

Wisdom in Discipline | Fathers and THE Father

Sunday, March 13, 2011

Discipline. One of those words that instill a great rhythm of thoughts and feelings in one's soul. It comes on the mind as a bad thing, something that one must seek to avoid and all the while we WORSHIP with hearts that reach toward a God that we do not know nor understand.

We have come to this place, not to seek and adore and revere and fear a HOLY and just God but a God that lives in peace with all men who is a God that does not exist and will never hear the praises of a tongue that forces such praises from an idolatrous heart of false assumptions.

We come to worship and WHO are we to worship except HOLINESS Himself who in the presence of DEAD THINGS shake and tremble. The righteous come before Him with fear and understanding His worth lays its foundations in His righteousness and holiness. Our hearts are callous when we come to worship a God of our making and the fruit of such things is that we hold to a facet of discipline of God as the result of personal and responsive consequences and in some cases that may be true, but in the reality of God's holiness, we all have not discipline to behold, but death.

May we come today with a heart that bleeds out of a RIGHT view of our God, might HE in His grace give us the ability to see His holiness like we have never seen it before. We should come to our place of worship with bent hearts, bowing souls and a broken spirit and seek to not look upon His holiness as though we have the privilege to do so, just as Uzzah touched the Arc to prevent it being defiled, his hand was that which defiled the holiness of God, not the dirt. For dirt does what God purposed it to do, but man must die when it tries to do what is right in the eyes of God.

When we come to the word of God, do we see God in this light or are we too blinded by our own devices and worldly religion to understand the presence of our King should be death for us? Are we too numb to discover the supreme and eternal chasm between us and God's holiness? Have we made an idol of our own hearts and painted Christ's face on the cover to make us feel at ease with our intentions and thoughts?

What comes to a man who denies the respect of God and worships Him in vain? Death comes, because that is what is RIGHT and JUST and HOLY. Death comes as it came to the sons of Aaron who approached God in a cavalier and immature way, death came to those in the early church who ate of the Lord's table in an unworthy manner and death should come to us today as we sit here comfortable looking to get something for OURSELVES and become indignant when we don't.

We are here to tremble, to worship, to cry out in thanksgiving that our God has mercifully stayed His hand of wrath and slowly swung His scepter of judgment as we labor for what we call the GOSPEL when in reality it is just a fight for the next "FIX" of joy that gives us another boost in our own little worlds towards demi-god status.

We fail to see God's holiness and in turn we worship wrongly and view Him incomplete which is not HIM but something He gives that we worship...

God is HOLY and is hungry for wrath and has laid HIS WRATH for the church on His Son so that His righteousness and Holiness would be SEEN. God is worthy because He is LORD, He is YAWEH He is the SOVERIGN ONE who deserves all praise and Christ has made Him

known.

God's mercy and grace alone can cause a man to tremble before Him. The wicked do not fear Him but sit comfortably looking for bread in other things. The blind do not see Him but think that He has given them a chance to "make things right" and slowly and quietly await the day of restitution where they might lay their case before His eyes and ears and be JUSTIFIED in their own faith in their own God in their own understanding of Him. This will not be. For there is none who can hide from His holiness and there is none that will not be judged in light of His RIGHTEOUSNESS. Every man and woman and child will stand before God and EACH and every word will be laid out and we will be judged according to our words because they will reflect our hearts.

These hearts that we now hold so dear, so precious are notoriously untrustworthy and yet we hold to what we "feel" and "think" over what God Himself has declared. BE HOLY... for I AM HOLY declares the LORD.

SO... what does this have to do with DISCIPLINE? Everything. God's HOLINESS is the reason for His discipline because it is a reflection of it through SANCTIFICATION. God disciplines those He loves and how are HIS just as a father disciplines a son so that we will be conformed to the likeness of His Son.

Without God's discipline, we are doomed to be blind to His holiness and if we are blind to His holiness, we are blind to His grace.

DISCIPLINE

Defined:

- i. punish in order to gain control or enforce obedience
- ii. develop (children's) behavior by instruction and practice; especially to teach self-control; **training to improve strength or self-control**

SO which one of these hits closest to your heart? Which way do you think God deals with you the most and why?

Proverbs 3:11 -12 (ESV)

**11 My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof,
12 for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.**

SON

It is the purpose of God to adopt His son's and daughters out of this world for they belong to HIM, not the enemy. He brings them out of the domain of darkness and into the light of His marvelous Son.

