

“Prevention Is The Best Medicine!”
1 Corinthians 11:31-34

Introduction:

1. You've Probably All Heard The Old Adage:
 - “Prevention Is The Best Medicine!”
 - And In Many Ways This Is True!
 - In Fact, Some Of You Have Done Some Extensive Study Into Nutrition & Prevention Techniques So That You Can Live Stronger & Healthier Lives!
 - **IE:** For The Last Several Years - In Order To Qualify For The Best Rates For Our Health Insurance:
 - It Was Necessary For My Wife & I To Have A Health Screening! This Screening Does Some Basic Testing To See How Healthy (Or Not So Healthy) We Are!
 - During One Of These Screenings, The Technician Was A Christian Man Who, After Finding Out That I Was A Pastor At A Like-Minded Church, Proceeded To Remind Me That My Body Is A Temple - And I Need Take Good Care Of That Temple!
 - And Certain Measures Of Prevention Would Go A Long Way For My Health - Like The Dreaded “E” Word - Exercise!
 - But As I Was Preparing For This Message:
 - I Realized That What Is True For Our Physical Health:
 - Is Also True For Our Spiritual Health & For A Christian’s Fellowship With Christ!
 - “Prevention Is The Best Medicine!”
 - In Order To Maintain Our Fellowship With God & In Order To Avoid Some Of The Discipline That We See Taking Place In The Corinthian Church!
2. And We See This Truth In The Last 4 Verses Of 1 Corinthians 11!
 - In The Context Of The Lord’s Supper:
 - Begin By Reading 11:20-34! (11:31-34 Is Our Text)
 - It Is Apparent That The Christians In Corinth:
 - Were Not Pleasing The Lord When They Worshiped Him & When They Came To The Lord’s Supper!
 - They Were Instead - Displeasing The Lord, Disappointing Him, And Sinning Against Him!
 - And God Was Dealing With Them & Their Sin!
 - He Was, In A Certain Sense, “Judging” Them For Their Sin, As We See In 11:31 - “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep!”
 - There Is A Certain Kind Of Judgement That Can Come Upon Christians Who Are Not Living Obedient Lives Before The Lord!
 - 1 Peter 4:7 - “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God!”
 - Wouldn’t It Have Been Better For Those Christians In That Church:
 - To Have “Examined Themselves” - And If There Was Anything Wrong In Their Actions / Attitudes / Affections - To Go To The Lord To Get It Taken Care Of Before His Hand Of Judgment & Discipline Came Upon Them?
 - So - Even Spiritually / Especially Spiritually:
 - “Prevention Is The Best Medicine!”
3. What About Us? You?
 - Do You Want To Disappoint Or Displease The Lord In Your Life?
 - As A Christian / As A Church?
 - Do You Want To Receive God’s Hand Of Judgment & Discipline Because Of Sin?
 - Especially When We Worship Or Participate In The Lord’s Supper?
 - If The Answer Is “No”:
 - Then, As We Will See In Our Verses This Morning, “Prevention **IS** The Best Medicine!”
 - How Can We Prevent Being Displeasing The Lord & Then Being Disciplined By The Lord?
 - By Responding Back Immediately To Whatever The Lord Is Doing To Bring Us Back Into His Fellowship!

*Respond To:

1. **The Conviction Of The Lord!**
 - 11:31 - “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged!”
 - Sometimes The Lord Get’s Our Attention Through Conviction!
 - We Find In This Verse:
 - A Prescription To Avoid Judgment!

- **IE:** There Are 2 Different Kinds Of Prescriptions! A Prescription Of Remedy - When You Are Sick Or In Pain Or Have Some Other Problem! A Prescription Of Prevention - When You Are Prone To Some Kind Of Pain Or Problem!
 - A Doctor Often Will Give You A Prescription & Expect You To Carry It Out! If Not, And Things Go Wrong, It Is Your Fault Not The Doctors!
- The Prescription Found In 11:31 Is:
 - “Self-Judgment” - “For If We Would Judge Ourselves!”
 - It Reminds Us Of 11:28 - “But Let A Man Examine Himself!”
 - What Does This Mean? What Does This Include?
- When The Holy Spirit Does His Work Of Conviction In Your Heart – Then You Need To Do Something About It!
 - Conviction Is Quite Possibly The Gentlest Form Of Correction By God!
 - So Many Times - The Lord Through The Holy Spirit Whispers Into Our Heart & Into Our Conscience - “This Is The Way, Walk Ye In It!”
- When You Sense The Conviction Of God In Your Life:
 - You Need To Respond!
 - Some Have Responded Through Penance - Or Self- Punishment - Like Many Devout Roman Catholics Who Around Easter Will Have Themselves Nailed To A Cross Like Jesus Was!
 - But This Is Not What 11:31 Is Talking About!
- The Way A Christian Responds To Conviction Is Found In:
 - 1 John 1:9 - 2:3 - “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. / 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. / 1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: / 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. / 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments!”
- Respond Through:
 - Confession To The Lord! Mourning / Repenting!
 - Receive Cleansing By The Lord!
 - Renew Commitment To The Lord!
 - The Prescription Is Not To Hide Your Sin, But To Humble Yourself & Bring It To The Lord!
- When You Do This, You Will Experience:
- The Prevention Of Divine Judgment:
 - “For If We Should Judge Ourselves, We Should Not Be Judged!”
 - Like The Corinthians Were Experiencing In 11:30!
 - Judgment - Through Weakness / Sickness / Even Death Of Believers!
- Paul Was Telling Them & Us:
 - If Self-Examination / Self-Judgment / And Humble Confession Had Been Taking Place:
 - They Would Not Have Been Experiencing Those Judgments In Their Church!
- Instead:
 - They Would Have Been Healthier In Their Bodies!
 - They Would Have Been Healthier As A Body!
- Because: Prevention Is The Best Medicine!
 - So - When You Receive The Conviction Of The Lord:
 - For Any Failure / Any Sin!
 - Respond Immediately!
 - Don’t Hide / Don’t Harbor Your Sin!
 - Get Rid Of It!
 - Respond Through Humble & Honest Confession!
 - And All That Is Included With That!
 - Why? 1 John 1:9 - “He – The Lord Himself – Is Faithful And Just To Forgive Us Our Sins, And To Cleanse Us From All Unrighteousness!”

* Respond To:

2. The Chastening Of The Lord!

- 11:32 - “But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world!”
- Sometimes The Lord Get’s Our Attention Through Chastening!
 - If We Refuse To Judge Ourselves – As Christians & As A Church – There Will Be Judgment!

- **IE:** And This Judgment Is Meant To Be Like An Alarm Clock - In Order To Wake His People Up! Some Alarm Clocks Are Sophisticated - When The Appointed Time Is Come - It Begins Rather Softly - But Then Gets Gradually Louder & Louder & Louder Until You Finally Have Had Enough & Get Up & Throw It Across The Room!
 - The Judgment Of The Lord Can Come In Different Forms & In Different Degrees - To Some, Softer / To Some, Louder & Harder - "For He Knoweth Our Frame; He Remembereth That We Are Dust!" (Psalm 103:14)
- But His Judgment Is Always To Wake Us Up!
- The Marks Of His Judgment:
 - Who Does God Have In His Sights When He Judges This Way? The Believer! The Christian!
 - God Deals With Us No Longer As A Sinner!
 - Because A Christian Really Has Received Forgiveness Of All Their Sin! Past / Present / Future! They Are Truly Saved! The Penalty For Their Sin Has Been Satisfied By Jesus! The Righteousness Of Christ Has Been Applied To Their Account!
 - So Now - God Deals With Us As Sons & Daughters!
 - Hebrews 12:7 - "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons!"
- The Meaning Of His Judgment:
 - So, What Does It Mean When "When We Are Judged" As Christians?
 - Answered In 11:32 - "We Are Chastened Of The Lord!"
 - To Be Disciplined & Trained As A Child!
 - Sometimes Soft / Sometimes Hard!
 - Hebrews 12:5-11 - "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. / 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? / 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye illegitimate, 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? / 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. / 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!"
- The Manner Of His Judgment:
 - When Does God Chasten & Judge His Children?
 - When We Sin / When We Go Astray!
 - Psalm 89:31-34 - "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; / Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. / Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. / My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips!"
 - How Does God Chasten & Judge His Children?
 - Many Ways!
 - Physical Discipline - As In 11:30!
 - Weakness / Sickness / Even Death!
 - Personal Discipline!
 - Through Difficult Circumstances & Even The Loss Of Loved Ones!
 - Like David - Loss Of His Son As A Result Of His Sin With Bathsheba!
 - Material Discipline!
 - Loss Of Material Things / Even Dissatisfaction With Material Things!
 - Amos 4:6-9 - "And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD!" (6)
 - Emotional Discipline!
 - Loss Of Joy / Peace / Growth!
 - Depression / Discouragement!
 - Psalm 51:8, 12 - "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. / Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation!"
 - Spiritual Discipline:
 - Psalm 66:18 - "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me!"
 - Church Discipline!
 - Public Process To Bring To Repentance & Confession!

