

Discipline: The Certificate of Adoption, Part 1 (Hebrews 12:6–8)

We are back today in Hebrews chapter 12, looking at the subject of discipline. In our text so far, beginning in verses 4 and 5, we have aimed to try and inform us of what God's Word says regarding the subject of discipline and to orient our hearts in a way that we think properly about this subject, because it is one that is fraught with confusion and a lot of misunderstanding. And our challenge thus far has been to try and turn our hearts to a position where we are willing to embrace the discipline that God brings into our lives, that we are able to understand that it is an expression of His love for us and of our relationship with Him. And if we can think properly about it, we are more likely to embrace it and to receive it, in order that the intention of God in sending discipline into our lives might be fulfilled and He might accomplish His purposes in us.

We need to view sufferings and afflictions and trials in our life, not as enemies to be battled, but as blessings to be embraced. And that is not easy. That is difficult. That is counterintuitive. We tend to want to avoid those things. We tend to want to kick against them and get out from underneath those as quickly as we possibly can. And we don't tend to view afflictions and difficulties and sufferings as an expression of God's love toward us and something, then, that we should embrace and receive and cooperate with God in the process of going through those afflictions, so that His purpose and His intention in sending those things into our lives might be fully accomplished, and that we might enjoy the peaceful fruits of righteousness, as verse 11 of this passage describes.

There are four things we have been looking at. Well, actually we've looked at one of the four things in verses 4–11. There are four things here that you and I must know and understand about God's discipline.

The first is the proper perspective in verses 4 and 5. We talked about how discipline and punishment are not the same thing. They're not identical. These are different intentions, different relationships, that are being expressed in punishment and discipline. Discipline is something reserved for God's children. Punishment is something reserved for God's enemies.

And then we talked about the proper way of responding to discipline. We don't want to despise it. We talked about the different ways that we tend to do that. And we don't want to despair under it, and I gave you several ways that we tend to despair under discipline. And all of this is intended to be an encouragement to us. That's what verse 5

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says. We have forgotten the exhortation, or the encouragement, that is addressed to us as sons.

And now we come to verses 6–8. And we're going to look at the second thing that we have to understand about discipline, and that is what discipline proves to us: the proof of discipline.

Discipline in our lives is an evidence of several things. Two of them we're going to talk about this morning: God's love and our sonship. This is what discipline proves. When discipline is present in our lives, it is the evidence that He is our Father and that He loves us.

Look at verse 6: “For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons” (Heb 12:6–8).

Notice how prolific throughout the passage the analogy of the father-son relationship is, all the way through it. It's woven all the way through it. That is, in fact, the framework in which all of our understanding of discipline needs to be put. It governs our understanding of our relationship. It governs our understanding of trials and difficulties that come into our lives. Because the father-son analogy is what the author is working out all the way through the entire context. So that helps frame it. That helps frame our understanding of it. And that is the analogy that the author is using here, because he says in verse 7, “God deals with you as with sons.” Verse 5: “You have forgotten the encouragement that is addressed to you as sons.” He is reminding them. Again, this is the encouragement. You are sons, and the discipline in your life is the evidence of your sonship.

And not only is it the evidence of your sonship, it is the evidence of God's love for you as sons. The Lord loves those whom He disciplines and He disciplines those whom He loves. So if you are receiving discipline, if trials and afflictions and suffering have come into your life and God is so pleased as to use those things in some sanctifying way in your life, in your soul, then that is an evidence that you are loved, and it is an evidence that you are a son.

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Again, this is not a warning passage. Verses 4–11 is not a warning passage. The sentiment here is not that God sits in Heaven with His rod, ready to bring it down upon your head at the first sign of you doing something wrong, so you better watch out and wait for it, because He is just itching to beat you as a child and discourage you. That's not the spirit of this at all. It's not a warning passage. This is an encouraging passage. It is the highest honor imaginable to be a child of God. It's the highest honor imaginable. That is a blessing that is so precious, so rich, so infinitely valuable, that you and I on this side of eternity cannot even begin to wrap our minds around what that will mean for us ten thousand, twenty thousand, a hundred thousand eons from now, because we have not yet even experienced a fraction of the joy and the glory and the blessing and the delights and the love that is waiting for us on the other side of the veil when we cross our finish line and receive our reward.

