **persecution**, the **sin of others**.

And who should we consider when we come under persecution? Consider Jesus.

***For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.***

This has to do with the "sinners against us;" the sinful act they commit against us as they did against Christ.

If we read chapter 11, we find the early saints resisted unto the shedding of blood, not because of some *besetting sin* they had in their own life, but from the sin of others.

***And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (Hebrews 11:36-38)***

Those saints went under much persecution. They did not give up the faith.

We are told that those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12)

Hebrews 12 is not telling us that the believers are being chastised, as in punishment, for their own sin. This is not about God the Father playing the big bully who beats His children to instill fear in them not to sin. His children walk in righteousness and are righteous as His Son is righteous.

***"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [Jesus] is righteous." 1 John 3:7***

Hebrews 12 is preparing the believers for persecution. As our brother Bryan Davis says,

*When you read chapter 12 in this light, you will see that the writer is preparing the readers for persecution. And the chastisement and discipline he writes about in verses*

*5 through 11 is talking about how God uses the sin of others to strengthen us. This is not a punishment for our own sins:*

***And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:5-11)***

*The same was true of Jesus:*

***Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. (Hebrews 5:8-9)***

*Jesus also endured the discipline of His Father through suffering under the sin of others. This is meant to encourage us as we undergo persecution as well.*

As said above, we are told that those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. For some of us it may not be to the point of our blood being shed at the hands of others. It can also be by false witnesses and accusers, mockers, etc.. There are going to be times when people are going to lie about us and insult us. I just learned recently of accusations against me that are not true. My first reaction was disbelief that someone could write such lies. I actually felt sick to my stomach. I will have to admit that it caught me off guard because I was already at a vulnerable moment as it was.

Persecution doesn't always have to be at the point of shedding blood. Jesus said,

***“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.”***

It should be expected that people are going to insult us and falsely say all kinds of evil against us because of Jesus.

I am thankful for Bryan Davis' insight concerning Hebrews 12:1-4. When someone asked him about the verse that says, "**let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,**" he responded, "*Just as we would put aside a weight, we would also put aside persecution and not allow it to hinder our running the race that is set before us.*"

It is not easy when we find out people are lying about us or insult us, make empty accusations, and trying their best to make character assassination. We have to lay aside every weight. (see also 1 Peter 5:7) We can't let it distract us. If we allow it, it certainly can hinder us. We may feel like giving up. As another brother, Jesse, pointed out, "'Rejoice and be exceedingly glad,' Jesus said."

Then it dawned on me! It isn't anything personal, it's **because of Jesus!** Yes!

**The Lord Jesus wants us to rejoice.** I am reminded of the story in Acts 5. The council came together and ordered the apostles to be flogged and they were told not to speak in the name of Jesus and then released. These men were whipped! They suffered not only from verbal accusations, but physically as well. And what did they do? They did as Jesus said,

***So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.***

They went away "rejoicing." They considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.

We are in a time where all the brothers and sisters in Christ will need to edify and encourage one another in times of persecution. For some of us it will be to the point of our own blood being shed. This has happened in the past and happens today in other countries to those who follow Christ. For others it will not be so extreme.

I am thankful for all my brothers and sister out there who know how to edify and encourage, and hopefully I am doing the same in return. We need to spur each other on in difficult times.

***“These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling. They will make you outcasts from the synagogue [today it might be from churches], but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me. But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. John 16:1-4***

***"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation." 1 Peter 4:12-13***

***"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." Matt. 5:43-45***