



Two thoughts before we read:

1. Regarding God's discipline, this is a tough subject matter.
2. Without a gospel perspective, this can be seriously misunderstood.

Hebrews 12:3-17

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." ...

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. 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? ...

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. Therefore lift your 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 be healed. ...

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 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 become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.
- Hebrews 12:3-17

The teaching for today: In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

1. Unpacking this teaching.
2. Our struggle with this teaching and how the gospel addresses our struggle.

The teaching for today: In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

1. Unpacking this teaching.

In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, **God disciplines** his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

a. What God does: God disciplines

Verses 5-6: 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.”

Takeaways:

1) **God’s discipline is not punitive in anger but corrective in love.**

Verse 6: “For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

Corrie Ten Boom: “It hurts when God has to **PRY** things out of our hand!”

Takeaways:

2) **We should not take God’s discipline flippantly nor should we be crushed by it.**

Verses 5b-6: “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.”

Takeaways:

3) **As we consider the truth that God disciplines us, we must keep in mind all of who God is and what he has done for us, not just in Hebrews but the whole of Scripture.**

Takeaways:

4) Not all storms are “discipline related.”

In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines **his children** in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

a. What God does: God disciplines

b. Who God disciplines: **His children**

Verses 7-10: 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. 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? 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.

Takeaways:

1) **God never punishes his children out of spite and anger but in love He chastens them.**

Verse 7b-8: 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.**

Takeaways:

2) **The context for this illustration is an “imperfect but healthy” relationship between father and son.**

Verses 9-10: 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? 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.

Jerry Bridges: “(God’s) Discipline may be either corrective or remedial. It may be sent for the purpose of correcting some sinful attitude or action, or to remedy some lack in our character. In either case, it is administered by our heavenly Father in love, not in wrath. Jesus has already borne the wrath of God in our place, so all adversities that come to us, come because He loves us and designs to conform us to the likeness of His Son.”

In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

- a. What God does: God disciplines
- b. Who God disciplines: His children
- c. How God disciplines: In a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

Discipline that does not weary:

Verse 3 (this verse sets the stage for our whole section on discipline):

“Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.”

Discipline that is meant to develop and strengthen:

Verse 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.

One more thought:

Practically, what does God’s discipline lead to?

Verses 12-17: Therefore lift your 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 be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 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 become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

Summary:

In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

The teaching for today: In order for us to hold fast and have gospel resilience, God disciplines his children in a way that does not weary them but strengthens and develops them in Christ.

1. Unpacking this teaching.

2. Our struggle with this teaching and how the gospel addresses our struggle.

Our struggle:

1. "If God is loving, he shouldn't be disciplining and punishing me."

In the gospel, God disciplines us as a loving, holy, and wise Father but doesn't punitively punish us as Judge.

Bryan Chapell: "Since God's justice has been fully satisfied, the remaining purposes of His discipline are to help those dear to Him to know more of the riches of His grace, and to grow more like Him. Divine discipline is intended to benefit the wayward rather than to exact retribution for wrong."

William Gurnall: "God's wounds cure, sin's kisses kill."

Our struggle:

2. "I've had bad personal experiences with harsh fathers and this is difficult for me to take in."

If this has been your story:

Verses 12-13: Therefore lift your 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 be healed.

As we close, a corporate prayer for all of us

Heavenly Father, I come today confessing that your discipline is something I avoid and resist. In your grace and wisdom, please don't give me what I deserve but give me what I need. Thank you for your gentleness towards me as I bring before you my sin, shame, and embarrassment. Thank you that in Christ, I stand not only justified but adopted as your beloved child. I find deep comfort knowing that you are my Heavenly Father who not only delights in me but also protects me. Enable me to hold fast with gospel resilience today. Amen.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Hold Fast

REDEEMER