And so, since that blessing is so precious, we have to understand discipline in terms of that. Discipline is a proof of two things. First, in verse 6, God's fatherly love. Look at it in verse 6: "For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

And the second thing is, it is a proof of, or an evidence of, our adoption. This is verses 7 and 8. "It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? [The presence of discipline is the evidence of your adoption into the family of God. Look at verse 8.] But if you are without discipline, of which all [that is, all true sons] have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons."

So therefore, our discipline that we receive from the Father is an evidence of His love for us and of our adoption, our sonship. Let's look at the first one in verse 6, an evidence of His love for us. Verse 6 again is a quotation from Proverbs chapter 3, verses 11 and 12. We've looked at that, we looked at the first part of that quotation up in verse 5, regarding how it is that we are to respond to discipline. Do not despise the discipline of the Lord, or regard it lightly, "nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him." We're not to despise it. We're not to despair under it. That's how we are to receive it, the mindset with which we embrace discipline.

And now, in verse 6, it becomes an evidence of His love for us. "For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." And the point of the quotation, again from verse 5: it is an encouragement or an exhortation.

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You and I are to read verse 6: “For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.” This is to fill our hearts with joy. That's encouragement. You have forgotten the encouragement that is addressed to you as sons.

God's going to discipline you. Doesn't that encourage you? If you understand discipline, it should encourage you. But if you don't understand discipline, that should terrify you. The only reason you should be terrified by falling into the hands of God is if you are not in His family. If you are in His family, the best place you can be is in His hands. Even if that means discipline. Even if it means the scourging that is mentioned in the last half of verse 6. It's an evidence of His love for you.

Love and discipline go together. Like Romeo and Juliet. Joanie and Chachi. Peanut butter and chocolate. Love and discipline go together. They are inseparable. You can't have one without the other. If you have one, you always have the other. Discipline issues from love, and these two things, they're inseparable. Revelation chapter 3: “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent” (Rev. 3:19). You see it here in this passage. “Those whom the Lord loves He disciplines.” It's in Proverbs chapter 3. Love and discipline go together. One is the evidence of the other, and the other is the evidence of the one. And they cannot be separated. They are compatible.

Parents understand this, that love and discipline are compatible. Let me correct that. Wise parents understand this, that love and discipline are compatible. Not every parent understands it. A wise parent understands it.

Children do not understand it. Children do not understand that love and discipline are compatible, because when children receive discipline, they think it is an expression of a lack of love by their parents. Right? You have been there. You were a child once. Everybody here who is not a child was one at one time. When you receive discipline, you think, “The discipline is an expression of a lack of love by my parents. And so, when my parents' love increases, the discipline goes away. When my parents don't love me as much, the discipline increases because the love is waning.”

We think, as children, that these two things are on a balance, and to have a lot of the one is to have little of the other. You know why children think that way? Because they're foolish, that's why.

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Now, if you're a child, you're saying, "Did Pastor Jim just call me a fool?" No, the Bible calls you a fool. Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him." It is bound up in the heart of a child. You were born a fool. You're not alone. Look around the room. Everybody here is born as a fool. Now, as you grow older and you gain wisdom, you start to understand that.

So, children, here's the positive aspect of this. As you get older and you gain a little bit of wisdom, you will look back on your childhood and say, "When I was a child, I was a fool." If you are never able to come to that conclusion, that "when I was a child, I was a fool" and you're an adult? You're still a fool, because age does not give you wisdom. How do I know this? Because there are plenty of adult fools who sit around at the feet of children thinking that children can give us wisdom. "Please, twelve-year-old girl, tell me all about climate change and fossil fuels and global economies. Please give me the wisdom of gender and sexuality and morality and education and public policy and economics and gun laws and everything else." They sit around at the feet of children, like children are the sages of the ages and that we can all gain wisdom from them. That is evil, wicked, selfish foolishness, and an evidence of a nation and a culture that is under the judgment of God and that has been turned over to a reprobate mind. If we had any sanity in our society, we wouldn't look to children for any kind of information, wisdom, insight on anything till they were past twenty-five years old. That's if we had any kind of sanity.

