

**25. August 2019**  
**“To resist sin to the blood!”**

**Heb 12:4-7,11-13**

***In the fight against sin, you have not yet had to keep fighting to the point of bloodshed. Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons? My son, do not scorn correction from the Lord, do not resent his training, for the Lord trains those he loves, and chastises every son he accepts. Perseverance is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons. Has there ever been any son whose father did not train him? Of course, any discipline is at the time a matter for grief, not joy; but later, in those who have undergone it, it bears fruit in peace and uprightness. So steady all weary hands and trembling knees and make your crooked paths straight; then the injured limb will not be maimed, it will get better instead.***

To resist sin to the blood!

This is a high standard that will only be understood if we respect and love God and His commandments more than we love ourselves.

It is already the gift of the fear of God that causes us to begin to hate sin and in no way want to insult God our Father. If this gift, together with our firm decision, becomes effective under the influence of the gift of strength, then the resistance to sin grows in us in such a way that we do not even want to come near to sin. We are ready to make every effort to resist with all our power. This can lead to death if, for example, we are forced to deny the Lord or perform similar acts.

Yesterday we heard from the Apostle Bartholomew that he resisted the sin of idolatry and thus testified the Lord with martyrdom. This is certainly not intended for every Christian. But we cannot rule this out. However, it remains for all the struggle against temptations to sin to lead attentively and with vigilance, in order to be able to testify to the love of God also with our life.

Is there an inner connection of the word that we resist sin to the blood and the Lord's discipline to educate us? I think yes!

The formation of man by the Lord is most important. This makes us stronger internally, because we are often very sensitive and react injured when we receive a correction. But when we have passed through correction, peace and justice grow in the soul as the fruit, the text reminds us. Here, of course, the corrections by the Lord or by other people who are entitled to make such corrections are meant. It is not now the place to talk about dealing with those corrections that are unjustified.

So when we overcome our first reactions to the Lord's corrections, which might give pain, and no joy, then the soul becomes more deeply connected with Him. She recognizes that these acts of education also happen out of love. God's love knows different ways. First of all, it is tender love that we receive as children of God, but also that love which leads us on the right path if we miss it or make the right path more clearly known. Often we are still taken by our own ideas and desires and thus fall astray.

On such a path of formation, we then receive from the Lord a "stronger food", as Apostle Paul would express and not only the milk as it is appropriate for children. This brings about an inner strengthening in us and, depending on the way God has planned with us, He will continue our formation accordingly. Now the strength grows to be able to withstand the temptations and aberrations, and in the struggle assigned to us to take over our place.

This will also make us more capable, with the grace of God, of resisting sin to the blood, and to prefer death rather than to remain in a grave sin.

With the formation by God's grace, the path of sanctification becomes concrete. Day after day, we are called to grow in love and deepen our unity with the Lord. This means to participate with the grace of God, not to weaken the grace with recklessness and carelessness and to become bitter. The mindfulness on our spiritual path must never diminish, so that we do not surrender to the inclinations of our human nature.