

ENDURANCE: The Discipline of Authentic Faith - July 5th, 2015 Hebrews 12:8

Hebrews 12:5-8 ESV

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? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Our verse that we’ll be focusing on today is: Hebrews 12:8

If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Personal Story – November 2009 – Burnout due to lost spiritual perspective.

Roman noblemen often had two kinds of sons: ‘legitimate sons’ and ‘illegitimate sons’.

Illegitimate = no discipline Legitimate = disciplined... *intensely*.

Being Legitimate came at a price!

Where does it leave us if God’s discipline is absent from our lives? Well, in that case, we can only come to one conclusion. We are illegitimate children.

So, what an honour it is to be the recipient of this discipline! It establishes our position as legitimate children. Would we dare to resist the discipline set in place by a loving father?

Unfortunately, this resistance is common. At times resistance is **active, conscious rebellion, and sometimes passive rebellion. (More common in our culture.)**

Examine our own lives, asking “Am I tuned in to God’s discipline? If the answer to these questions is “No” then verse 8 is a warning to inauthentic followers of Christ.

Three Notes on the Lord’s Discipline

1. Determine your relationship with God. And Know his Love!

John 3:16, Romans 8:1, Joel 2:32

Q: Have I experienced Christ? Have I entrusted myself to Christ?

2. The Pain of Fatherly Discipline = Growth & Life

1 Peter 4:12, 2 Peter 1:5-7, Hebrews 12:11

This pain should not come as a surprise to us: **1 Peter 4:12** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening.

A New Perspective - The details in our lives are not unnecessary pain from a God who is unaware, but can be instrumental in our correction by a loving Father.

Q. How can we know that we are in an authentic relationship with God?

2 Peter 1:5-7 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

Authentic faith requires this discipline, both discipline from God and self-discipline.

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.

3. God Calls us to the endurance of faith.

It comes down to a matter of trust! Simple, childlike trust in a loving Father.

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Job 5:17 Blessed is the one whom God reproves; Therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty.

Proverbs 3:11 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.

Questions that God doesn't answer: Why it is your turn, or why it is happening now, or why there is this much pain, or why it lasts this long. But he has told you what you need to know: it is the love of an all-wise Father to a child. Will you trust him?

-John Piper

Christ doesn't promise peaceful circumstances, he promises His peace *amidst* our circumstances.

Remember: Hebrews 12:8 also tells us that:

The Lord's Discipline is something all Christians will experience.

Christians in Iraq under the shadow of ISIS – fleeing armies intent on their destruction

Chinese believers being persecuted under the Communist government.

We need to: Trust and know that it is the beneficial correction of a loving Father.

Divine Discipline reminds us of our status as children of God.

1 Cor 11:32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. We are being saved from ourselves!

Our world is heading for one day – a day of judgment by God on a sinful world, but we are being saved from that judgment and condemnation.

The legitimate son of the Roman had the responsibility Of carrying on the family name. Of representing his family well.

Are we representing our Christian family well? Is our Heavenly Father pleased with how we are living up to our name of Christian? Remember we will never earn our salvation with good works, but are we good and faithful servants?

Do we realize what a privilege it is to bear the name of Christian? I pray that we do!

The legitimate Son in the home of a Roman nobleman endured discipline with the anticipation of his promised inheritance. Money, property, possessions.

As children of God, what are we promised? An even more amazing inheritance!

2 Corinthians 4:17

"For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

1 Cor 2:9 "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" – these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

Do we have our eyes set on this inheritance? This unimaginable inheritance?

Personal Story – the Discipline of God in my own life.

Be encouraged that there is a joyful and comforting conclusion – a day when discipline will no longer be necessary!