

Wisdom for Living – It Brings Discipline

Proverbs 3:11-12

September 21 & 22, 2014

Proverbs 3:11-12

¹¹ **My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke,** ¹² **because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.**

A man came home from work and found his three children outside, still in their pajamas, playing in the mud, with empty food boxes and wrappers strewn all around the front yard. The door of his wife's car was open, as was the front door to the house and there was no sign of the dog. Proceeding into the entry, he found an even bigger mess. A lamp had been knocked over, and the throw rug was wadded against one wall. In the front room the TV was loudly blaring, and the family room was strewn with toys and various items of clothing. In the kitchen, dishes filled the sink, breakfast food was spilled on the counter, the fridge door was open wide, dog food was spilled on the floor, a broken glass lay under the table, and a small pile of sand was spread by the back door.

He quickly headed up the stairs, stepping over toys and more piles of clothes, looking for his wife. He was worried she might be ill, or that something serious had happened. He was met with a small trickle of water as it made its way out the bathroom door. As he peered inside he found wet towels, scummy soap and more toys strewn over the floor. Miles of toilet paper lay in a heap and toothpaste had been smeared over the mirror and walls. As he rushed to the bedroom, he found his wife still curled up in the bed in her pajamas, reading a novel. She looked up at him, smiled, and asked how his day went. He looked at her bewildered and asked, 'What happened here today?' She again smiled and answered, 'You know every day when you come home from work and you ask me what in the world I do all day?' 'Yes,' was his incredulous reply. She answered, 'Well, today I didn't do it.'

What if God would do this? What if God would just simply ignore us and let and just let this world go on its merry way? That would not be very wise. Over the last weeks, we have seen God's wisdom at work in our lives. We have seen how he removes fears in our lives. His wisdom guards our tongue. His wisdom helps us find direction in our lives. This weekend, as we focus our thoughts on Christian Education, we will see how God lovingly teaches us as he may discipline us in our lives.

"My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke." What is discipline? It is a simple question. However, the answer to that question is key to understanding this Proverb and why God brings discipline to us in our lives. The entire purpose of **"discipline"** is to teach. Parents – you are teaching your children. From little on, our children are learning from us. They learn how to talk. They learn how to be happy. They learn how to be sad. They learn how to encourage. They learn how to complain. They learn our mannerisms – good or bad. It is not a question as to IF they will learn; it is a question as to WHAT they will learn.

Solomon says that **"discipline"** is teaching people to live correctly in the fear of the Lord. Discipline trains people for life. The discipline that Solomon is talking about here is not like the discipline a parent does because their child won't go to sleep or go to bed early. It is not discipline that is done because they said a bad word. It isn't discipline that is done because they won't stop running around. Yes, that discipline is important and needs to be done.

The discipline that Solomon is talking about here is the big picture stuff. It is discipline that is done to teach people to honor God in any and every aspect of their lives. It is the discipline that God might do with us to teach us to honor our lives for Him. There are so many things that children learn today. Many of those are good. They learn sports to teach team work. They learn all kinds of things in school that not only helps them in life, but things that are learned to help many different people around.

Yet, the most important thing that you can ever teach your child is Jesus. The athletic abilities or academic abilities will change over time. I don't think there is a single parent, grandparent or great grandparent here that doesn't want to see their children in heaven. Because we love them, we are going to discipline and teach out of love to guide them in the Christian lives. God does the same thing to us: **"the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in."**

I don't think there is a single parent who likes to discipline. Even though kids might think that parents enjoy it, they don't. Yet, it absolutely necessary to show children love. That is what discipline is all about – love! It's not about punishing. It's not about pay-back time. When God might discipline us – it is about a Heavenly Father loving his children so much that he wants to keep nudging them along toward heaven and having his children keeping their eyes fixed on Jesus. That's the connection between Christian Education and Discipline.

A little boy who was floating his boat on a pond, when the boat floated away! A man came by and saw the boat out on the pond and began throwing stones on the far side of the boat. The boy said, "What are you doing?" Without a word, the man just kept throwing those stones on the other side of that boat. Then something very interesting happened! As the stones hit the water beyond the boat, they created ripples which pushed the boat back toward that boy. Even though the stones disturbed the smooth water, they achieved the desired result. That is the way that God's discipline works. When we drift away from Him, He throws out stones of discipline to disturb the water and sends out ripples pushing us back to where we ought to be. Yet, sometimes it is very difficult to see the purpose of discipline in our lives – even when it might be discipline from God. Even though we may not always see it, we know God loves us **"as a father the son he delights in."** May we all see God's wisdom and see that wisdom as he may discipline us in our lives. May we all live our lives for our Lord. Amen.