So children are foolish, and "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child." The rod of discipline must drive it far from him. It is foolish, then, to think that discipline is incompatible with love and that to have a lot of one is to have little of the other, or to have a lot of the other is to have a little bit of the one. That is a foolish way of thinking.

It is also foolish for a parent to think, "Because I love my child, I will not discipline my child. If I love my child, I'm just going to let them express themselves. In the middle of the aisle at Walmart because I won't buy them Fruity Pebbles. I'm just going to let them express their anxiety, their angst, their anger, their frustration, their hatred, their selfishness. They just need to vent this in the middle of Walmart. I'm not going to say no to them. I'm not going to squash their free expression. I'm not going to correct their behavior. I'm not going to discipline them." That is not an expression of love. That is an expression of evil folly and wickedness.

I know people who will never say no to their children. That is foolishness. That is utter foolishness. And it's the evidence that somebody does not love their child. God is the

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perfect parent, and our job as parents is to model how He parents us. So we are to model His wisdom, His insight, His creativity, His love, His grace, and, yes, His discipline. And we are to pursue disciplining our children in the same way that God disciplines us. Because the connections between disciplining children in the physical realm, in the natural realm, between parents and children here in this world, and the parallels between that and God disciplining us, they are strong parallels, and they are obvious parallels.

And I am a fool when I question God's love for me because I'm going through affliction or suffering. That is a foolish response. That is a wicked response. It is foolish to think in my heart and my mind that if God loves me, He will keep me free from any kind of affliction or suffering. And it is foolishness to think that if I am undergoing affliction or suffering or any kind of discipline at all, that that must be, then, an evidence that God doesn't love me as much as He loves my Christian neighbor who doesn't seem to be going through any affliction at the moment. That's a foolish way of thinking. That's how foolish children think. But the truth is that God loves those whom He disciplines. That's verse 6: The Lord loves those whom He disciplines, and He disciplines those whom He loves.

So let's go a step further. Not only are love and discipline compatible with one another. Let's go a step further. Discipline springs from divine love. Discipline is the expression of love. And if there is no discipline, there is no love. And if there is love, then there most certainly will be some form of discipline, some degree, some kind, because God loves those whom He disciplines and He disciplines those whom He loves.

Divine love is the impetus for discipline. It is the motive. It is the driving force. Discipline issues out of divine love just as much as grace and loving-kindness and affection and everything else that we associate with God's love. Discipline comes out of that, because these two things go together and they are inseparable. Discipline is the expression of that love, because divine love seeks not its own glory and good, but the glory and good and holiness of the one that is disciplined and loved.

Because God loves us, He will discipline us, because He seeks our good. Just as a parent who loves their child will discipline that child, not because he hates that child, not because he wants to cause suffering to that child. But a good parent will discipline his child because he seeks the child's good.

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God seeks our holiness. He seeks our moral improvement. He seeks wisdom and grace and the mortification and the subduing of sin in our lives, the peaceful fruits of righteousness. These are the things that God will work in our lives through discipline. And because He is pursuing those things in our lives, He will discipline us, which is obviously the best way for Him to accomplish those purposes, or He would not do it.

Discipline is the best way to accomplish those purposes. If God loves us, then He will pursue these things in our lives. And because God loves us, He will produce them. Now, could God produce these things in my life, in our lives, in some other way? He could. There might be some other way. He could just remove from me my selfishness and my pride. He could do that. Is that the best way for Him to do it? Is that the way that is best for my good? No.

You know what is the best way for me to grow in holiness? It's to endure discipline. If that were not the best thing for me, He would not ordain that for me, because He only ordains for me what is for my best. So that's the best way God can accomplish it. That is the way that He has ordained to accomplish it. And He will infallibly do so.

Remember the quote from Spurgeon: "The rod is baptized in deep affection before it is laid to the back of the believer." Memorize it. "The rod is baptized in deep affection before it is laid to the back of the believer." You must know that. That is simply Spurgeon's way of paraphrasing verse 6: "Those whom the Lord loves He disciplines."

Love is His motivation. In the earthly parental realm, we understand this. We as parents, when we discipline our children, are seeking their moral formation, their character development. We're seeking to impart good habits and virtues and character qualities, making them good citizens, giving them wisdom, discernment, the fear of God. All of that stands behind a parent's desire and motive to discipline their children. Because an undisciplined child is an unloved child. An undisciplined child is an unloved child. So when you see that child melting down in the middle of Walmart, my heart breaks for them. Because I think to myself, this child has nobody in their lives who loves them enough to tell them that that is not appropriate behavior and to bring correction into that situation and discipline them so that that doesn't happen.

They say, "Jim, does that mean that your children never melted down in the middle of Walmart?" No, they did. Every last one of them did. Once. And then they would try it at Yoke's once. And then they would try it at church once.

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Of course they try it, but I love them enough to get them to understand, using even pain if necessary, “This is not appropriate behavior. This is not God-honoring behavior. We will not tolerate this at Walmart or at Jalapeños or at Yoke’s, or anywhere else you try this, because we do not tolerate it at home.” Have you run across those parents who say, “I just don't understand why, when I bring my child out in public, they act like this.” (Pick me! I know.) Might I suggest that they do this in Walmart because they do this at home? They do this in the restaurant because they do this at home. If you are consistent and you love them enough to correct them, you will discipline them.

The same is true—this is not a sermon about parents disciplining children. This is a sermon to get you to see the parallels between what it is that we have to do in the lives of our children and how it is that God treats us, and we're simply to act out in the physical realm with our kids the way that God responds to us. So that when we act a certain way and God comes in and says, “That is not how you respond,” we have to learn that and say, “Thank you for that correction.” And never think to ourselves that the presence of that painful discipline was, in fact, an evidence of His displeasure with us, in terms of “He doesn't love me enough” or “He doesn't love me as much as someone else.” Proverbs 13:24 says, “He who withholds his rod hates his son.” Wow, that's strong, isn't it? You withhold your rod, you hate your child. “But he who loves him disciplines him diligently” (Prov. 13:24).

Proverbs 19:18: “Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death.” Why? If you discipline your son, you don't desire him to have a run-in later on with the law and with the court system and with somebody else who will make his life miserable, maybe, possibly, ultimately, eventually leading to his death. If I love my child, I want to train them how to act and behave so that later on this does not lead to their death.

You see the modern videos posted all over online of children assaulting parents and assaulting adults and punching people in the streets? You know why that is? Because somebody spared the rod on those children in their developmental years and didn't care enough about those children, or anybody else, to bring discipline to bear. Discipline is inseparable with love. And if you love your child, you will discipline them. And if God loves you, He will discipline you. And if you don't love your child, then you will not discipline them. Proverbs 23:13–14: “Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.” That's encouraging, right? Don't be afraid to strike him with the rod. You're not going to kill him. Verse 14: “You shall

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strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol.” The discipline is better than damnation. So you use discipline to show them ultimately what damnation will mean.

This is what God does with us. The Lord wants to rescue us from the peril and the foolishness and the spiritual danger in which we place ourselves in our rebellion, the things that threaten us. And because He loves us, He will move with precision to send discipline so that He may prevent future sin. He may correct us in sin. He may purge from our life the things that displease Him, that do not bring Him joy in our lives. He loves us enough to do that. Deuteronomy 8:5: “Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.” See the parallel there? The Lord Himself uses that parallel. Job 5:17: “Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproveth, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.”

Discipline flows out of the love of God. He loves us, and therefore He disciplines us. And if He did not have that familial and fatherly love for us, then He would not discipline us. Discipline proceeds from the love of the person being disciplined.

Punishment proceeds from the love of justice. Understand, this is another difference between punishment and discipline. When I discipline my child, I'm not trying to satisfy some standard of justice. Something has been wronged, so he has to pay this price so that justice can be satisfied. When I discipline my child, I discipline my child because I'm seeking their good, ultimate good, and because I love them. Not because I love justice, because I love them. So discipline is motivated by a love for the person you discipline. Punishment is motivated by a love for justice.