- These Are Not Always Because Of God's Judgment & Chastening, But They Can Be! You Will Often Know!
- Why Does God Chasten & Judge His Children?
 - "That We Should Not Be Condemned With The World!"
 - He Chastens Us & Disciplines Us:
 - To Confirm Our Relationship With Him!
 - If God Does Not Chasten Us Now:
 - He Will Punish Us Later!
 - Because We Are Not His Children!
 - "God Doesn't Whip The Devil's Children!"
- So Remember: Prevention Is The Best Medicine!
 - And - When You Receive The Chastening Of The Lord:
 - For Any Failure / Any Sin!
 - Respond Immediately!
 - How? Revelation 3:19-20 - "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. / Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me!"
 - "Open The Door!"
 - Enjoy A Restored Fellowship With The Lord!

* Respond To:

3. The Correction Of The Lord!

- 11:33 - "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another!"
 - Sometimes The Lord Get's Our Attention Through Correction!
 - In This Verse, Paul Tells Them What They Need To Do To Correct Their Error In Approaching God In Worship & Through The Lord's Supper!
 - Their Worship Was Broken!
 - Here's How To Fix It!
 - **IE:** Like When A Person Breaks A Bone - It Cannot Function The Way It Should - Roofer - Fell From A Ladder & Broke Both Wrists - Didn't Heal Right - Still Usable - But Hardest Thing To Deal With - Couldn't Hug His Wife Completely With Hands & All! If Our Worship Is Broken, Then We Cannot Reach Up To The Lord Properly Either!
 - We Need To Respond To The Correction Of The Lord! Because Prevention Is The Best Medicine!
 - His Correction Is:
- For Our Comfort!
 - "Wherefore, My Brethren!"
 - Even After All The Difficulties Paul Had To Deal With & Even The Harsh Words - Paul Still Comes To Them & Calls To Them As Brothers In Jesus Christ!
 - There Is Great Love For Them!
 - There Is A Great Longing For Them!
 - And This Correction Is To Comfort & Encourage Them!
 - Because God Is Still Working In Them!
 - The Correction Of The Lord Is Always For Our Comfort!
 - Not On The Outside, But On The Inside!
 - The "Peaceable Fruit Of Righteousness" Mentioned In Hebrews 12:11!
 - So Respond To His Correction!
 - His Correction Is Also:
- For Our Change!
 - "When Ye Come Together To Eat!"
 - Before - When They Came Together:
 - They Were Following The Wrong Plan!
 - They Were To Be Getting Together "For The Better" (11:17) - But Instead - They Made It "For The Worse!"
 - Before - When They Came Together:
 - They Had The Wrong Priorities!
 - Instead Of Promoting Fellowship!
 - They Promoted Factions!

- Before - When They Came Together:
 - They Had The Wrong Purpose!
 - They Were Sowing To Their Flesh & Not To The Spirit - Even At The Lord's Supper!
- But Now - They Can Come Together As A Church:
 - Following The Right Plan!
 - With The Right Priorities!
 - And For The Right Purpose!
 - Whenever They Worship & Especially When They Participate Together In The Lord's Supper!
- The Correction Of The Lord Is Always For Our Change!
 - To Follow His Plan / Have His Priorities & Purpose!
- So Respond To His Correction!
 - His Correction Is Also:
- For Our Communion!
 - "Tarry One For Another!"
 - "Tarry" - A Command To Wait For Each Other, In Order To Fellowship & Worship Together!
 - This Was Something New To Them!
 - But Not To The Lord!
 - To "Tarry" Would Include:
 - Patience With One Another!
 - Passion / Love For One Another!
 - Peace With One Another!
 - Providing For One Another!
 - And Participating With One Another!
 - If We Do Not Obey When God Corrects Us:
 - We Can Expect His Chastening & Discipline!
 - Is This Something We Want, Knowing That Disobedience Displeases The Lord? No!
- Prevention Is The Best Medicine!
 - When You Receive The Correction Of The Lord:
 - For Any Failure / Any Sin!
 - Respond Immediately!
 - How?
 - Through Obedience!
 - 1 John 2:5 - "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him!"
 - Obedience Is An Evidence Of Our Relationship!
 - Obedience Is An Expression Of Our Love / Fellowship!

