

## LIFEFAITHFUSION DEVOTIONAL

# Putting Discipline into Discipleship

LIFEFAITHFUSION  
DEVOTIONAL  
DAY ONE

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Hebrews 12:10-11  
Proverbs 1:1-2  
Romans 8:29  
Colossians 3:10  
Ephesians 2:10  
Philippians 1:6  
Proverbs 22:15  
Ezekiel 20:37

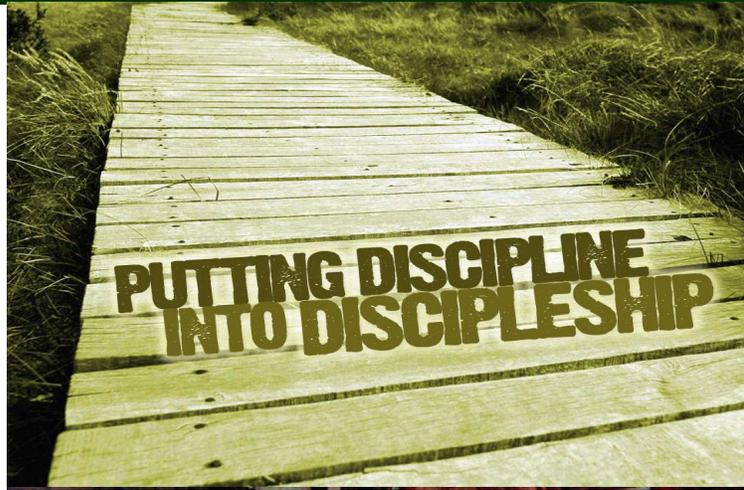
SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Paideuo-(Greek) Chasten, child-train, correct, reproof.

Musar-(Hebrew) discipline, chastening, correction, teaching

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus:  
“Your correction is always right and for my best good, that I may share your holiness.”  
(Hebrews 12:10b LB)  
Amen



DISCIPLINE IS POSITIVE

What comes to your mind when you read the word “discipline”? Can you think of some positive aspects of discipline? The next sentence will be a surprise to some of you. According to the Bible, *all* discipline is constructive and positive!

“God disciplines us for *our good*, that *we may share in his holiness*. Later on, it *produces a harvest of righteousness and peace...*” Hebrews 12:10b-11 NIV (emphasis added)

Amazing. With God, all of His discipline is valuable and constructive. So, why doesn’t God’s discipline *feel* positive? Growing up, you probably weren’t always disciplined with the godly purposes listed above; therefore, when God disciplines you now, it’s hard to feel like it’s a positive, helpful experience.

Webster’s Dictionary defines discipline as “training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness, and efficiency.” or, “acceptance of or submission to authority and control.”

Some of us received discipline that developed our self-control and character, and we benefited from it. But for many discipline was not the positive experience that God designed. It was more like having to “submit to authority and control.” Discipline was usually dispensed out of anger, fear, or as punishment and abuse.

If you have been deeply hurt because of the misuse of discipline and are ready to click the mouse off this page—please don't. It will be good for you to learn about **God's** design for discipline. As you learn about discipline you can recognize how God is using it in your life. And the healing process can begin.

Would you say your discipline growing up left you wounded, or was it beneficial discipline? If you were wounded, find a Christian friend who can help you process the pain from your past. If you were sexually abused, please do not navigate these waters alone. Seek help from a Christian counselor.

- Read Proverbs 9:10; 2 Timothy 4:2; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; and Hebrews 12:10-11. Write your own definition of discipline on a piece of paper that you can easily refer to during this week's devotions.
- Has your understanding of the Bible's meaning of discipline changed? If yes, how?

### SOLOMON'S LEGACY

Solomon was at a great disadvantage in finding a good role model in the area of discipline. His father, King David, was a great leader of God's people. However, he didn't properly discipline his children when they needed correcting. His lack of self-discipline toward women was reflected in his affair with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11).

This lack of discipline is also reflected in Solomon's life. As a result, even though God told Solomon not to marry women from foreign nations (1 Kings 11:2), Solomon didn't learn the self-discipline needed when he was young. The wealthy king married many foreign women instead of obeying God's directive to keep his faith pure. After warning Solomon twice personally, God had to discipline the monarch's disobedience for his idolatrous marriages. As a result, Solomon lost his kingdom (1 Kings 11:9-13).