You see, when we punish criminals, we don't do it because we love criminals. We do it because we are trying to satisfy the demands of justice. So punishment and discipline are different.

Now, you may ask, totally as an aside: “How long should I discipline my child? To what age?” That's a good question. I just had this conversation with my oldest son this last week, and I said, “There obviously was a time in your life when I stopped spanking you.” And it was not because he got bigger than me, because I could still take him. But there comes a point where the age of the person that you're talking about, that you're disciplining, that kind of discipline, if you haven't accomplished something by then in your loving discipline to that point, you have not rescued his soul from Sheol. And then you can just pray that God will. That's all you can ask.

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Homer Kent said this: “When believers are confronted with the prospect of enduring hardships, they must understand that it is not as a punishment coming from God's wrath, but is part of the heavenly Father's program of educating His sons. Even when that discipline must involve correction for waywardness, the purpose is not the venting of God's anger, but the positive one of fostering spiritual maturity and preventing further sinfulness.” That's the goal.

Now, this may have, in your mind, raised an issue that you would like to have answered at this point. But if it hasn't, then I'm going to raise the issue for you. If God loves those whom He disciplines and disciplines those whom He loves, but discipline is reserved only for His children, then what is the relationship of the love of God to unbelievers? Because obviously there are some illegitimate children who do not receive discipline, but only receive punishment. Does that therefore mean that God does not love unbelievers? It's a good question, isn't it?

Because verse 8 says, “If you are without discipline, of which all [that is, all the legitimate children, all His children] have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” So discipline is reserved for those whom God loves. And if He does not discipline the unbeliever, then does that mean that God does not love the unbeliever? Is that tough? Not really. What kind of love are we talking about in this context? Are we talking about the love that a Creator might have for His creation? Or are we talking about the love that a Father has uniquely for His children? See, God loves unbelievers, but He does not love unbelievers (those who are not His children) with the same kind of love or the same degree of love or the same intention in love as He does for those who are His children.

We're talking in our context here about a familial love, a fatherly love. God has a love for His creatures and for His creation and for unbelievers that is deeper, more profound than you and I can possibly understand, but it is not the redeeming love with which He loves His own children. That is a love that seeks that person's good. It is a love that expresses itself in discipline. It is a love that is reserved only for those who are His sheep, His bride, His people, His church—those whom the Father has given to the Son. They are the recipients of that special, redeeming familial love, even though God has a love for unbelievers. But in this context, he's talking about familial love, fatherly love. That kind of love God does not lavish upon those who are not His.

And that is not a moral defect, by the way. There are some who think God has to love all people equally. No, He does not. That is not a moral virtue to love all people equally. I

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do not love your children the same way that I love my children, and you do not consider that a moral defect in my character. You don't, because you understand, parents, that you love your children with a different kind of love and a different degree of love than you love my children. That is not to say that I don't love your children or you don't love my children, but it is to say that I love my children differently than I love your children, just as I love my wife differently than I love every other woman in this congregation. Even though I might have a fond affection and a Christian love for every woman in this congregation, the love that I reserve for my wife is different. It is special. It is unique. And that is not a moral defect. That's a virtue. And you are thankful for that, that I love my wife that way. I reserve the right to love people that I am in a special relationship with different than people that I have no relationship with, and God does the exact same thing.

So it is not a moral defect in God that He does not love unbelievers the way that He loves those who are His children. That is a virtue. It is a perfection in God, and we can be thankful for it.

So no, He does not discipline unbelievers. Why? Because He is not seeking their moral improvement. He's not trying to do that. He's not trying to purge sin out of their lives. God's not trying to do anything. If He were doing that, He would fail. But He's not trying to do that. Therefore, He's not putting discipline out on the lives of those who are not His people.

And herein lies the encouragement. This is the point of the passage. God's discipline is proof, not that He loves you the same way that He loves everybody else. Here's the encouragement: that God's discipline is proof that He loves you like a father loves his son. That's the encouragement. You get a special love if you're in the family of God. A redeeming love, a love that seeks your highest good, a love that has reserved for you an eternal and imperishable inheritance in the heavens, a love that has given to you everything that God has in the person of Christ. It is a love that seeks your redemption, that accomplishes your salvation. It is a love that exists between the Father and the Son in the Trinity. Because the Father loves the Son, He pours out on the Son all of that eternal and infinite love. And then, because the love of God overflows beyond even the Trinitarian Persons there, that love seeks expression in loving other people. So God creates a body of people whom He redeems and brings to Himself and includes in His Son, so that the love with which the Father lavishes upon the Son may spill over and pour out onto you and I. And we may enjoy that inter-Trinitarian love. That is not a love

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that is poured out on unbelievers. That is a love that is brought into and specific to the children of God who are members and participants with the fellowship that we have in the Trinitarian Godhead, by virtue of the fact of what the Spirit has done in saving us.

Because the Father has given a people to the Son, the Son came and redeemed those people, purchased their salvation, paid the price for their eternal redemption, brings them into His family. This is the bride that the Father has given to His Son. That bride is redeemed, so that the Father may love that bride with the same love, infinite and abounding and eternal, that He loves the Son with, right? Just as I seek to love the spouses of my children, the same love that I have for my own children. That's what I pursue.

This is what the Father does. So that is a love that is reserved only for us. This is a love that is poured out on all of God's children, and on only God's children. Look at the end of verse 6. It's the second half. "And He scourges every son whom He receives."

Underline the word *every*. All God's children receive discipline. All of them. If you look at your life and you say, "I haven't been disciplined. I haven't had any affliction, I haven't had any suffering. I'm not growing in holiness. God's not producing peaceable fruits of righteousness in my life. He's not sanctifying me. I'm not growing in holiness. I'm just sort of here, I'm sort of attached to the fringes of Christianity. God is not accomplishing anything in my life through suffering or affliction," you have every reason to doubt whether or not you're a legitimate child of God. That's the point.

But if you're under affliction, suffering, praise God! That is the stamp of His love for you. It's the evidence of it, because He loves those whom He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives. None are exempt from this. That word *scourging*, by the way, is a strong word. It is a harsh word. That is not a mistranslation, right? Like the original Greek says, "He slaps the back of the hand of every Son whom He receives," and somehow, somebody just thought, "Now I feel like translating that *scourging*." No, that is not a mistranslation. It's the word for scourging. Matthew 10:17: "Beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues." Jesus used it of His own treatment prior to His crucifixion when He said, "[They] will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up" (Matt. 20:19). That's the word for scourging.

In the Gospels, it's used to describe the hatred and hostility that is vented upon an individual when they are being scourged by somebody else. But here, that is not the point, because again, it is not hatred and hostility that is in view here. Instead, it is love.

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"Discipline: The Certificate of Adoption, Part 1 (Hebrews 12:6–8)" by Jim Osman, pastor/teacher. Available online at: <https://kootenaichurch.org>

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What is in view here is the severity of the discipline. It's the severity of it. And he includes this verse and uses this word *scourging* intentionally, lest you and I think that discipline, up to a certain point, is an evidence of God's love, but when it gets real severe, it's no longer an evidence of His love. This is the author's way of saying, no, some discipline will be painful. It will be extremely painful. And when it feels like scourging, nothing has changed. His love has not changed. His intention has not changed. His purposes have not changed. Your relationship to Him has not changed. None of it has changed. Just because the intensity is dialed up a notch does not mean that anything that I have said about discipline since we started verse 4 changes. None of it does. Even the scourging. Even scourging is an expression of God's love.

Sometimes severe sin, which places us in severe danger and in which we persist with severe impenitence, requires severe discipline. God loves us so much that He would rather scourge us than leave us to our sin. He loves us so much that He would rather whip us in love before abandoning us to our depravity and our wicked hearts. He scourges every son whom He receives.

Love demands that. It is the evidence of His love. Even severe discipline does not change any of this, and everything we've seen about discipline up till now still holds true even under the severest of sufferings. It is still an evidence of God's love.

Second, it is an evidence or a proof of our sonship. That's verses 7 and 8. And we'll look at that next week.