

DISCIPLINE

A path from painful to fruitful

HEBREWS 12:5-11

Preparing for Small Group: Read the passage below, and answer the following questions.

- (1) What do these verses tell me about God?
 - (2) What do these verses tell me about sinful humanity?
 - (3) What do these verses tell me about Jesus?
 - (4) What does God want me to know?
 - (5) What does God want me to do?
-

“Discipline Done Right”

Hebrews 12:5-11

Main Idea: God disciplines the children He loves to mature them in His Son.

Discoveries about the discipline of your Father:

Discipline comes from your Father’s love (5-8).

In the verses preceding Hebrews 12:5-8, the author of Hebrews calls for endurance in the life of faith. Recognizing that following Jesus is not easy and that the struggle against sin is real, the writer of Hebrews urges the believer to remember that suffering is connected to being a son or daughter of the King and that suffering serves a purpose in discipline that matures a child of God. In Hebrews 12:5-6, the writer of Hebrews quotes from Proverbs in order to lay out some fundamental reminders when it comes to understanding and applying the discipline of the Lord. Three of the most important facts that are revealed in verses 5-6, and then built upon in verses 7-8, include the following:

- You are His child;
 - You have His love; and
 - You need His instruction and correction.
1. Read Hebrews 12:1-4. How do these verses set the stage for the discussion of the right perspective on God’s discipline in the life of a believer?
 2. Read Hebrews 12:5. In what ways might someone “regard lightly” the discipline of the Lord? Why would someone need to be encouraged to not grow weary when reproved?
 3. Read Hebrews 12:6. What’s the difference between “discipline” and “chastising?” How are these connected? When have you clearly experienced either?
 4. Read Hebrews 12:7-8. What’s the main point of these verses? Do you know someone who needs to be encouraged with this truth? Pray for them. Commit to share with them.

Discipline comes to mature you as His child (9-10).

In Hebrews 12:9-10, the author makes a comparison between the discipline of an earthly father and the discipline of the heavenly Father. The comparison provides two simple and clear points:

- Your earthly father’s discipline is limited in time and quality; and
- Your heavenly Father’s discipline is always for your good.

In other words, in the best of cases, earthly fathers only discipline their children while they are children and under their guardianship. During that time, they make decisions related to discipline as best they can, but often times those decisions are less than perfect. However, in contrast, the discipline of God is perfect and always perfectly done for the good of His children during their entire life on earth, and the purpose of God's discipline is always to grow His children in His likeness until they are one day eternally glorified in Christ!

1. Read Hebrews 12:9. Why do we respect those who appropriately discipline us? What does it mean that we'll "live" through subjection or obedience to God's discipline in our lives?
2. Read Hebrews 12:10. Discuss the connection between "for our good" and "share his holiness." Do you think sometimes this connection is missed or misunderstood?
3. In Hebrews 12:10, what does sharing in God's holiness look like in our lives? How does your small group help in this maturing process through God's discipline?
4. What's one area of holiness that you need God to mature in your life? Share, and then take time to pray for and with each other.

Discipline comes to give you peace and righteousness (11).

From an earthly perspective, discipline is always painful when it comes; however, God's discipline always has great purpose in cultivating God's fruit in the lives of His children. To those who have been trained and have learned from God's discipline, the greatest fruit is righteousness. This is connected to a growing holiness — or Christlikeness — in the life a follower of Jesus. Additionally, this fruit is something that by God's design will bring peace into the life a believer through a right relationship with God and a rightful resting in the Lord through faith in Jesus Christ.

1. Have you experienced the statement that discipline seems painful when received, but that discipline can produce good results in the end? Share examples, and discuss.
2. What is the "peaceful fruit of righteousness?" Discuss what that looks like, grounding your discussion in God's Word related to righteousness in the life of a believer.
3. What's required to be "trained by it (the discipline of the Lord)" in our lives? What can hinder a believer from being "trained" by discipline?
4. Thank God for the fact that He cares about you enough to discipline you for your own good. Pray for hearts that will receive, be trained by, and will mature through the discipline of our Father!