- Are you being disciplined by God now? In what way? What are the positive benefits of this chastening?.
- Is there someone that can give you encouragement and prayer support as you go through this time?

### DISCIPLINE IS GOD'S TOOL

“The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for attaining wisdom **and discipline**” (Proverbs 1:1-2 NIV) (emphasis added)

A skilled carpenter loves working with wood. With his tools he transforms plain planks of oak and cedar into works of art. That's what God does with us in His sanctification process. God, the Master Artisan, takes our unfinished lives, and with His tool of discipline, creates beautiful masterpieces reflecting His glory (Romans 8:29, Colossians 3:10).

“For we are God's *workmanship*” (Ephesians 2:10 NIV). (emphasis added)

“(H)e who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion”  
(Philippians 1:6 NIV).

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 22:15a that “Folly is bound up in the heart of the child” (NIV). Man was not created to be foolish. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they existed in perfect harmony with each other and with God. But when sin entered the picture, their purity was replaced with the bent for foolishness. We are not born wanting to be wise. God has to place that desire in us and then use the rod of discipline to remove foolishness from us!

The rest of Proverbs 22:15b says “...but the rod of discipline will drive it [folly] out of him.” (NIV)

Let’s look in more detail at the term “rod.” The *rod* held tremendous meaning to the Israelites who heard King Solomon’s proverb. The people knew that the *rod* or *staff* was a symbol of the person’s authority and strength. The Hebrew nation remembered that all of God’s miracles through Moses in Egypt occurred when he was holding the rod of God.

In Ezekiel 20:37 God speaks to His people:

“And I will cause you to pass under the rod [as the shepherd does his sheep when he counts them, and I will count you as Mine and I will constrain you] and bring you into the covenant to which you are permanently bound.” (AMP)

The shepherd would stand at the gate of the pen where the sheep would stay at night and put his rod across the gate. When the sheep passed “under the rod,” the shepherd not only counted the sheep, but also carefully examined each sheep to make sure it was healthy. When we pass under God’s rod, we are covered by His wonderful care. He gives us an intimate firsthand examination to make sure that we are healthy.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts;  
and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”  
Psalm 139:23-24 (KJV)

God, our loving Shepherd, has only our best interests at heart as we pass under His rod and into safety. This is a beautiful word picture for those of us that grew up with healthy discipline. For those who were deeply hurt by the misuse of discipline, this imagery is probably not comforting. God understands. Talk to Him. Let Him know how you’re feeling. Please seek the help of a Christian counselor.

Leviticus 27:32 NIV says that “every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd’s rod—will be holy to the Lord” and in Ezekiel 20:37 (NIV) God says “I will take note of you as you pass under my rod, and I will bring you into the bond of my covenant.” In addition to using the rod at the gate of the pen, it had other uses, including the protection of the shepherd and the sheep. The shepherd used his staff to drive away predators like wolves, coyotes, and stray dogs. The rod was also the sign of authority (Jeremiah 48:17, Exodus 4:2, 17, 20; 7:9-20; 8:16-17). In Isaiah, the rod symbolized God’s punishment of evil people: “At the voice of the Lord the Assyrians will be stricken with dismay and terror, when He smites them with His rod” (Isaiah 30:31 AMP).

- As you reflect upon your life, can you see how God has used His tool of discipline to “create beautiful works of Christlikeness” in your life? Write down the areas on the back of this page. Thank God for His love for you.
- Thank God for being the loving Shepherd that provides His rod to protect you during the day and during the night. Can you remember times when you experienced His protection? What were they?

Discipline as God designed will be painful at times, but at all times it will be for our good. On Day Two we’ll look at God’s love as the basis of His discipline.

### **APPLYING THE TRUTH**

Read: Exodus 4:2, 17, 20; 7:9-20; 8:16-17; Leviticus 27:32; 1 Kings 11:2, 9-13, 12:4, 10-11;  
Proverbs 9:10; Isaiah 30:31; Jeremiah 48:17; Ezekiel 20:37; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 4:2

In the area below, write out the Scripture(s), thoughts(s), and question(s) from today's devotional that you want to spend more time thinking about. What will you apply to your life?