

"I'm disciplining you, because I love you and want the best for you". I've often spoken this phrase to my children before wielding *"the rod of correction"*. I've made this a practice, because I want my children to know I'm reproofing them out of a love for and delight in them and a desire to see them flourish. (1) My hope is that my children, though they may not at the moment, will recognize discipline is meant for their good. How much more should those of us adopted into God's family know that the Father's perfect discipline is always meant to sanctify us.

Proverbs 3:1-12 is the 3rd of 10 parental appeals found in the first 7 Chapters of Proverbs. It is composed of a series of 6 *"if then"* type statements, with the first 5 statements building to the grand exhortation found in Verses 11 and 12:(2)

IF	THEN
1 <i>My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,</i>	2 <i>for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.</i>
3 <i>Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.</i>	4 <i>So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.</i>
5 <i>Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.</i> 6a <i>In all your ways acknowledge him,</i>	6b <i>and he will make straight your paths.</i>
7 <i>Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.</i>	8 <i>It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.</i>
9 <i>Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;</i>	10 <i>then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.</i>

IF	THEN
11 <i>My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof,</i>	12 <i>for the Lord reproofs him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.</i>

The words of verses 11 and 12 are repeated in the New Testament book of Hebrews:

3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. **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 reproofed 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. (Hebrews 12:3-11) (ESV)*

In writing about the persecution the Hebrews were experiencing, the author identifies these trials as acts of God’s loving, fatherly discipline. What those who persecuted the Hebrews meant for evil, God was using to make His children more holy. Like the child of Proverbs 3:11-12, the Hebrews were called not to despise this discipline, but to persevere. They were commanded to consider Jesus who endured persecution unto death on the cross, something the Hebrews had yet to experience themselves.

Do you find yourself despising the Lord’s discipline? Are you growing weary of His reproof? Then, consider Christ who died on the cross in Your place. The way He sinlessly endured persecution for the sake of His people. And, do not forget the Father is using your trial(s) to reprove you as a beloved child in whom He delights, to the end of making you more holy and righteous.

Are you a child of God? Apart from Christ all men stand condemned and their suffering is just a foretaste of the eternal punishment that awaits. But, if you will repent of your sin and believe in Jesus, you can know with confidence that you have been graciously adopted into the family of God as a child He will discipline, love and receive.

Pastor Rich

1. I have also made it my general practice to use these occasions to show my children they are sinners and to hold out Christ as our only hope. I have found this book to be *generally* helpful in regard to these parenting matters: <https://www.wtsbooks.com/products/shepherding-childs-heart-revised-and-updated-tedd-tripp-9780966378603?variant=9782265839663>
2. Beale, G.K. and Carson, D.A.. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2007 (p.998)