God ADOPTS the church. We don't pick our Father. God's adoption of His children gives us the picture of His discipline. To teach us, to mold us. But before we go there, let us look at this passage and then we will look at the NT usage of this same text in relation to God's ultimate reasons behind discipline.

The LORD LOVES therefore He disciplines.

"as a father the son in whom he delights."

When we are stretched and our faith is challenged, we are growing by the hands of the father. So...

DO NOT DESPISE

Because it is of the LORD and all things that are from the Lord are Good.
Adonai, Lord - Sovereign One, "the sovereign"

God is in control of what we THINK is harsh or unmerited or even deserving toward His children. And as we will see in Hebrews, God even is the author of our discipline and suffering.

We should LOVE the Lord's discipline. What DISCIPLINE in your life today are you not LOVING? What stress, what molding, what opportunity to praise?

Do you have indictments against you? Praise God for His GRACE and for the opportunity to worship Him because these indictments are GONE in His presence who is the eternal judge.

LOVE discipline, LOVE correction, LOVE consequences because they mold us, they train us, they teach us and they give us a glimpse toward holiness and a glimpse away from wrath.

DISCIPLINE - training and strengthening; MOLDING

This TRAINING comes in many forms and for many so-called reasons. Primarily it is a direct shadow of God's holiness because it either comes to mold us or mash us a little. Discipline comes due to two things:

SIN - As a direct consequence to our disobedience.

SON- As a direct calling to continue walking like Christ.

God brings discipline to those who sin as correction and to those who walk in obedience as correction and strength.

See Also:

Job 5:17 (ESV)

17 "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves; therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty.

REPROOF - correction and consequence NOT JUDGMENT or PUNISHMENT

DO NOT BE WEARY

Do not grow tired, do not give up and DO NOT PRAY for it to stop in lieu of praying God's will be done through it. Why would we want to STOP growing in our faith?

Why would we desire to be out of God's molding us into His holiness? Why oh why? Because it stinks and it hurts and it's not fun! But oh, how His grace is powerful, so discipline only comes at the strength of HIS GRACE and faithfulness, what should that mean for you?

That is the POWER OF GOD which is the GOSPEL of which we should NOT BE ASHAMED! We should not be weary, but boldly with inexpressible joy worshipping His holiness!

So we see a little chain here: Adoption as SONS, this is the gospel. Discipline as SONS, this is the Gospel. Love as SONS, this is the gospel. Instead of wrath... This is all GRACE. Nothing else because there is nothing else but Grace. God's grace is NOT CHEAP.

This is not some cheap responsive pity that God has on people, this is a determined and providential purpose that God has elected to do before He created the world.

So, what difference does this make for us? In our homes, jobs, government and church?

Discipline for children, discipline for society, discipline for the church?

TURN TO

Hebrews 12:4-11 (ESV)

4 In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

5 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.

6 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?

8 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.

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.

The reason is SIN

Correction comes because of SIN. God's RICH MERCY gives us the privilege of being shaped and trained in righteousness when we should receive wrath.

The reason is SONSHIP

We are adopted as sons.

Revelation 3:19 (ESV)

19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

The reason is SOVEREIGN

Leviticus 11:44-45 (ESV)

44 For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground.

45 For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

God prepares HIMSELF a people and TEACHES them to understand and worship Him and SEE HIS HOLINESS through His discipline.

JESUS took JUDGMENT so we could be TAUGHT holiness instead of JUDGED by Holiness.

The reason is SOLID

That God's HOLINESS and GLORY is revealed through the church. That His wisdom is proclaimed through the shaping of our lives.

Discipline does not CAUSE salvation or righteousness, it just points and prepares for it. Discipline is BECAUSE we are His SONS and DAUGHTERS, it comes that we might behold the holiness of God and tremble, but not shrink back but be at PEACE while still in AWE for perfect LOVE casts out fear and God has shed His own blood for the sins of the church that He might display His righteousness in forgiving us through the Blood of Jesus Christ.

We have not BLED in our resisting sin but God has!

HOLINESS is the purpose of discipline and it teaches us and those around us the reality of the gospel which begins with God's holiness and ends with His holiness!

We are a middle and cherished pleasant jam in the sandwich of God's glory and grace and He is worthy.

What brush calls out in defiance against its owner to paint what the brush desires? What clay jumps off the table in retreat for it doesn't want to become a pot at the potter's hands? What instrument makes its own melody against the will of the master musician? NONE, and so it is that none of the children of God despise correction.

2 Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)

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

Children of parents. Love discipline for it is of the Lord.
Children of God. Love discipline for it teaches His holiness.
Church. Love discipline for it reflects the holiness of God.