* Respond To:

4. Our Condition Before The Lord!

- 11:34 - "And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come!"
 - Paul Is Now Coming To The End Of This Chapter & The End Of This Problem!
 - And Here - He Is Explaining To Them Once Again That:
 - "Prevention Is The Best Medicine!"
 - Don't Even Get To The Point Where You Require:
 - The Severest Forms Of Conviction / Chastening / Correction Of The Lord!
 - How?
- Be Prepared For Your Worship!
 - "And If Any Man Hunger, Let Him Eat At Home!"
 - To Have The Right Condition Before The Lord In Worship Requires Preparation!
 - Preparation Of The Heart! Prayer / Submission!
 - Preparation Of The Mind! Rest / Alertness!
 - Even Preparation Of The Body! Even Food!
 - Did You Come Prepared Today For Worship?
 - Sometimes In Very Simple & Practical Ways!
 - So That You Are Fully Engaged In Worship & Not Distracted!
- Be Proper In Your Worship!
 - "That Ye Come Not Together Unto Condemnation!"

- Or The Judgment / Chastening Of The Lord!
- To Ensure That You Are Not Coming:
 - Either In Worship Or To The Lord's Table:
 - In The "Unworthy Manner" Mentioned In 11:27 & 29!
- We Must Come To The Lord In Worship:
 - "Decently & In Order!" (14:37)
 - In Faith / In Love / In Thanksgiving / In Reverence!
 - Matthew Henry - "Holy Things Are To Be Used In A Holy Manner!"
- Is This How We Seek To Worship The Lord?
 - There Is A Proper Way To Worship Him!
- Be Pliable As You Worship!
 - Pliable - Like A Lump Of Clay In The Hands Of A Potter!
 - "And The Rest Will I Set In Order When I Come!"
 - It Appears That There Were Other Things That Needed To Be Addressed In Their Worship - And Paul Was Going To Come To Help Them!
 - But They Needed To Be Teachable!
 - Ready & Willing To Learn & Apply God's Ways To Their Worship!
 - Are We Ready & Willing To Receive The Lord's Instruction & Teaching?
- Prevention *Is* The Best Medicine!
 - When You Consider Your Condition Before The Lord:
 - Respond Immediately!
 - How?
 - Through Preparation! Be Prepared For Anything & Everything That The Lord Brings To Your Attention!
 - Be Prepared For His Convictions!
 - And Respond Through Confessing!
 - Be Prepared For His Chastening!
 - And Respond Through Receiving!
 - Be Prepared For His Correction!
 - And Respond By Obeying!

Conclusion:

1. In Fact - We Need To Be Ready To Respond To The Least Measure Of Discipline In Our Lives!
 - T. Fuller - "Let Us Humble Ourselves Under His Hand When He Layeth But His 'Little Finger' Upon Us!"
2. Prevention Is The Best Medicine!
 - 11:31 - "For If We Should Judge Ourselves, We Should Not Be Judged!"
 - Respond To His Working In Your Life!
 - Return To The Lord!
 - Remember That His Sacrifice Brought You From Being A Sinner To Being A Son!
 - And Now This Is How God Is Dealing With You!
 - Repent Of Your Sin!
 - And Be Restored In Your Fellowship With Your Savior!
3. Make Sure That There Is:
 - "Nothing Between [Your] Soul & The Savior!"
 - So That You Can Experience & Enjoy Once Again The Sweet Fellowship Jesus Himself Invites You To!
 - As You Worship Him!
 - And Especially As You Participate In The Lord's Supper!

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