

FOR DISCIPLINE

Hebrews 12:5-7 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. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." 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?

~ PRAY ~

The writer of Hebrews is quoting **Proverbs 3:11,12** My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

The gospel is not just a list of *Do's* and *Don't's*. There's far more "good news" than that. But this text DOES have some! **THREE OF THE GOSPEL'S "DON'TS" in Hebrews 12.**

1. Do not forget **Proverbs 3:11,12**
2. Do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. *Don't forget about it. Don't undervalue it. Don't ignore it.*
3. Do not be weary when chastised by the Lord. *Don't get tired of it.*

FIVE NOTES ON THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE [and I invite you, as we think of God in his role as our Father to think of me, in my current circumstances, as an example of one of God's sons that these statements are speaking about.]

1. It is God's loving and fatherly "child-training."
Hebrews 12:6,7 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves... 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?
→ "discipline" [GREEK: "*paideia*" from the Greek word for "young child" ("*pais*")]
But not training by a tutor or a master: training by your father.

2. "For the moment", it seems painful rather than pleasant but "later", it produces righteousness.
Hebrews 12:11 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.
This discipline is NOT INTENDED to be pleasant. It's intended to be productive. So it's painful. But the pain is not to be thought of as random, or purposeless. It's loaded up with purpose. It will be productive.

3. Sometimes it is God's response to our bad behavior.
Hebrews 12:6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. "chastises" → scourges = "whips" ("rod" as in the Book of Proverbs)

Generally:

Proverbs 19:18 Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death.

Specifically:

Proverbs 23:13 Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish them with the rod, they will not die.

A COMMENT ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT...

Proverbs 13:24 Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. Disciplining children assumes corporal punishment: a rod not spared but used.

PERSONAL OPINION: (Two of them, about "spanking".) i) "One of the tools in a parent's tool box."
ii) Not a parent's *only* response to bad behavior.

e.g. A good father with two sons in the back seat.
~ When they misbehaved, he would say: "Out of the car. See you in half an hour."
~ And that father's method in that case takes us to the next note:

4. Sometimes it is God's response to our high potential.
~ Imagine that one of the sons of that good father was actually very good at running.
~ Imagine the father noticing and saying, "You could earn a scholarship, but it'll be a lot of hard work."

In the case of **God as the good Father**, the extra discipline is *not always* suggested as an option. Think of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. And Corrie Ten Boom. God just starts the child-training → "the pruning"

John 15:1,2 I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

GETTING PERSONAL: *Why so sick? Why twice in a row? Why 3 ½ years? Why no longer working as a pastor?*

Q¹. Is it the Lord's discipline? The text says: **Yes.** (It's been *painful rather than pleasant* and it's been *productive*)
Q². Because of "bad behavior" OR "high potential"? I'm going to go with **"Yes!" To both!**

WE COULD ASK: Why did the Apostle Paul suffer so much? (2 Corinthians 11)
Was it for "bad behavior" OR "high potential"? Guess "Yes." To both.

Sometimes, Paul WAS clear about why some suffering was happening.

2 Corinthians 12:7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

Sometimes Paul wasn't clear. **His conscience WAS clear**, but God's reasons were NOT clear to him at all.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. If in doubt, guess "Yes" to both?

But here is something that every real believer in God through Jesus Christ can and should be clear on:

5. It is God using the details of our lives to change us. Any details. Perhaps all the details.
This from, Paul, a Christian with a lot of really painful, unpleasant experiences.

Romans 8:28-29 ... we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

God's purpose is to make us like Christ!

So here we are again **"looking to Jesus"** and **"considering him who endured..."**)

Q. So in the interests of NOT regarding lightly the discipline of the Lord and NOT being weary when chastised by the Lord, let's ask ourselves: how will we faithfully ENDURE "the discipline of the Lord"?

A. BY FAITH: by TRUSTING God as a good son (or daughter) trusts a very good, wise and loving father.
By trusting God the Father *in the same way that Jesus, the perfectly good son, trusted him.*

SPEAKING PERSONALLY: about my 3 ½ years of painful and not pleasant experiences, what I have learned is what the apostle Paul has written.

Now I know BY EXPERIENCE that when you entrust yourself to God in a relationship with Jesus Christ:

Philippians 4:7 ... the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

And as Nehemiah said to the people: **Nehemiah 8:10** ... do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

→ **If you have not entrusted yourself to God** by committing yourself to live to Jesus Christ, I urge you to do so.

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

NEXT SUNDAY: **"ENDURANCE. Part 7"** **Hebrews 12:8** (Dave DeSmit)

DIGGING DEEPER

Hebrews 12:5-7

In the Old Testament, God revealed himself to his people, metaphorically, as their father, although not very often (in comparison to the many such references in the New Testament). From Genesis to Malachi, God is specifically called “the Father” of an individual or a nation only fifteen times. In nine other places in the Old Testament, God is compared to a father without the word actually being used.

“Consider” the following texts in order to better understand the Old Testament depiction of God as a father, and so what the original readers of the Letter to the Hebrews would have been set up to understand from their “Bible” knowledge.

GOD THE FATHER

Deuteronomy 32:6

2 Samuel 7:14

1 Chronicles 17:13; 22:10; 28:6

Psalms 68:5; 89:26

Isaiah 63:16; 64:8

Jeremiah 3:4,19; 31:9

Malachi 1:6; 2:10

GOD LIKE A FATHER

Exodus 4:22,23

Deuteronomy 1:31; 8:5; 14:1

Psalms 103:13

Jeremiah 3:22; 31:20

Hosea 11:1-4

Malachi 3:17