

1/2

**The Lord's Discipline Is Reserved For Those He Loves & Accepts Us As His Children. (:5-6)**

That should encourage us. (Prov. 3:11-12, LXX vs. Hebrew)

- God does not discipline - train & purify - everyone.
  - The fact that He disciplines us illustrates the Father-child relationship we have w/Him.
    - The Lord does not discipline those who are not His children (:8).
    - e.g. Kids in neighborhood - which ones do you yell at/discipline? your own/the ones you love
  - It's because He loves & accepts us as children that he disciplines us & that's not something to take lightly (5b).
  - Despise / Discouraged
- When we recognize discipline from the Lord, we begin to see it as an opportunity.
  - An opportunity for what? To suffer? No!
  - Are disasters & tragedies like swats on the fanny saying "Knock it off!"? Of course not.
- The Father loves His children - He wouldn't hurt you on purpose, but He will allow you to learn from your mistakes - & sometimes that hurts.

**The Lord discipline's His children through the hardships we face (:7).**

- 1983 Gallup Poll - 1 Question of God = "Why is there suffering in the world?"
  - Suffering is not caused by the Lord (cf. Job?). Where does it come from?
- Many of the hardships we face are due to the fact that we live in a fallen world.
  - Two things that bring Satan great joy: hurting you & seeing you turn from God.
  - Satan appeals to the evil in man's heart & his rebellious nature to produce great suffering.
  - Then we blame God for everything from the cancer to Hitler & Satan loves it.
  - But it wouldn't be accurate to blame everything on Satan.
- Some of the hardships we face are due to the consequences of our actions.
  - Why do I always have to learn the hard way?
    - New cowboy boots - 1/2 size too small (they'll stretch...) - threw in trash at S.F.
  - God has given man great freedom - we're not robots - but man has abused his freedom.
    - Sickness = lifestyle: unhealthy diet, drugs/alcohol - 56,000 deaths due to drunk drivers.
    - Technology = Cars = ozone layer / pollution.
  - Satan doesn't cause that, but he enjoys our suffering: God doesn't cause it & it grieves Him.
- Some of the suffering in the world is caused by violating the natural laws of the universe.
  - Gravity - w/o we'd float away, but causes pain to jumpers.
  - Fault lines - Not intended to hurt man, but if ignored cause great pain/suffering/hardship.
  - India - once fertile, beliefs (reincarnation) cows & rats eat vegetation & grain = starvation.
  - Between the world we live in & our own mistakes, it's not necessary for the Lord to create hardship in our lives; there's enough of that already.
  - But enduring hardship isn't the Lord's only method of discipline.
- Just think of how much easier our lives would be if we just heeded His warnings & followed His instructions.
  - This really is the method God would prefer to train & purify His children.
    - (Ps 119:11, 105, 130)
    - (2Tim 3:16) *All scripture is God-breathed & is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting & training in righteousness.*

(The Lord disciplines His children (#1), through hardship &amp; His word (#2). Thirdly, we see that...

**The Lord's Discipline Is Never Pleasant, But It Is Always In Our Best Interest (:9-11).**

- We respect our human fathers because they correct & train us when we were wrong.
  - (Both me & Tiger Joe respected my Dad!)
- Our parents discipline us according to their desires & limited wisdom.

2/2

- But parents sometimes teach wrong principles.

Rebecca taught Jacob to lie, cheat & steal - to accomplish *her* purpose in *her* wisdom.

- Our heavenly Father always has *our* best interests at heart, in His perfect wisdom.

(The Lord disciplines His children through hardship & His word. It may not seem pleasant at the time, but it's for our own good. And the 4th component...)

The Lord's discipline results in LIFE - peace, righteousness, & holiness (:9-10b, 11b).

- Our human fathers gave us physical life, but our heavenly Father gives us spiritual Life.
- Under the training of the Lord we share in His holiness, righteousness & peace.
  - And nothing could be further from hardship.
- When you know that the Lord's discipline is going to lead you out of pain, suffering & hardship, it changes your perspective.
  - It's not that my Dad didn't like that Tiger Joe tank, or that he didn't want me to have fun; It's because he loved me & wanted the best for me that he disciplined me.
  - If I knew then what I know now, I'd ask him to sit down w/me & explain - pour all his wisdom & knowledge into me.

(That's what I want the Lord to do, & that's the 5th component...)

We should develop our ability to recognize & submit to the Lord's discipline. (:12-13)

For two reasons:

- To get the most out of it.
  - As we recognize & submit to the Lord's discipline we learn the lessons He would teach us much faster & w/much less pain.
  - No parent wants to see their children suffer - but if that's the only way they'll learn, if it will save them from greater suffering in the future - we allow it.
    - That's why God allows suffering the world.
  - We begin to see His character, His love for us, & that He wants more than anything to set us free from hardship.
- Our response to the Lord's discipline affects others. (:12-13)
  - How do you respond to hardship? Do you...
    - Tolerate it? - "oh well, that's life..."
    - Accept it w/self pity? - "Why me, I don't deserve this..."
    - Resent God for trying to teach you a lesson?
    - Or do you accept it gratefully for what it is - correction from a loving Father.
  - Are those that are watching you struggle discouraged or encouraged by your response?
  - Are the lame disabled or healed by the testimony of your life?