

GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

#2 Becoming Strong Again / Hebrews 12

In places where the ground freezes, there is a perpetual need for farmers to remove rocks from their fields before they can plant. Theories as to where all the rocks come from aside, every spring northern hemisphere youth make extra cash by walking through farm fields picking up rocks so the farmer can plow.

In Session 2 Pastor Clive introduced the concept of *removing the rubble* through self-counseling. Today we find out how to become strong *again* applying three truths taught in Hebrews chapter twelve.

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. ~ Hebrews 12:12-17 (NKJV)

#1 Healing takes time.

Healing is a process (Heb 12:12-13). When we injury our bodies, we see a doctor for a diagnosis, usually get a prescription, and often adjust our diet and/or behavior in order to get well. Just so when we are weak on the inside; recovery comes through correct diagnosis and commitment to healthy spiritual living.

#2 Exercise keeps things healthy.

Besides the obvious spiritual disciplines—Bible reading, prayer, church gatherings—Hebrews 12:12-13 provides three practical “exercises” to become strong again:

- Make good decisions now. Don’t be paralyzed by past choices. Deal with sinful and unwise choices through confession to God and wise counsel, and then make good decisions now.
- Change your posture. To encourage your spirit, physical changes must be made (e.g., actual posture, schedule, medical checkups, etc.).
- To end up in a good place, make straight paths for your feet. Create different habits, find different friends, choose different behavior.

See also the comparison of physical and spiritual exercise in 1 Timothy 4:6-8.

#3 Gardening enables the right things to grow well.

Many lives are completely overgrown with bitterness and profanity. These dangerous weeds must be dealt with!

- Uproot bitterness. Bitterness slowly intertwines itself into every part of our lives, and saps all life away.
- Stop feeding your flesh. Esau was a *profane* person, wanting only to feed his desires. Once a person has already “failed,” it becomes so much easier to fail again. Esau’s catastrophic moral decision was the result of his inward spiritual attitude and intense physical weakness (Gen 25:29-34). Instead of feeding our appetites, let us pursue peace with people and holiness with God. See also Galatians 6:7-9.