

(3) Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 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.”

(7) 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.

(9) Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

(10) For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. 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.

(12) Therefore, lift you drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather healed.

(14) Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

(15) See to it ---

-- that no one fails to obtain the grace of God;

-- that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many have become defiled;

-- that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.

(17) For you know that afterward, when he [Esau] desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

Think on these things:

- 1) In addition to “so great a cloud of witnesses” (v. 1) who endured life issues and prevailed by faith --- referring to the folks mentioned in Hebrews 11 --- who else should Christians consider as an example of endurance when we face our own challenging times (vs. 3-4)?

Jesus, whose resistance in struggle against sin was to the point of shedding His blood (for us).

- 2) We like to sing, “I’m so glad I’m a part of the family of God.” What (mixed) blessing comes with being a child of God (v. 5)? Why does God do this with us (v. 6)? What is the caution issued with this information (v. 5b)?

If God loves us and treats us as His sons and daughters, that will also come with His discipline and reproof to guide us in proper living. Discipline is for every child of God --- and the admonition is not to grow weary because God keeps showing us His love through discipline efforts.

- 3) What do you think is the purpose of discipline and chastising? Consider 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

This is an opinion question. Discipline and chastising typically aim to “correct” behavior, a form of guidance from a parent to a child. It can be for protection and safety, or to instill family standards. The Bible verses speak about God’s Word being used for teaching, reproof (stop that!), correction (do this instead!), and training in righteousness (a godly life style in God’s eyes). Parental discipline would do well to embrace these outcomes. Discipline can also refer to punishment; parents must be careful.

- 4) In our context (Hebrews 10:19-12:7) discussion of developing “faith that endures”, who is being disciplined or chastised (ourselves, our kids, the church family...)? See v. 7. If one is not being disciplined or chastised, what is said about his/her/their faith (v. 8)?

This is about how God disciplines “us,” not our discipline of others. Developing enduring faith will involve going through various disciplinary acts by God (our Father). Not being disciplined is only for those who are not God’s children....

- 5) Verse 5 says God disciplines His children because He loves them. Verse 10 adds that He does this is for our own good. And though discipline “for the moment” seems painful rather than pleasant (v. 11), what is the outcome (yield) for those who experience God’s discipline? What word at the end of v. 11 points to how God views His discipline for us?

Coming through the discipline (test) develops “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” We become stronger in faith and better, more obedient believers. God views His discipline for us as “training.”

- 6) V. 12 begins with “therefore,” asking us to consider understanding the Lord’s discipline with some applications. Instead of being downtrodden and beaten down by what we are enduring in our lives presently, what do vs. 12-13 challenge us to do?

Lift up our hands (in prayer?), gather ourselves to stand up firmly, and walk in straight (righteous) paths so we may be healed.

- 7) What is to be our goal in personal relationships (v. 14a)? **Live at peace with everyone.**
- 8) What is required of us to see the Lord in heaven (v. 14b)? **We must be/become “holy” to see the Lord.**
- 9) Reading vs. 15-16, what three things are we to “see to it” --- **(caring for our church community...)**
- A) **That no one fails to obtain God’s grace for eternal salvation!**
 - B) **That no root of “bitterness” takes hold that negatively impacts our church family. Deuteronomy 19:18 speaks of bitter hearts towards God that lead one to seek anything or any god but Him (bitterness defiles us).**
 - C) **That no one becomes sexually immoral or unholy in their lives.**

- 10) Esau is discussed in vs. 16b-17 as a poor example. Whereas Jacob married as directed by his parents, Esau married heathen, ungodly women from the region around them. What did he trade for his meal? Even though he later lamented this, and that with tears, was his repentance accepted?

He traded his birthright as the oldest son for a bowl of stew, and his later repentance was rejected.

- 11) Let’s close with a quick review on discipline in the home. Children grow up and mature, but they don’t start out with the reasoning to understand safety or boundary matters, or unacceptable issues such as bullying, stealing, lying, etc.... They need their parents to be parents. Many understand the teaching, “Spare the rod, spoil the child,” loosely built around Proverbs 13:24. In our culture today, however, spankings and switches used on children can lead to child abuse allegations and prosecution. What is God’s purpose in discipline (Hebrews 12:11b)? Also, why are corrections made (v. 6)? Parents discipline as seems best (v. 10). Let these truths help shape discipline in the home.

God's purpose in disciplining us, His children, is to result in righteous lives and living, bringing us peace in the long run. His disciplinary actions are motivated by His love for us, to make us better people who willingly embrace His standards. In response, He seeks obedience from love --- not fear!

People and situations I want to pray for this week: