

But It Hurts
By Rick Ezell

“My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in” (Prov. 3:11-12 NIV).

Baptist pastor Peter Lord said, “There is one attribute of God through which we are able to see all the other facets of him. It serves as the viewpoint or table from which we are able to view all the other facets of his personality. God is first and foremost, above and beyond anything else, a father.”

God is the divine parent. His discipline of his children is no different than the correction we get from our loving earthly fathers. While the idea of punishment is certainly present, discipline primarily involves teaching or training rather than chastisement for wrongdoing. Similar to military training, the threat of penalty is present, but the main focus is to prepare and equip one for battle and survival.

Discipline is a mark of love. Solomon reminds us “for the LORD disciplines the one He loves.” If you are venturing down the wrong path, God loves you too much to allow you to keep going the way you are heading.

Discipline, therefore, is not God's way of getting even or His means of retaliating for the wrongs you have committed. When God disciplines you He is not getting you back; He is drawing you back. He seeks to bring you back to His will, from that which will destroy you, and toward His likeness.

God, our father, wants the best for you. Tom Landry, legendary head coach of the Dallas Cowboys, said, “The job of a coach is to make players do what they don't want to do, in order to achieve what they've always wanted to be.” That's what God does for you. Remember that the next time you feel God's discipline.

God loves us just the way we are, but he refuses to let us stay that way. Don't take his discipline as anger toward you, take it as affirmation that you are his child, that he believes in you, and that he wants nothing but the best for you.

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