

The Clarity Trumpet

a publication of

CLARITY MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Post Office Box 10 • LaGrange, WY 82221

For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

I Corinthians 14:8, 9

Thoughts on the Believer's Security

How often we consider the subject of the security of the believer in Jesus Christ from a purely proof-text approach. The one who thinks a believer in Christ may lose his salvation will turn to *his* verses to substantiate the point that salvation may somehow be forfeited later on. Then, the person who is convinced that there is no way a true believer in Jesus Christ can ever again be lost will bring out *his* verses to nail down his case. Back and forth they go, often doing no more than reconfirming their own position to themselves. Sometimes the very fact that there are an overwhelming number of Bible verses in support of a particular truth is sufficient to convince any open minded person of its correctness. I believe this is the case in the matter of our salvation being by faith alone in Christ alone. The Biblical evidence is so staggering. The same is true, in my opinion, concerning the security of the believer in Christ.

Everyone who truly and sincerely believes in the Lord Jesus Christ to save them is saved forever. They will not be cast out, they cannot walk out of God's family once they are in, and once they have been born again they cannot be *unborn*. (Scripture never says, "You must be born again *again!*"). Neither Satan nor his demons can yank a true believer out of the hands of his Savior. God's Word is crystal clear on this. John 5:24: "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has** everlasting life, and **shall not** come into judgment, but **has passed** from death into life.*" John 6:37, 39: "***All** that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will **by no means** cast out.*"

*... This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of **all** He has given Me I should lose **nothing**, but should raise it up at the last day."*

God's Chastening: the Seal of the Believer's Security in Christ

Whatever your own view is concerning the security of the believer in Christ, let me suggest a little different slant to the subject -- an approach that I believe is absolutely essential if we are to bring a balance to our view of this subject.

Consider the grand truth of *God's chastening* of His blood-bought children. The primary passage dealing with the chastisement of God is Hebrews 12:3-11. Understanding chastening is imperative for a proper grasp of our relationship with God. At times you may hear this expressed: "If anyone claims to be a Christian and lives in habitual sin, he was never saved to start with because if he was, God would be chastening him." Such an approach to the subject of chastening is wide of the mark on at least two counts. First, is the assumption that if God is chastening someone, the chastening will be observed by others. However, some of the most effective chastening God ever does is accomplished by His Spirit *on the inside*, in the believer's mind and heart. Secondly, such a view assumes that chastening is primarily *punishment* for wrong doing. It is not.

In the Greek world, the term translated "chastening" (v. 5) was the most basic term for "education," which usually included discipline. The term often conveyed the concept of moral instruction. Hebrews clearly declares, "*Whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*" So, chastening is the experience of *every* child of God. It is not reserved for just disobedient Christians. The chastening of God, when properly understood, appreciated, and welcomed is one of the most comforting truths in Scripture: I am His and He is mine! I am His child; He is my Father and, as such, He will take perfect care of me—including my straying.

We waste a lot of energy trying to figure out who is or who isn't saved based on their outward lifestyle when only God knows the hearts of men (cp. I Kings 8:39). It is enough to be assured of my own relationship with Him, and to do all I can to bring others to personally know

Him through faith.

In the Hebrews passage we see that those who *are* God's children may respond to His chastening or training in one of four possible ways, only one of which is pleasing to God and beneficial for the child of God. First, we may forget the truth of God's chastening — allowing it to be crowded out of our minds and lives (v. 5). The apostle Peter reminds us that any believer who does not add to his faith "*is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*" (II Peter 1:5-9).

Could it be that some reading these words have strayed so from the Lord that you've forgotten that He is your loving, caring heavenly Father. Has your Savior become a stranger to you? It need not be that way with you. You may be trusting Him to save you but in the hustle and bustle of trying to balance everything in your life, you have not left time or room for the most important Person of all. You may be robbing yourself of one of life's most precious and valuable possessions—a living, growing relationship with the Lord.

A second way the believer may respond to God's chastening is to despise it (v.5). Imagine that—the clay despising what the Potter is attempting to make of it! Now, I realize there are those whose theology will not permit them to allow for any true believer to react this way. But one's theology does not change what God plainly reveals. Those of you who have been through some really difficult times—times that were so excruciatingly painful that you were even suicidal perhaps, *know* that it is possible to reach a breaking point where you despise what God is doing or allowing to happen to you. The theorists can spread their theological views all they want, but some of you know what it is to wish God would leave you alone.

In those trying situations you don't want pat answers, even though the pat answers may be exactly what you need to hear and to heed. Even in our darkest hours, "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear...*" (Psalm 46:1, 2a). An old Puritan used to say, "Let God plow for He purposeth a crop." That's a loose paraphrase of Hebrews 12:5—don't despise God's chastening.

Thirdly, a true believer may become discouraged when they are chastened by the

Lord (v. 5). Discouragement can quickly lead to bitterness. It's easy to see how a child of God can become discouraged in God's School when we think of the training of our own children. Every child is different, as is every child of God. Some are perfectionists and easily become discouraged when they fail. Being corrected for the same behavior over and over again leads some children to despair. They'll say, "I can't do anything right!" There are those in God's family who feel the same way and become discouraged. If you are in this category, remember that God has the long view in mind as He is developing you. Discouragement comes when we take the short view and wonder why we don't see any significant improvements. You didn't learn to walk in a single day, nor will you learn to walk victoriously with the Lord in a short period of time. Keep focused on Him and you *will* conquer discouragement.

Finally, there are those believers who "endure" chastening (v. 5); they allow themselves to "be trained by it" (v. 11). These are the ones who grow, who produce "fruit that remains" (John 15:16), who "are useful for the Master, prepared for every good work" (II Timothy 2:21). These believers are not necessarily the majority, but they are what God is wanting and expecting. Anything less is a disappointment and incomplete.

In each case, these described in Hebrews 12 are true children of God. Their *eternal relationship* with Him is not altered by how they respond to His training. However, their *walk* with Him *is* determined by how they allow Him to mold them into the pattern He knows is best for them. Is every child of God secure in Christ? Absolutely, yes. Is every child of God godly? That depends. "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (v. 11). Let's determine to let God train us as He sees fit—and for our own lasting benefit for His ultimate glory^o

Clarity Trumpet #1 Richard A. Seymour