The Discipline of the Lord 2

**For the Moment Sorrowful**

Heb. 12:11

Introduction:

1. Discipline is not pleasant and yet it results in something highly desirable.

 a. Dickie spoke Wednesday night about 1 Cor. 9:27 and athletes who discipline themselves

 in order to receive a prize.

 b. People discipline themselves financially in order to have a comfortable retirement.

 c. And spiritual discipline results in “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

2. Like exercise and financial discipline spiritual discipline is not only uncomfortable it is painful.

3. Heb. 12 says, “God, our Father, disciplines us for our good.” But what can we expect?

4. In Heb. 10:32-12:13 there is a series of illustrations that gives us insight into how God disciplines those whom He loves.

5. Welcome.

Discussion:

I. Discipline calls for **endurance** through difficult moments (10:32-39).

 A. These people were reminded of some of the things they had experienced.

 1. It is described as “a great conflict of sufferings.”

 2. Some of the things they had suffered are enumerated.

 a. They were made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations.

 b. They shared with those so treated.

 c. They showed sympathy to prisoners.

 d. Accepted joyfully the seizure of their property.

 B. How were they able to do this? They recognized a greater reward (10:34b).

 It is described here as a “better possession and an abiding one.”

 1. The rich young ruler was unable to give up his possessions for the kingdom of God

 (Lk. 18:22).

 2. The rich man in the Lazarus story was unable to give up his possessions to help

 Lazarus and ended up in torment (Lk. 16:19ff).

 3. If we are to endure the sufferings associated with discipline we will have to see past

 the momentary sacrifices, the pains of reproach, imprisonment and even death and

 recognize a greater reward. Job maintained his loyalty to God after loosing wealth,

 family and health.

 C. Thus the admonition in Heb. 10:35-36.

 1. Do not throw away your confidence.

 2. You have need of endurance.

 3. Our challenge is to do the will of God in the face of adversity.

 4. Jesus admonished the church at Smyrna, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you

 the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). The devil was about to cast some of them into prison.

 5. God is with us and He will deliver us. Relief is coming. Do not shrink back.

 D. Heb. 10:38-39 defines for us what it means to life by faith.

 1. It means enduring the difficulties.

 2. Based on the promises made by God.

 3. Looking forward to the reward.

II. Disciplined **faith** endures hardship as evidenced in the examples of Heb. 11:1-12:2.

 A. Abel was murdered (11:4).

 1. This at the hands of a rebellious brother.

 2. He had done nothing wrong. Oh, he had committed sin or he would have had no

 need to be offering a sacrifice, but he was faithful to God. He had done nothing to

 deserve his brother’s assault on his life.

 3. Sometimes we experience the results of other people’s sin and we must endure it.

 4. Faith takes us beyond the assault because we recognize that God has promised us

 greater things. He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. He is the one who

 promises life greater than this life.

 B. Noah prepared an ark (11:7).

 1. “How does that involve hardship?” you may ask.

 2. Try telling people who perhaps have never seen rain that God is going to flood the

 earth; take 120 years and build a monstrous ark, nowhere near a body of water and

 start gathering animals into it; preach righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5) to a world whose

 thoughts are only evil continually (Gen. 6:5). See what kind of hardship it causes

 you.

 C. Abraham lived as an alien (11:8-10).

 1. Dwelt in tents. Recognized the temporary nature of this existence.

 2. Looking for a city with foundations promised him by God. For Abraham it was all

 about what God promised him and not about the things of this life.

 D. Abraham offered up Isaac (11:1719).

 1. God had promised Abraham descendants through Isaac. How could this possibly

 be fulfilled if Isaac is dead?

 2. Abraham considered that God is able even to raise the dead.

 3. His disciplined faith endured the challenge.

 E. Moses endured ill treatment (11:23-26).

 1. The families of Israel whose children were killed endured ill treatment.

 2. Moses chose to give up Egypt and the passing pleasures of sin.

 3. Faith endures hardship, embraces the reproach of Christ and risks the wrath of

 kings as it looks to the promised riches that God provides.

 4. How is it then that we think that our lives should be easy? “If the Father loves me

 why is He putting me through this?” “Why am I not in Eden?” Israel raised the

 question, “Is the Lord among us or not?” Why no water? Why no food? “Lord give

 me what I want and then I will believe in you.”

 5. Even Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered (Heb. 5:8).

 6. Born outside the Garden of Eden we learn something of the consequences of sin by

 experience. It is part of the discipline of the Lord.

 7. James wrote, “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trails,

 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have

 its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (1:2).

 F. Others faithfully endured hardship (11:36-38).

 G. Jesus endured the cross (Heb. 12:2).

 H. I do not know what discipline the future holds for you and me. Will we be like Job?

 Abel? Moses? Jesus?

 1. Some discipline comes as a result of my own sin.

 2. Some comes at the hand of the agents of Satan. Ex. Cain. Pharaoh.

 3. Some comes from Satan himself. Ex. Job.

 4. Some comes from the instruction of God. Ex. 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

 5. Some comes from being delivered over to Satan. Ex. 1 Cor. 5.

 I. Story about a young preacher beaten down by a congregation . . . Sent to a counselor.

 The counselor’s response was “God must be preparing you for something great to have

 put you through all this.” I have told you about my friend who said, “I have stopped

 praying for wisdom because I do not like what the Lord puts me through to teach me.”

 How many are willing to enroll and pay the tuition to the University of Hard Knocks?

 Discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful, yet to those trained by

 it yields “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” Why not be subject to the Father of

 spirits and live?

III. Do not grow weary and loose heart when you are disciplined (12:3-13).

 A. Do not shrink back (10:38).

 B. Do not faint when you are reproved by Him (12:5).

 C. Instead strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble (12:12-13).

 Two ways to look at this:

 1. I need to strengthen others who are weak.

 2. I need to strengthen myself.

 3. Perhaps 10:32-34 comes to mind.

 a. These people endured a great conflict of sufferings personally.

 b. They showed sympathy to others who were suffering.

 D. Are you shrinking back because of hardship? Are you faint when you are reproved by

 Him? “Let us aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and

 let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the

 author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross,

 despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (12:1-2).

Conclusion:

1. “All discipline for the moment is not joyful, but sorrowful.”

2. But let us look past the discipline of this life and with the eye of faith see the reward that God has promised us.

3. The Father loves us and disciplines us for our good to bring us to life, to the peaceful fruit of righteousness and to healing.