

The Chastening of the Lord

Hebrews 12:4-11

- Chastening and rebuke are found throughout our passage of the day
- It speaks to believers who are striving against sin
- They find themselves in need of chastening
- And God is a good father
- He brings timely discipline into the lives of His followers

- We'll talk more about what this means
- As we focus on our theme "The Chastening of the Lord"
- From Hebrews 12:4-11

- Chapter twelve of Hebrews opens speaking of the great "cloud of witnesses"
- Those faithful men and women who have gone on before
- They have run their race with patience
- But they are not unlike us
- They were just flesh and blood
- And they battled sin

- In the midst of the battle
- They looked unto Jesus
- Who is called the author and finisher of our faith

- And whatever battle we face
- We must not be wearied or faint in our minds
- As long as we are alive on this earth, the battle will rage

- If we go off course
- God has a way of getting us back on course
- Our passage of the day begins talking about it...

Hebrews 12:4-6

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

- We may have sometimes failed in our resistance of sin
- Giving in to temptation
- And when we have, have we also forgotten the blessing of chastening?

- These words are expressed in a different way via the ERV...

"You are struggling against sin, but you have not had to give up your life for the cause. You are children of God, and he speaks words of comfort to you. You have forgotten these words: 'My child, don't think

the Lord's discipline is worth nothing, and don't stop trying when he corrects you. The Lord disciplines everyone he loves; he punishes everyone he accepts as a child."

- Correction is needed in the Christian life
- And God does it
- We must not feel it is something bad
- Or that it is something negative for us
- He does it because He is a good father
- And He cares for His children
- The motivation is always love

- We know this when we think of loving parents
- We know this when we think of teachers that demand a lot of us
- Or authority figures that hold us accountable
- Being rebuked or chastened is not enjoyable
- But we can see its value
- It plays an important role in shaping our character

- As we are being conformed to the image of Christ
- God always rebukes and chastens
- This is only right and good...

Hebrews 12:7

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

- This question is really important to answer
- Because we have an instinctive understanding about this
- We know that a good father disciplines his children
- This is understood

- Children are just children
- They make foolish decisions and do wrong things
- We made foolish decisions and did wrong things
- And there is no growing up if we are not corrected at times
- If we are not disciplined and given punishments for our wrongdoing

- And how do we feel about a father who disciplines?
- We look at him as someone to be respected
- Because he is doing the right thing
- He is loving his children enough to do something hard
- Avoiding discipline and punishment would be the easy thing - in the short-term
- But it is not the best thing
- It is certainly not the loving thing

- There are some obvious conclusions to make...

Hebrews 12:8-9

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

- Something is wrong if a believer does not experience this chastening
- A father does not discipline someone who is not his own son
- Those without chastening by God are outside God's family
- This is a very serious thing to consider
- Are you one of His?
- Consider whether or not you are disciplined and punished when disobedient

- What does this chastening look like?
- Well, we know it happens in the mind and heart
- Sometimes in the physical body
- Certainly in circumstances
- No doubt other people are used by God
- They may be in our local church - brothers and sisters
- Who speak truth (perhaps painful truth), but certainly truth to us
- Or people who do not know Him
- Who play some role in our chastening
- The chastening is not specifically defined
- But we seem to know it when it comes

- There is a very real sense in which we gave reverence to earthly fathers
- When they demanded obedience
- How can we then, not obey the Father that is above all?

- We realized, at some point, earthly parents wanted what was best
- We should realize the same thing about the Heavenly Father

- There are more details...

Hebrews 12:10

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

- Earthly fathers can get it all wrong
- Even the best of earthly fathers
- They are just men of sinful flesh
- They do wrong
- They are wrong
- They make choices that don't please God

- Many of us know this by experience

- God is not the same way
- He is perfectly trustworthy
- Perfectly correct in all circumstances
- He sees all
- Knows all
- Understands every motive
- Never misreads anything
- Never misunderstands anything

- So, we know His chastening is just
- We know it is right
- We know it is holy

- And He does it for our profit
- That we may partake of His holiness
- And become more like Him

- Remember this...

Hebrews 12:11

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

- It is not fun
- Nothing in the passage indicates it might be
- But it is valuable
- It works its way out into fruit
- God uses chastening to make us into the people we ought to be
- He loves us enough to do this

- This becomes a blessing to the disciple of Christ
- Rather than rebelling against His discipline
- We embrace it
- And while it take time to come to this place
- We can be certain, based on this passage and many others
- That He knows and does what is best
- And we are better for it

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2024