

Fathers and the Father's Discipline

Introduction: This is the 3rd of three sermons around discipline, all in the larger context of the sermon series on "Endurance" and "Help in High Places".

- Mike v5-7 on "For Discipline" – accepting life's difficult details as God's fatherly discipline.
- Dave v 8 - the discipline of the Lord as a demonstration of the authenticity of our faith
- Today v9-11 - which contrasts the discipline of our earthly fathers and by extension **THE DISCIPLINE OF ALL THOSE IN AUTHORITY OVER US**, with the discipline of our heavenly Father.

Heb 12.5-8 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." 7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Heb 12.9-11 Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but [the Father] disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. 11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Let's pray: (reference to notes)

BIG IDEA: how great is the power and the wisdom and the love of God when "He disciplines us for our good"

INTENT: highlight verses from the text, accepting them as the Word of God without need for further proof, and by God's grace lead us to ponder how we might joyfully embrace these truths.

this talk of **discipline / God's discipline** may be a **very sensitive** subject, 1ST thought – **PUNISHMENT: perhaps a particularly bad experience**, or you are struggling to come to grips with God who is Love and yet allows suffering and disciplines those He loves.

Many people - at different stages in your journey with God. My journey might parallel your experience.

1. (not yet trusting in Christ) There was a time when I did not know God and did not care about His love or His discipline.
2. (young believers &) As God drew me to Himself and I came to believe in Jesus as my Saviour I struggled with how pain and suffering fits into God's world, and how discipline, particularly God's discipline fits in our lives.
3. (believers) grown through many stages of unbelief, confusion and doubt, as I have had to work my way, by God's grace to a better understanding and embracing of who God is and His Truth.
4. (mature believers). God has brought me (and you) to the place where I embrace His discipline love Him even more.

Whatever our state, may God our Father open our minds and hearts to see how it is that He can be so great and so loving that He can and does "discipline us for our good"

While the subject of "discipline" is often a sensitive subject – let us remember that God offers us great promises of blessing, to have Him as our greatest treasure, to rest in His loving arms, The fact that we need more than these rich promises reflects on our nature. God knows that we need discipline. And

1: God knows: discipline hurts:

the word “discipline / chastise” is used 10 times in v5-11 and means to: instruct, train, correct, chastise – **by whatever means appropriate to give us full possession of what is being taught**

Now it is God who saves us, & He works in us to make us more like Christ, and He works to complete the good work He has started, therefore i/t/c – all the time

Sometimes God’s discipline (i/t/c) is pleasant, but here – it hurts

v5 do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him

v6 the Lord ... chastises every son whom he receives.

v7 It is for discipline that you have to endure

v11 all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant

While we might ask – am I being disciplined (i/t/c) by the Lord? And why am I being disciplined? As Mike reminded us – sometimes God’s discipline is a response to our bad behavior, and sometimes it is a response to our high potential

Even as those who have yet to trust Christ – God disciplines – ie. men at TC experience

the advantage of being disciplined when it hurts, when it fits with what I want / value ie. treasure God more, thankful that He roots out my sin / sharpens me

And sometime I have been disciplined, and **the real issue is my rebellious heart**. I want things my way, and I am rebuked / corrected, and I don’t like it at all. can you identify with me?

2: God knows that we have experienced ‘earthly’ discipline that is valuable

Perhaps you have had very painful experiences and you do not respect those who disciplined you – if they disciplined you in their sin, (**God does not excuse their sin**) please ask God to help you look past their failures or look to other examples to learn this principle. God is making a case - working from the lesser to the greater

v9 “we have had earthly fathers (authorities) who disciplined us and we respected them”

ie. that causes us to mend our ways, / that encourage us to press through the pain to gain the goal we are striving for

Ps 141:5 Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it.

Pr 27:5,6 Better is open rebuke than hidden love. 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

the person’s rebuke **is not quite on the mark**, in retrospect I hope you can see instances where God has used their rebuke for your good

God says think carefully. We ought to be able to see the principle of earthly discipline from those in authority over us, though painful, yet valuable, AND respect them for it ...

(but not always)

Perhaps you can think of circumstances where your parents disciplined you, or another person in authority and you would say, - that was not right, unjust, or too much and this colors our view of God’s disciplining us

(but not always)

"they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them"

we live in a broken world and our parents, those in authority, even we ourselves as those in authority are not perfect ...No one in earthly authority over us is God!

In contrast, God is perfect, without sin, our Saviour and our Father:

3. God (in His godliness) disciplines us for our good:

V6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

V10 [the Father] disciplines us for our good,

God is very practical in His discipline. God says do not worry. We worry. God gives us over to our worry. God says do not(sin). We(sin), God gives us over

(Job's friend says) Job 5:17,18 "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reprove; therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty. 18 For he wounds, but he binds up; he shatters, but his hands heal

Consider Job – God called Job a righteous man. The devil meant to destroy Job by destroying his faith in God. **Consider Job's trials (his livelihood/family/health/loved ones/misunderstood by friends/doubting God).** Job was sorely tried, even by his well-meaning friends. God worked in all of the devil's schemes for Job's good! And ultimately Job saw God more clearly

Transition: How do we embrace God disciplining us for our good? I believe we need to go back to more foundational truths about God and His relationship to us in order to be willing to receive God's discipline and count it as joy!

WSC#4 What is God? God is Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

this definition of God it has been a great help to me to put this world, our history and all the circumstances of mankind, let alone my circumstances into proper perspective.

Sometimes **I CAN SEE HIM CLEARLY** in the midst of the most difficult circumstances.....

Sometimes **WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND / PRONE TO COMPLAIN** – God you got it wrong, there was a mistake – yet if we would quiet our hearts and come humbly to our Lord and Savior with the conviction You, sovereign, all loving God are working deeply even in the discipline for our good

When **I CANNOT SEE**, and I have **learned to bow down** in humble submission

I look to Jesus, who suffered far more than we can think or imagine, being willing to pay the penalty for our sins, that He might reconcile us to God, and much more!

IS THIS BLIND FAITH? No. We have the revealed Word of God / the testimony of many believers / my own testimony / and for many – your experience

How does this apply to our verses – discipline seems painful – and perhaps all the more when God disciplines us!

The more we will see God for who He is, the more we will see the greatness of His love towards us and how utterly trustworthy He is, the more we will be willing to embrace His discipline and **the benefits** that flow from His discipline.

4. **The benefits of God's discipline** - God means to separate us from our sin / develop and sharpen us for His use.

V9 - life – and give us abundant life / a life of joy and purpose

V10 - that we may share [God's] holiness – free from sin / free to live as God's holy children

V11 (God's discipline) yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness – that passes understanding

V11 – trained by [God's discipline] – to be His faithful servants & beloved children

As we grow in our understanding of God's greatness and His overwhelming love for us, and more importantly **GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER, SON & SPIRIT**, we will begin to see much more clearly how good it is to be under the loving and gracious discipline of our God and Savior.

➤ To become more in love with God, to become more like Christ to those around us

As Heb 12:1 says – keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, who has paid such an enormous price to redeem us for Himself, and who has promised to complete the good work He has started,

Entrust yourself to our loving God. Step out in faith declaring to God – Your will be done. Father God, bring on what you deem best, that as you work in all things for my good You would indeed make me more like your Son Jesus Christ