

# God's Sovereignty in Chastening

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## WHAT IS THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD?

The chastening of the Lord is God training His children through the discipline and exercise of life experience, adversity and suffering by His sovereign ordering of our times, seasons and circumstances.

The chastening of the Lord is God's divine process of sanctification of exposing and transforming. Transformation can't take place without the sinful condition of the heart first being exposed, producing godly sorrow, contrition and repentance, the catalysts for transformation.

The exposing of our sinfulness goes progressively deeper and deeper, until all is revealed. And the transforming of our nature and character becomes more and more evident and miraculous.

## WHAT GOD EXPOSES IN CHASTENING

*Jeremiah 17:9-10 ESV*

*9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

*10 "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."*

*Hebrews 5:14 ESV*

*14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

*Luke 22:33-34 ESV*

*33 Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."*

*34 Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."*

*Luke 22:54-56 ESV*

*54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance.*

*55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them.*

*56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him."*

*Luke 22:61-62 ESV*

*61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."*

*62 And he went out and wept bitterly.*

*Job 23:3-5 ESV*

*3 Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!*

*4 I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.*

*5 I would know what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me.*

*Job 42:5-6 ESV*

*5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;*

*6 therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."*

*Genesis 31:41 ESV*

*41 [Jacob to Laban] "These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times."*

*1 Corinthians 11:27-32 ESV*

*27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.*

*28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

*29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.*

*30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*

*31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.*

*32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.*

*Hebrews 12:25 ESV*

*25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.*

## 1. **God is Sovereign**

*Our loving heavenly Father initiates, permits, guides and controls every event and circumstance in our lives. It is what the Bible calls our "lot", our "course", our "race."*

**Hebrews 12:1** ESV

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and **let us run with endurance the race that is set before us**,

**Psalm 16:5** ESV

5 **The LORD is my chosen portion** (*mĕnath - portion, what is allotted*) and **my cup; you hold my lot** (*gowral - pebbles used for making decisions and determining a portion or destiny*).

**Proverbs 16:33** ESV

33 **The lot** (*gowral - pebbles used for making decisions and determining a portion or destiny*) **is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD**.

**Psalm 37:23-24** NASB

23 **The steps of a man are established** (*kuwn - prepare, make ready, fixed, established, provide*) **by the LORD, And He delights in his way.**

24 **When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.**

*God's plan for my life is never late, thwarted, suspended or postponed. Not even when I fail or sin, as long as I remain repentant and contrite.*

*Through failure and sin it is easy to assume that God's sovereign plan for your life is delayed, suspended or even ruined while God has you on discipline, under probation or even set aside.*

*Approximately 50 days after Peter denied the Lord God used him to deliver the inaugural, keynote sermon announcing the purpose of Pentecost and the birth of the Church. Wouldn't James or John be a better choice so soon after Peter's blatant failure?*

*If we remain submissive and surrendered to God's chastening; sorry, confessing, and repenting for our sins, God will actually use our failures to break, strengthen and prepare us for great service in His Kingdom.*

**Luke 22:31-32** ESV

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat,  
32 **but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."**

## 2. Every Child is Chastened

*As long as we occupy this body of sinful flesh, no matter how old we are or how long we've been a Christian, we will always be under God's sovereign chastening, because the flesh with its sinful passions must continually be put to death.*

**Proverbs 6:23** ESV

23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and **the reproofs of discipline are the way** (*derek - road, path, manner, journey, habit, course of life*) **of life.**

**Hebrews 12:7-17** ESV

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.**

**Jeremiah 2:29-30** ESV

29 **"Why do you contend with me? You have all transgressed against me,"** declares the LORD.

30 **In vain have I struck your children; they took no correction; your own sword devoured your prophets like a ravaging lion.**

**Romans 1:28** ESV

28 **And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased (reprobate) mind.**

## 3. Chastening is Our Father's Love for Our Eternal Good

*"Chastisement is designed for our good, to promote our highest interests. Look beyond the rod to the All-wise hand that wields it!" - A. W. Pink*

*"The rod has been baptized in deep affection before it is laid on the believer's back. God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve us for nought, but out of love and affection, because he perceives that if he leaves us un-chastised, we shall bring upon ourselves misery ten thousand-fold greater than we shall suffer by his slight rebukes, and the gentle blows of his hand." --Charles Spurgeon*

*"God has no pleasure in afflicting us, but He will not keep back even the most painful chastisement if He can but thereby guide His beloved child to come home and abide in the beloved Son." - Andrew Murray*

1 Corinthians 11:32 KJV

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Hebrews 12:9-11 ESV

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.

#### 4. God's Chastening Requires Endurance

Hebrews 12:7-17 ESV

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure.

*"Faith upholds a Christian under all trials, by assuring him that every painful dispensation is under the direction of his Lord; that chastisements are a token of His love; that the season, measure, and continuance of his sufferings, are appointed by Infinite Wisdom, and designed to work for his everlasting good; and that grace and strength shall be afforded him, according to his need." - John Newton*

Hebrews 12:12-17 ESV

12 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be 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 become defiled;

16 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 desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 ESV

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

#### 5. We are Never Alone in the Chastening

*"He remembers our frame and knows that we are dust. He may sometimes chasten us, it is true, but even this He does with a smile, the proud, tender smile of a Father who is bursting with pleasure over an imperfect but promising son who is coming every day to look more and more like the One whose child he is." - A. W. Tozer*

1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.