

**WORDS OF GRACE  
SEASONED WITH SALT  
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**Divine Chastisement**

***By Pastor Art Watkins***

The subject of our last newsletter was eternal security. Many people today do not believe in eternal security for they say it gives people a license to sin. But, it's been my observation through the years that people do not need a license to sin, for they have sinned without a license since the beginning of the world. The people who believe you can lose your salvation do not fully understand two things: The cross and divine chastisement. They cannot see the truth that Christ died and paid for all our sins and that he forgives all the sins that he died for. He forgives the sins he died for and because he died for all our sins, he forgives all our sins. If he forgives all our sins, then he cannot send us to hell for sin. Those who reject the doctrine of eternal security do not understand divine chastisement either. They can't see that we are sons of God and that God deals with us as sons and God does to his sons what we do to ours when they misbehave: he chastises us, but he does not send us to hell. In dealing with people who do not believe in eternal security I ask them; when your children misbehave do you stick them in a fire and burn them? They say of course not! I then ask them; what would you think of a father who stuck his children in a fire and burned them because they misbehaved? They immediately say; he is a murderer and a child abuser! I then say to them; why do you believe God will stick one of his own children in the fires of hell and burn them forever when they misbehave? If you believe a person can lose their salvation this is exactly what you believe whether you admit it or not. These people who believe that salvation can be lost condemn fathers who abuse their children, but then turn around and say God the Father abuses his with the ultimate child abuse by sending them to suffer in the fires of hell for sins that Christ paid for.

On the other side of the religious spectrum there are many Christians who really think that eternal security is a license to sin. They may not say it with their mouths, but they say it with their lives. They are deceived into believing that because they cannot lose their salvation for any reason, that it's OK for them to live any way they like without repercussion. To them salvation and security is just a fire escape out of hell. They fail to see how salvation and security is supposed to change our personal lives now, as well as our future destiny. There was a preacher in the south who taught people for years that quote: *God is not interested in how you behave, just in what you believe.* I heard him say this countless times and needless to say he led people to justify all types of sin in the name of security and forgiveness. He even scolded people who confessed their sins to God and led some to even believe that confessing sin was sin!

Many people who bought into this deception also believe security and forgiveness frees them from chastisement. They can't comprehend how God can and does chastise believers for sin even though they are forgiven and secure. They also reject the idea that a Christian should judge and confess his sins to God to avoid chastisement. These people and many others like them are deceived and do not understand security and the fact that eternal security does not exempt them from chastisement.

**Hebrews 12:5-13**

***And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:***

***For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?***

***But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.***

***Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?***

***For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.***

The subject of these verses is divine chastisement. Divine chastisement is a subject that is no longer preached in many local churches today. Many people today believe it is wrong to chastise their own children and consequently they don't believe God chastens his. But he does and sometimes the chastisement is severe. Many extreme dispensationalists do not believe God chastises his children today because of the false theories they have about forgiveness of sin and ignorance of the two natures.

The fact is: God chastises his children and in this study you will see why and each fact is backed up with the scriptures.

### **Chastisement Is A Sign Of Sonship**

***But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.***

This verse plainly says that if God does not chasten you, then you are not a son of God. God chastens ***every son he receives*** and if you are free from chastisement, you are a bastard and not a son. A bastard is an illegitimate child and they are usually abandoned by their father. The care of them is left to the mother and the father avoids all responsibility for them, and usually he is concealed and unknown. ***He does not recognize the child; he neither provides for him; nor instructs him; nor governs him; nor disciplines him.***

If you are not a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus, God does not recognize you, he does not provide for you, he does not instruct you, he does not govern you and he does not discipline you. God does not chastise people who are not his sons. People who are not the sons of God

are free from chastisement. Those who say God does not chastise them are really saying they are not sons of God. Verse 7 plainly says; ***what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?***

It does not matter if a person lives under law or grace or if he is a Jew or a gentile, if he is a son of God he will be chastened for his sins. And if a person insists that God does not chastise them, consider them lost.

