

Who likes discipline or chastening? I don’t think there is a single person who enjoys it, but we always remember the circumstance that motivated it, don’t we? I’m sure your childhood memories of discipline come to mind when you didn’t listen to your parent’s instruction and you paid the consequences. This happens when you’ve usually done something you’re not supposed to do. Discipline or chastening comes only when there has not been obedience or when the rules or law have been broken. **Discipline** means ‘*the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.*’ **Chasten** likewise according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary means to “*correct by punishment or suffering; to prune (as a work or style of art) of excess, pretense or falsity; to cause to be more humble or restrained.*”

This chapter deals primarily with Christians, who knowingly get off track because they’ve not listened to teaching and instruction from their spiritual leaders and pastors, or they have a stubborn heart and mind, or they want to do things their way and the list goes on. **Hebrews 12:5-11** says; “*And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, does not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*”

The society we’re living in frowns on discipline and chastening. Parents are glared at when they discipline their child in public, school teachers have no recourse for unruly children, and employers find it difficult to bring correction to an employee for fear of discrimination and so on. Can you imagine what sports games would be without umpires and referees who are there to bring discipline and correction? You wouldn’t have a game because everyone would do as seemed right to them. But God Almighty is superior and supreme in His way of training His children and is not manipulated by or concerned with what the American or Canadian Civil Liberties Unions have to say.

King Solomon says it like this in **Proverbs 15:10**; “*Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, and he who hates correction will die.*” So the reason for the discipline and chastening was because of disobedience, they forsook the straight and narrow way; Christian and Hopeful didn’t listen to their pastors who had even given them instructions for what lie ahead. They were deceived by a Flatterer, a false apostle who had transformed himself into an angel of light. The Apostle Paul warns us of such as these in **II Corinthians 11:13-15**; “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*” A false teacher, pastor, leader or apostle just doesn’t say; “I’m an angel of light, a deceitful worker and liar!” No, no no! They’re smooth talking, they use flattery to puff you up, they gently lure you away from the truth and before you know it, they’re teaching you outright lies and denying of the truth of the Word of God! Jude 16 says; “*These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.*” They ultimately want the upper hand in your life. Although we don’t know the full conversation between the three of them, they were drawn in by and embraced the flattery that he gave them. John 10:10 & 12 says; “*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly...But the hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.*” This flatterer was a hireling and his ultimate goal as we see was to ensnare them to ultimately steal, kill and destroy!

What happens when you’re caught? You immediately start pleading your case don’t you; you repent and seek forgiveness and restoration. Little children will often come to their parents with quivering lips and big tears running down their faces say “I’m sorry mommy, I won’t do it again, I’m sorry...” When we repent of our error and sin, God forgives us! I John 1:9 says; “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all*

unrighteousness.” The study of angelic intervention and ministry is extensive and we don’t have time to do that right now, but we do know that they are ministering spirits – [Hebrews 1:14](#) and that they do many tasks such as; deliver messages, they’re sent to explain the meaning of visions, they’re sent to give direction and guidance, they protect us, they’re warriors, they worship and praise Almighty God and they carry out God’s discipline such as Sodom and Gomorrah. It’s interesting why the ‘Shining One’ or angel brought discipline, but it would seem that Father God is continually watching over the wellbeing of his children to ensure that they complete the journey to heaven and it was obvious that He saw fit to bring chastening to them for their sinful detour. God can use anything to get us back on track, He will close doors, remove friendships, shut things down in your life, or whatever. But know that if discipline is happening or has happened in your life from your Father God, it’s because He loves you and has a much better plan for you. You’re to be trained in righteousness which is just and righteous in conduct and character.

Christian and Hopeful were specifically given instructions from the shepherds’ (pastors) about the road conditions and were given a map and they were specifically warned against the Flatterer – both of these they ignored. Don’t think that you may be so mature in your walk with Christ that the devil will forget about tempting you, he won’t, and if you let self sufficiency and your own earthly knowledge guide you, you may wander off course as these two did. King Nebuchadnezzar didn’t repent of his pride and arrogance and look what happened to him? He lived out in the fields with the wild animals and became like an animal himself! But when he repented, he was restored. [Daniel 4:34-37](#).

True repentance brings great contentment and gratitude. As I said earlier, if you’ve been disciplined or chastised by the Lord, you’ll always remember the ‘why’ and you’ll have learned not to put yourself in that situation again. Although our society frowns on and wants to stay away from discipline and chastening, it will always be a part of God’s dealings with his own children. Proverbs 3:11-12; *“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction; for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”* Job 5:17-18; *“Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. For He bruises, but He binds up, He wounds, but His hands make whole.”*

