

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Children of the King

No 6

Discipline as Sons

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 12.1-13.

Christians are not exempt from problems and suffering. In fact these may even be more acute than before. However the Bible gives us some answers to the benefits that come with suffering; first because God can give His grace and peace in that moment of need, and second because we know that God has allowed these abrasive things to rub against us as part of our training in holiness. He uses discipline as well as encouragement. It is the buffing of polishing that helps us to shine. This is our topic for today.

As always we need to place a passage in its context. Verse four is only understood as we read chapter eleven. Chapter twelve begins with a therefore, a conjunction of reason. We tend to see the reference to sin in Hebrews 12.4 to be our sin, but think of it as the sin of others like that which caused the shedding of the blood of the of all those heroes of faith in chapter eleven. The word used for 'blood' in verse four has the added meanings of 'killing, death or sacrifice.' Jesus also endured 'such opposition from sinful men' v3(NIV). The hardship faced by these Hebrew readers was that of opposition by fellow Jews and exclusion from their traditional Jewish heritage because of their faith in Jesus. It had not at that time included death. God uses all forms of adversity for discipline as we shall see.

First, Discipline is A Normal Part of Child Rearing and Christian Living.

Have you about forgotten Proverbs 3.11-12? Then, look it up now. The Bible has a lot to say about God using adversity to teach His people a lesson. The book of Judges is all about adversity being used as an instrument of discipline and also people neglecting to learn. Knowing this helps us to make sense of some of the things that happen in our lives, as well as the stories of the Bible.

Our passage tells us that this is a part of ordinary family life, and if so, ought it not be more so in the family of God. You can learn more in 1 Corinthians 11.30-32.

Second, There Are Several Things That Work Together.

How do we know whether what is happening is the chastisement of God, or the interference of the devil to be resisted or a difficulty to be overcome in victorious faith?

God is a loving Father. He does not enjoy punishing you. He does not want you to suffer. He wants you to grow in joy and grace and faith.

There are several things which work together in achieving His purposes.

Encouragement. God would rather use the carrot than the stick. Look at verse five. Do you recognise it as Proverbs 3.11&12? It gives as an encouragement. Sometimes He uses people. Barnabas was a man with the ministry of encouragement. His name was Joseph but the

disciples nick-named him Barnabas meaning 'Son of Encouragement' (Acts 4.36). God has his holy men and women everywhere. He uses them to encourage His children to greater godliness and more fruitful living and service. Are you an encourager?

A Word of Scripture. One of the principle functions of Scripture is for rebuking, correcting and training God's children.:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3.16&17(NIV)

God will not discipline you without telling you why, otherwise the discipline would be fruitless. Sometimes it is the discipline that drives us back to the word and back to the place of prayer. They had forgotten the word, some of us have not even read it! Have you been neglecting the regular reading of God's word? You may be missing out on God's instruction.

A Word of Admonition. Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 2Timothy 2.4(NIV) God's messengers are charged with this awesome responsibility. It is not always popular, but it is necessary. When God's messengers rub you the wrong way, guess whose fault that is!

Third, Discipline is A Process That Takes Time.

It takes time for a plant to grow. The tender shoots are the ones that can be trained into shape. If the branches are damaged they are pruned back in hope of a better tree John 15.1-3. If it takes too long the tree becomes stunted. See Hebrews 5.12. Allow time for growth. Make full use of the time you have. Ephesians 5.16, Colossians 4.5

Fourth, There Are Three Ways We Can Respond.

We can count discipline as nothing, disregard it. This may not be a conscious act. We see the things happening in our lives only as obstacles to be overcome or conditions to be endured, not as an event allowed by God for a purpose, so we gain nothing by it v5. God may need to take us through it all again.

We can be overburdened, buried under our hardship. It is sometimes difficult to not be crushed by life's sorrows. When this happens we concentrate on the pain of discipline, rather than the lesson v5.

We can look for the hand of God in what He has allowed to come into our life, knowing that He intends it for our good as we are being moulded into the image of His Son v10&11. In short we can learn and correct our shortcomings, grow in holiness. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Revelation 3.19(NIV)

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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