### **God Chastens His Sons Because He Loves Them**

Verse 6 says: ***For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.***

Why does God chastise his sons? Because he hates them? No. Because he loves them. Chastisement is not only a sign of sonship, but a sign that God loves you for he chastens those he loves and delights in. Proverbs 3:12 says: ***For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.***

If God did not care about your well being he would leave you alone which is the worst thing God can do to anyone. The fact that he takes the time to chasten you shows he is interested in you and loves you and wants to change something in your life that is wrong. When he sees you are headed in the wrong direction or what you are doing will harm you, he will try and stop you and if words don't work, the rod of correction will. He even says that a father who does not chasten his son does not love him. Proverbs 13:24 says: ***He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*** (God must really love me)

### **The Purpose Of Chastisement Is Correction**

In Hebrews 12:6 Paul wrote: Whom the Lord loveth ***he chasteneth.***

Proverbs 3:12 says: whom the Lord loveth ***he correcteth.***

One verse says chasteneth and the other correcteth. By comparing these two verses we see the purpose of chastisement. The purpose of chastisement is correction. Do you correct your children? So does God. That's the purpose of chastisement. Many times the only way a child can be corrected and turned around is by

chastisement. When words of warning don't work, the rod will. The sting of the switch corrected my behavior when I was young. The taste of soap corrected my speech when I was young. Whippings give you an attitude adjustment. They leave a long lasting impression on your mind as well as your behind.

God chastens his people to correct their behavior too. Many times when they will not take heed to the warnings of his word about their sins and bad habits and when they will not be corrected by preaching, the Lord will apply *the board of education to the seat of learning*. When we walk after the flesh and do not allow God to reprove and correct us spiritually with his word, he will reprove and correct us by physical means and methods until we get the message.

Once a lady saw a shepherd break the leg of one of his sheep and she was horrified. She condemned the shepherd, but the shepherd told her; I broke his leg because he keeps wandering away from the flock and I have to leave the flock and go searching for him to save him from the wolves and from getting lost.

Sometimes God's people wander away from the flock and end up in the *far country* that is infested with wolves and so the good Shepherd chastises them to bring them home where they are safe. Dear reader does this sound familiar?

### **Forgiveness Of Sin Is Not Exemption From Chastisement**

Many extreme dispensationalists think that because God has forgiven them of all sins he will not chastise them for their sins. They say; how can God chastise us for sins he has forgiven? This idea comes from a faulty understanding of forgiveness and the two natures.

**First**, if he didn't chastise us how could he correct us? Chastisement is for correction and unless God corrects us we would not know or admit that what we are doing is wrong. Some Christians are so blinded by their sins and bad habits that they can't see that what they are doing is wrong. And many times the only way God can get their attention to turn them around is to physically chastise them.

**Second**, the flesh is not saved and it is subject to condemnation and chastisement. See 1 Corinthians 5:5.

**Third**, God chastens believers he has forgiven under grace. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 says: ***Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, HIM SHALL GOD DESTROY; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.***

According to these verses if a Christian defiles the temple of God, Paul said: Him shall God destroy. The same Paul who said in Colossians 2:13 that God forgave you of all trespasses, says in 1 Corinthians 3:17 that God will destroy you if you defile the temple of God.

In 1 Corinthians 5:4-5 is found a man who defiled the temple of God and his flesh was destroyed. It says: ***In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.***

This man committed fornication and was turned over to the devil by Paul and the church for the destruction of his flesh. He was saved and under grace and all his sins were forgiven, but he lost his life because of his sin. His spirit will be saved when Jesus comes again, but his flesh was destroyed. Forgiveness of sins did not exempt him from chastisement.

The Corinthian church was a very carnal church and one of their many sins was perverting the Lord's Supper. They turned the Lord's Supper into a feast of gluttony and drunkenness. And Paul said to them in 1 Corinthians 11:29-30: ***For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh DAMNATION to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are WEAK and SICKLY among you, and many SLEEP.***

The Corinthians were members of the body of Christ, under grace and all their sins forgiven, but that did not prevent God from chastising them. God punished some with weakness, some with sickness and others with death for sin. Paul the apostle of grace says God will make you

weak because of sin. God will make you sick because of sin. And God may take your life because of sin.

In 1 Corinthians 11:31-32 Paul goes on to say: ***For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, WE ARE CHASTENED OF THE LORD, that we should not be condemned with the world.***

God says we can avoid chastisement if we judge ourselves. But if we don't, God will judge us. When God judges us he chastens us. These verses are written to the church and they plainly say that when we fail to judge and confess our sins we are chastened of the Lord.

These verses proves beyond a doubt that God chastens saints he has forgiven, destroys believers he has forgiven, takes the lives of believers he has forgiven, and makes saints weak and sick he has forgiven

**Fourth**, Christ did not die to save us from temporal condemnation and chastisement. He died to save us from the eternal condemnation of our sins. Romans 8:1 says we will not come into eternal condemnation, but 1 Corinthians 11:29 says we can come into temporal condemnation of our sins. One is eternal and the other temporal. We are saved from eternal condemnation, but not temporal. But God says we can avoid temporal condemnation by judging and confessing our sins. Anyone who does not judge and confess their sins is tempting God to chasten them.

### **The Fruits Of Chastisement Is Righteousness**

***Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.***

Did you ever notice how well behaved children are after they are chastened with the rod? Did you ever notice how quiet it is around your house after you chasten your children? Did you ever notice how obedient your children become after they are chastened?

Chastisement produces righteous living. When God chastens his children it changes their mind, conduct, behavior and attitude for the better.

You become a more godly Christian. You lay aside the sins of the flesh. You break off bad habits. You quit using profane words. You become more humble. You become more quiet. You become more peaceable and holy. (2 Cor.7:1)

### **Divine Chastisement Profits Believers**

***For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.***

When my mother and father chastened me, I thought they were trying to kill me. It was impossible then to convince me that chastisement was for my good. But looking back, I thank God they did. Every whipping I got, I deserved and my life was changed for the better. Through chastisement I learned what was right and wrong, what was good and bad, what sin was and the fact that sin had to be punished. Chastisement kept me from sins that others committed. Chastisement put the fear of God in my heart. This is why God tells parents to chasten their children. Proverbs 23:13-14 says: ***Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.***

God chastises his children for their profit and benefit too. Divine chastisement does the following:

#### ***(1) It Weans Us From The World***

***1 John 2:15 says; Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

One of the biggest problems that Christians have is their love for the world and the things and stuff of the world, which is no friend to God. A Christian who loves the world is of no use to the Lord. Demas (2 Tim. 4:10) forsook Paul and became a useless, apostate Christian because he loved the world. He loved the world more than God and forsook Paul and God as a result. Many times God has to chastise us or allow us to suffer affliction or loss to change how we feel about this world. And God knows how to ruin this world for you. He knows what to touch in your life to make this world a miserable place for you. He can send things into your life that will

make you hate this world. And when he does, you won't look at the world the same way again. Divine chastisement cuts the roots we have in the world. It changes the affections we have for this evil world. It changes our view point of this world. It gets our eyes off the world to things above where they belong. (Col. 3:1-3)

### **(2) It Brings Us Back To God**

By nature we have an independent spirit, especially when things are going smooth. When everything is going good we live as if we don't need God. We become unthankful and ignore the Lord. We live as if we can get along without God. We fail to pray and thank God for health, food, strength, salvation and we fail to ask him for divine guidance. Divine chastisement is designed to empty us of our self sufficiency, to make us feel weakness and helplessness. Trials and troubles drive us to our knees and toward God. Sickness and sorrow make us seek the Lord earnestly in prayer.

In the four gospels, it was rare for any one in good health and strength to seek the Lord. It was trouble and illness which brought people to Christ the great physician.

The nobleman came to Christ-Why? Because his son was at the point of death.

Jairus sought after Christ - Why? Because his daughter was sick.

The Canaanite woman fell down at Christ's feet-Why? Because of her sick daughter.

The sisters of Lazarus sought after Christ-Why? Their brother was sick.

They all came to Jesus because they had needs and problems they could not solve.

Chastisement, pain and afflictions may be bitter and hard, but they have a way of showing us how weak and helpless we are and they are the method many times God uses to bring us back to him and to trust him at all times. .

(Take the time to read Psalms 107:11-28 and notice that it was not until they were brought down and afflicted that THEN they cried unto the Lord.)

### **(3) It Makes The Promises Of God More Precious To Us**

Sometimes painful experiences unlocks passages of scripture which were otherwise closed. It's when we are brought low that certain

promises become more of a reality and a comfort to us. The promises of resurrection mean far more unto Christians when some of their loved ones have died and are removed from them by death. The promises that God will never leave us nor forsake us mean more to lonely, despised Christians than those who are not. The promises that God will supply all our need mean more to a Christian who is suffering financially than one who is not.

C.H. Spurgeon said this;

*There are some verses written, as it were in a secret ink, which must be held before the fire of adversity before they become visible. There are many passages in Job, the Psalms, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah which do not appeal to me when the sun is shining; but which, in times of adversity, are like the welcome beams of the moon on a dark night. It was his painful thorn in the flesh which taught Paul the blessedness of that text, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

### **(4) It Qualifies Us To Sympathize With Others**

If you have never been through pain, sorrow and affliction you are not really qualified to weep with them that weep. If you have never been chastened of the Lord you cannot minister unto someone who is being chastened. You can't comfort someone in distress and trouble unless you have been there yourself. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 he wrote: ***Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.***

God allowed Paul to suffer tribulation, pain and loss to equip him to comfort anyone else who was suffering tribulation, pain and loss.

### **(5) It Demonstrates To Us The Blessedness And Sufficiency Of God's Grace**

In 2 Corinthians 12:9 God said to Paul: ***My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.***

In order to prove this verse, we have to be brought into a place of severe testing and trial and made to feel our own incompetency and

nothingness. You will never experience the special grace of 2 Corinthians 12:9 until you are brought down to a place where you need it. If you have prospered in business all your life and have always had an easy time financially, then it is probable you know very little about God's strength being perfected in your weakness. If you have been healthy all your life and have never suffered much weakness and pain, then you are not likely to know much about this special grace and strength of God. If you have never been through trying situations which bring you to your knees, or experienced heartbreaking bereavements, you may know little about the sufficiency of this special divine grace. You may have heard or read about this special grace, but you will never experience it, until you are put through trials and tribulations. Then and only then will you find that his grace can sustain your heart under the heaviest losses.

#### **(6) It Develops Our Spiritual Graces**

Romans 5:3-5 says: ***And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.***

There are three spiritual graces produced by tribulation: Patience, experience and hope. Chastisement will teach us to be patient. It will also give us experience in God's workings and it will give us a longing for the future hope of Christ's return to deliver us from these wretched bodies. Patience, experience and hope are 3 spiritual graces and they are all three produced by tribulation, pain and even chastisement.

#### **(7) It Brings Us Into Fellowship With The Sufferings Of Christ**

When we suffer trials and tribulation and chastisement it makes us appreciate more what Christ endured for us. While we have plenty, we cannot appreciate the poverty Christ endured for us. While we enjoy a comfortable bed and a roof over our head, we cannot truly sympathize with Christ who had nowhere to lay his head. It is not until some close friend on whom we counted has betrayed our trust that we can understand how Christ was betrayed by his brethren. It is only

when some brother has denied you that you begin to understand what Christ felt when Peter denied him.

Chastisement, pain, sufferings bring us into fellowship with Christ's sufferings. We get a taste of what and how he suffered. And once we get a taste of it, Christ becomes more precious to us and it helps us see in some measure what he went through for us. And when we see what and how he suffered for us, the more we will be ashamed of ourselves when we sin against him for he suffered to make us holy.

Hebrews 12:12-13 says: ***Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.***

This is addressed to someone who had been chastened by the Lord, but instead of being corrected by the chastisement they whine and wither away. Instead of admitting they were wrong they threw in the towel and quit. Paul warns about this in verse 5 when he said; ***My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.***

Some children take chastisement like a man and after they are chastened they immediately change their attitude, conduct and behavior. But some children sulk, feel sorry for themselves, whimper and whine and faint away.

God's children are the same way. Some Christians own up to their sins and take their chastisement patiently. After they are chastised they correct their conduct and behavior and begin to live godly in Christ Jesus and get back in the race God gave them to run. But some Christians will not own up to their sins or they blame someone else and when they are chastened they cry and moan and groan, feel sorry for themselves and quit and give up and stay like that for years. The command is, get over it, get up, pick up your weak hands and feeble knees and get back in the race. Quit feeling sorry for yourselves, quit sulking and whining.

#### ***Make straight paths for your feet***

The reason God has to chastise us is because our paths are crooked. It's time to get off that crooked path for that's what got us into trouble in

the first place. Get back on the straight path again and this time stay on it.

**The Writings of Others Concerning Divine Chastisement**  
**Albert Barnes**

**For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.** This is also a quotation from Proverbs 3. It means that it is a universal rule that God sends trials on those whom he truly loves. It does not, of course, mean that he sends chastisement which is not deserved; or that he sends it “for the mere purpose” of inflicting pain. That cannot be. But it means that by his chastisements he shows that he has a paternal care for us. He does not treat us with neglect and unconcern, as a father often does his illegitimate child. The very fact that he corrects us shows that he has toward us a father’s feelings, and exercises toward us a paternal care. If he did not, he would let us go on without any attention, and leave us to pursue a course of sin that would involve us in ruin. To restrain and govern a child; to correct him when he errs, shows that there is a parental solicitude for him, and that he is not an outcast. And as there is in the life of every child of God something that deserves correction, it happens that it is universally true that “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.”

**For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.**

The apostle speaks of this as if it were a universal truth in regard to Christians who are afflicted. And it is so. There is no Christian who is not ultimately benefited by trials, and who is not able at some period subsequently to say, “It was good for me that I was afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.” When a Christian comes to die, he does not feel that he has had one trial too many, or one which he did not deserve. He can then look back and see the effect of some early trial so severe that he once thought he could hardly endure it, spreading a hallowed influence over his future years, and scattering its golden fruit all along the pathway of life. I have never known a Christian who was not benefited by afflictions; I have seen none who was not able to say that his

trials produced some happy effect on his religious character, and on his real happiness in life. If this be so, then no matter how severe our trials, we should submit to them without a complaint. The more severe they are, the more we shall yet be blessed - on earth or in heaven.

**John Gill**

**Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him**

God has various ways of rebuking, reproofing, and convincing, sometimes by his Spirit, sometimes by his word and ministers, and sometimes by afflictive providences; by these he rebukes his people for their sins, convinces them of them, and brings them to acknowledgment and confession; he makes them hereby sensible of their duty, in which they have been remiss, and brings them to a more constant and fervent discharge of it; he reproofs them for, and convinces of their folly in trusting in the creature, or loving it too much, and of every wrong way they have been walking in; and these rebukes are not in a way of wrath, but love, and therefore saints should not faint at them: there are two extremes they are apt to run into, either to take no notice, and make light of an affliction, or else to be overwhelmed by it, and sink under it; both are guarded against in this exhortation.

**But he for our profit**

Saints are no losers by afflictions; they lose nothing but their dross and tin; they do not lose the love of God; nor their interest in the covenant of grace; nor the presence of God; nor grace in their own hearts; nor spiritual peace and comfort: on the contrary, they are real gainers by them; their graces gain by them fresh lustre and glory; they obtain a greater degree of spiritual knowledge; and a larger stock of experience; and are hereby restored to their former state, duty, and zeal; and become more conformable to Christ; yea, their afflictions conduce to their future glory; many are the profits arising from them.

**Matthew Henry**

**Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.** Observe, (1.) The best of God's children need

chastisement. They have their faults and follies, which need to be corrected. (2.) Though God may let others alone in their sins, he will correct sin in his own children; they are of his family, and shall not escape his rebukes when they need them. (3.) In this he acts as becomes a father, and treats them like children; no wise and good father will wink at faults in his own children as he would in others; his relation and his affections oblige him to take more notice of the faults of his own children than those of others. (4.) To be suffered to go on in sin without a rebuke is a sad sign of alienation from God; such are bastards, not sons. They may call him Father, because born in the pale of the church; but they are the spurious offspring of another father, not of God.

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